



The social life of boats and Cultural Riverscape in Mekong Delta, Vietnam

Thi Ngoc Tuyen Nguyen

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Fine and Applied Arts Research and Creation
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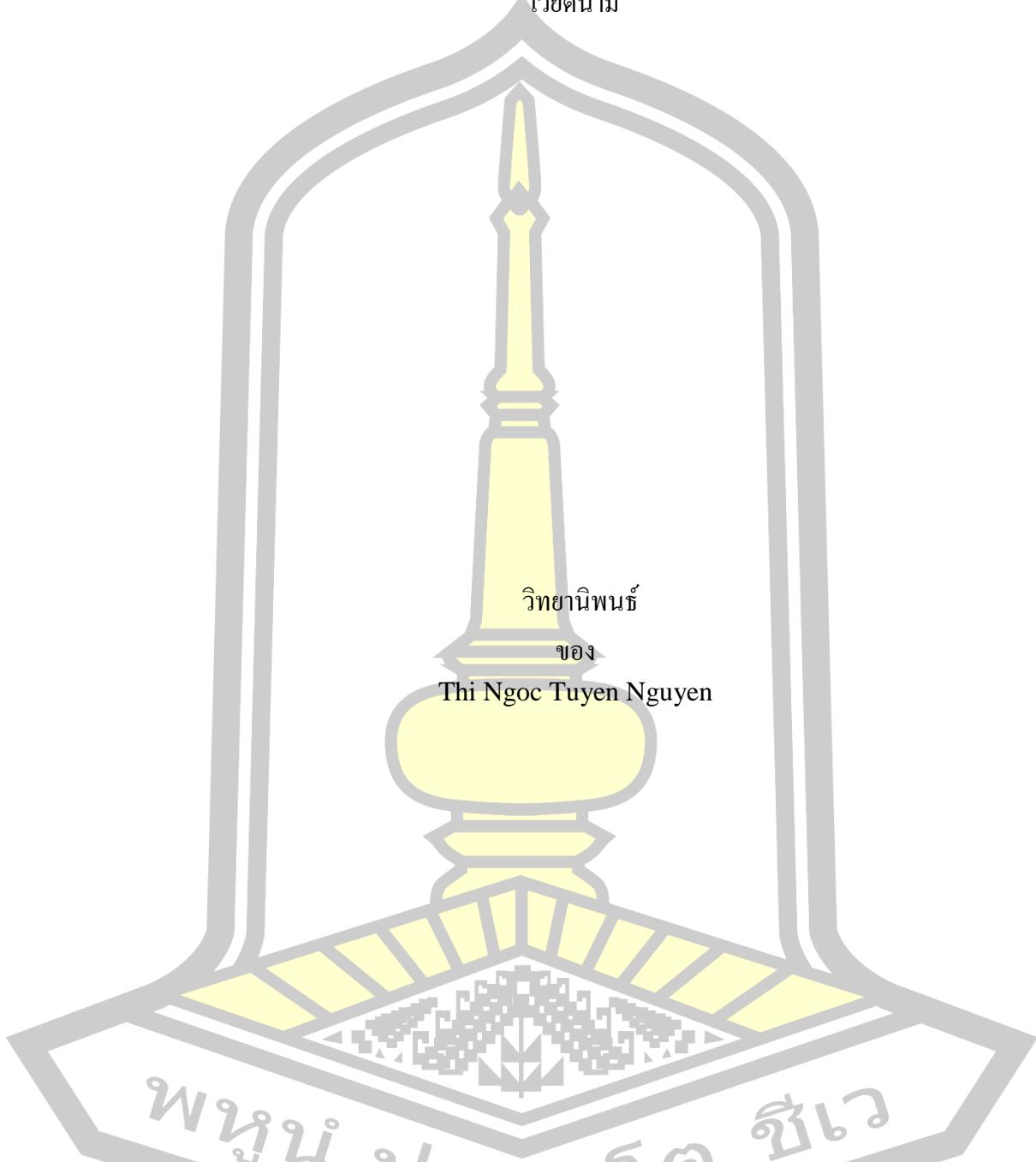
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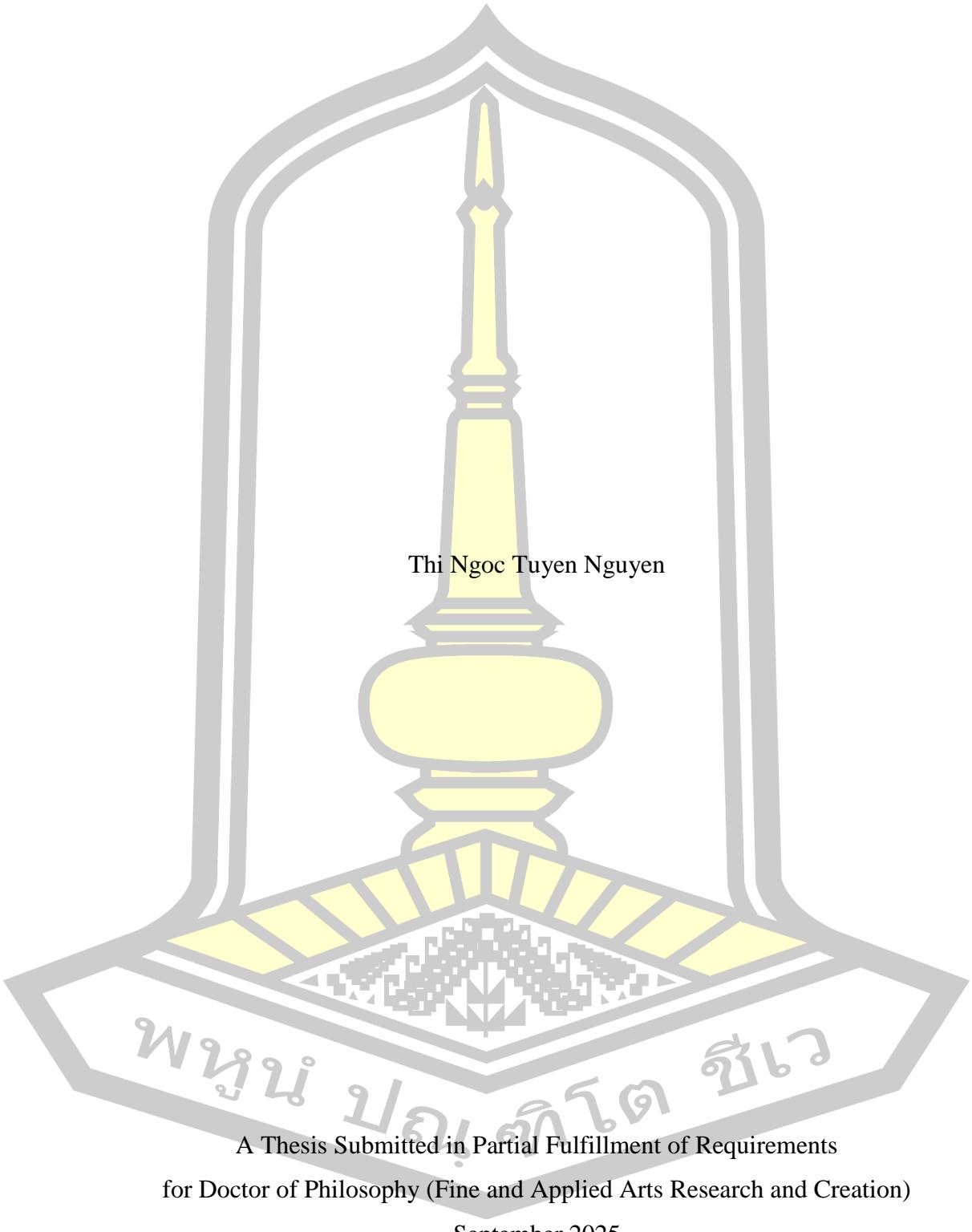


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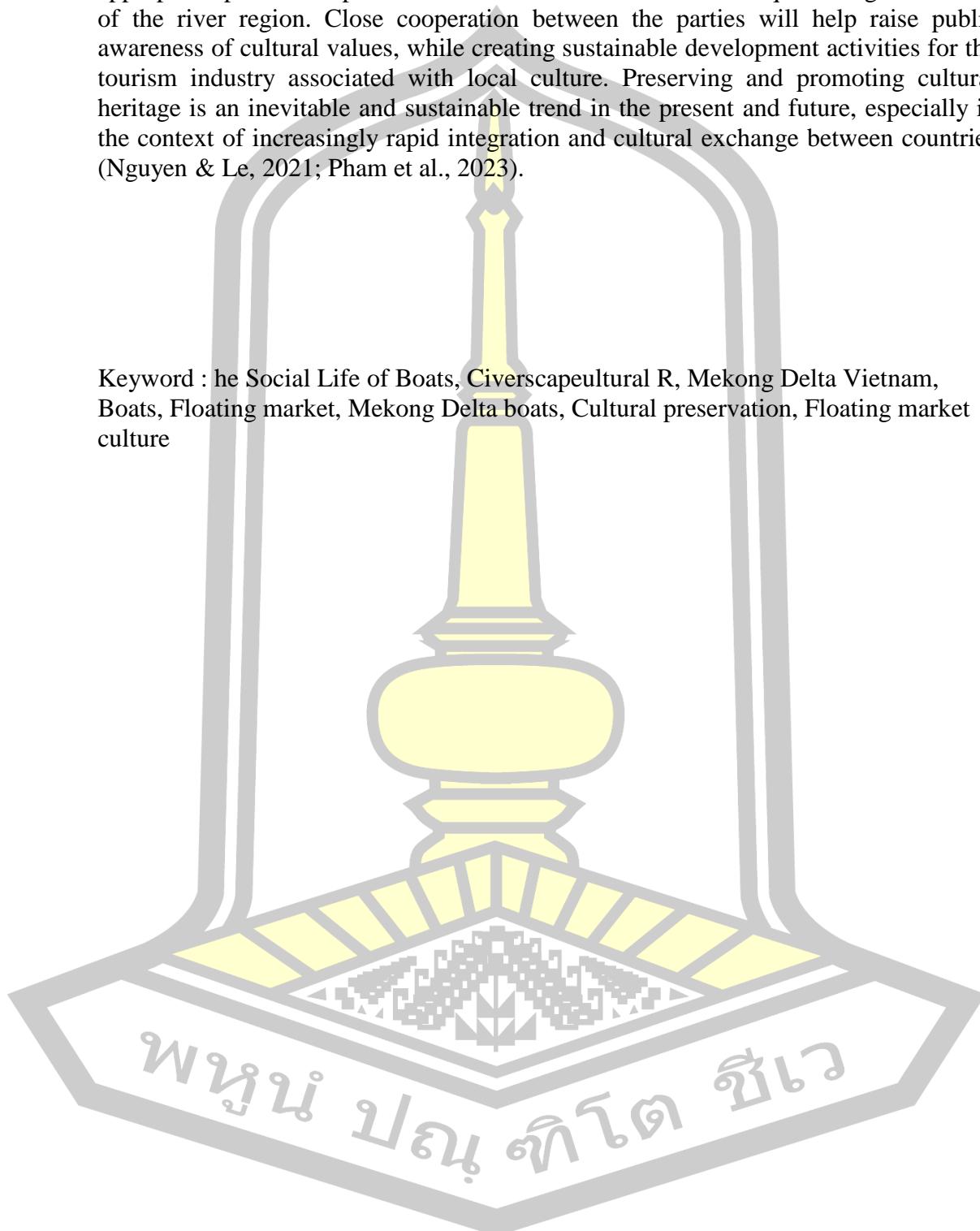
ABSTRACT

In this study, we use qualitative research methods to analyze the social life of boats in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, thereby pointing out the value of vessels in forming the unique river culture of the residents here. This river culture, with boats as a typical symbol, is very rich and diverse in shape, size, and flexibility in the function of boats in the floating market culture in the Mekong Delta. In 2016, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam recognized this culture as an intangible cultural heritage.

The specific research objectives are as follows: Research on physical space and cultural river landscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, and research on boats according to the socio-cultural identity dimension of the people in the Mekong Delta. Research on the social life of boats and unique cultural river landscape in 'Cai Rang Floating Market' in Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. "Ghe Bau" research: analysis of research units. They were selected by purposive sampling method. The tools used were baseline surveys, observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and document searches. Data were collected by analyzing documents, artifacts, historical images, and field surveys. The research results indicate that the Mekong Delta's historical conditions, geographical features and complex river systems have formed the habit of using boats, thereby emphasizing their essential role in the region.

The forms of market meetings on the river have turned boats into essential elements, contributing to the river culture characteristics. In addition, the diversity, characteristics of boats and natural social life have formed unique cultural values of this river region. Boats serve the needs of transporting goods and people and carry riverside communities' customs, habits, and unique cultural features. Combining these means of transport with livelihood activities, festivals, and cultural exchanges has created a rich picture of river culture in the Mekong Delta. However, in the current context, social development and urbanization have increasingly narrowed the area of floating markets, reduced the number of boats, affecting some characteristics of their types, designs, and functions. This has deeply affected the typical values of floating market culture. Therefore, local authorities, the Party, the State, and businesses,

especially those operating in the tourism sector, need to pay attention and implement appropriate policies to preserve and maintain boats and the unique intangible culture of the river region. Close cooperation between the parties will help raise public awareness of cultural values, while creating sustainable development activities for the tourism industry associated with local culture. Preserving and promoting cultural heritage is an inevitable and sustainable trend in the present and future, especially in the context of increasingly rapid integration and cultural exchange between countries (Nguyen & Le, 2021; Pham et al., 2023).



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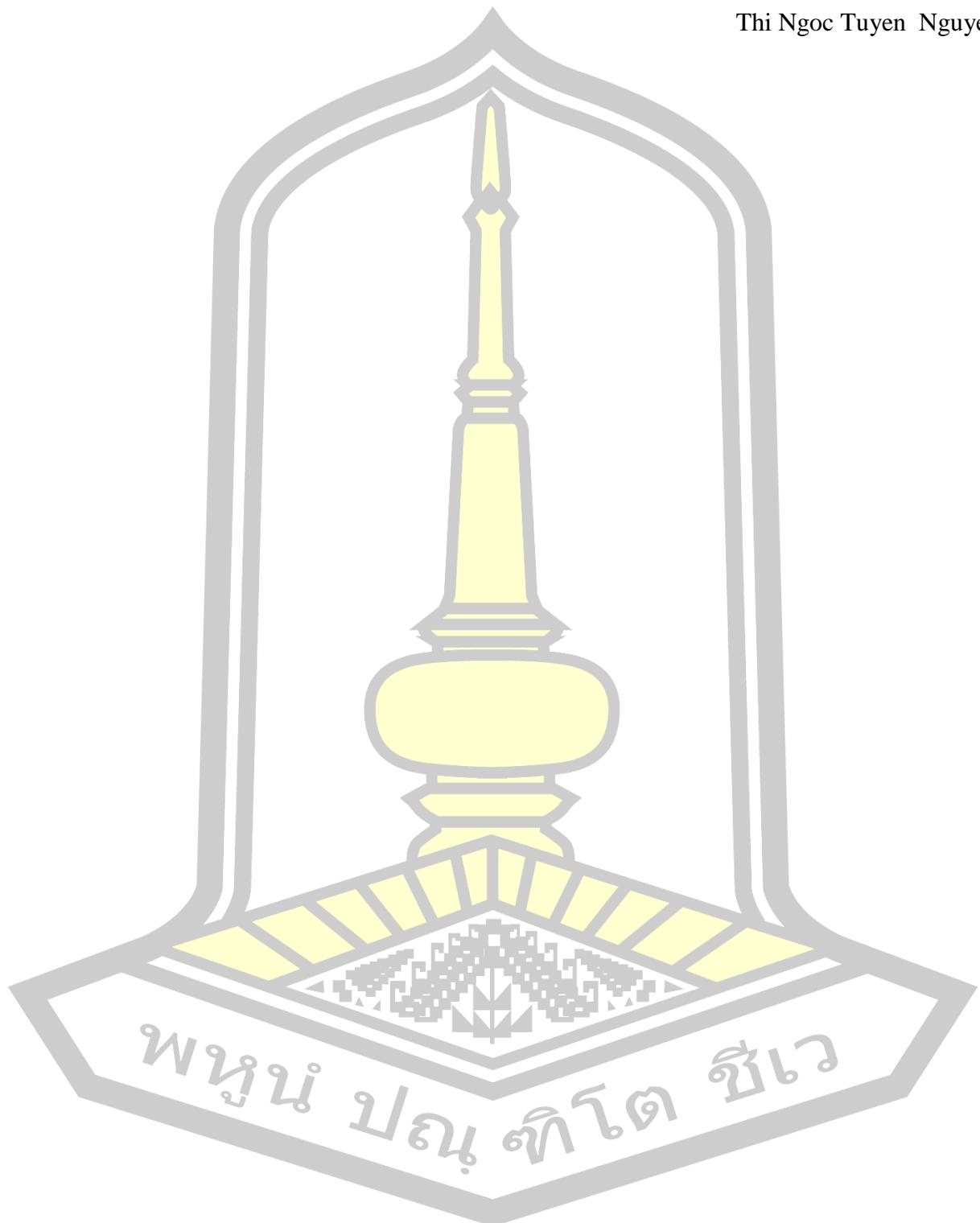


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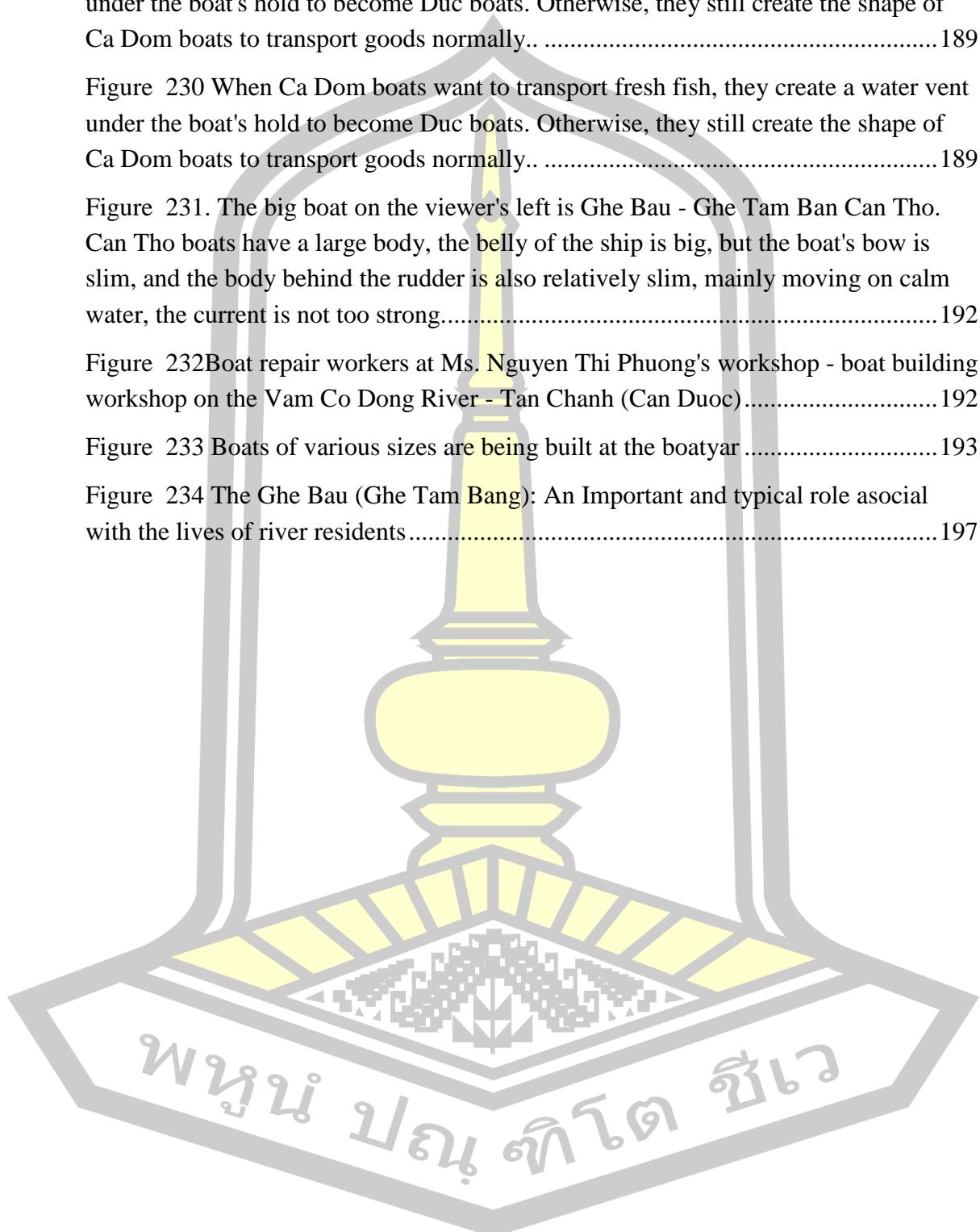
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Background

Vietnam is located in an area influenced by the tropical monsoon climate. Vietnam's terrain has many rivers and canals and a dense system of lagoons, ponds, and lakes distributed over almost the entire territory. The East borders a coastline of about 3000km. Many studies have mentioned the term "river culture" to indicate the ecosystem, society, or the interaction of the influences between river landscapes and behavioral habits; learning from rivers and nature is inevitable (Karl Matthias Wantzen et al., 2016). Therefore, the living environment of Vietnamese people has always been closely linked to rivers and seas. Living in such an environment, Vietnamese people's transportation and trade mainly rely on waterways, so boats play an essential role in Vietnamese people's socio-economic and cultural life.

In studies that show the typical culture of a region, boats are also considered one of the documents for essential archaeological surveys (Jonathan Adams, 2010). This is even more evident in areas with many rivers. Images of boats have appeared a lot in the ancient cultures of the Vietnamese people. On Dong Son's bronzes, patterns of boats and rowers appear. Boats are also decorated in Vietnamese house architecture. Many Vietnamese houses come from parts of ships, and many places of ethnic minorities also simulate the shape of vessels. From ancient to modern times, Vietnamese people only used boats to travel, transport, and make a living. Even when they died, they were buried in boat-shaped coffins or tombs.

Boats were strongly developed and reflected in the boatbuilding industry, especially during the Nguyen Dynasty—the history of the Dang Trong and Dang Ngoai wars. The Southern/Southwestern region belongs to Dang Trong. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Dang Trong achieved outstanding achievements; the Nguyen lords had a powerful fleet of ships, ensuring commercial transportation needs, notably naval ships. 1671 Rabbi Benige Vachet arrives in the description of boats (p23-24 marine shipbuilding).

Using warships for the navy was very important during the Tay Son War. The South is a land of rivers and canals, and transportation is mainly by boat. The book Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi describes the terrain of Vinh Long County as follows: "In the sea, in the river, in the lake, in the land, it seems like the moon and stars are scattered, without boats, it is impossible to travel, so there are many people here. Know how to row. The book Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi by Trinh Hoai Duc (1765-1825) writes: "There are boats everywhere in Gia Dinh. Boats are crowded on the river, going back and forth day and night"; Tran Vinh Thanh (present-day Can Tho) has a rough terrain, rivers, and rivers circulate intermingled, and without the help of boats, it is impossible to travel.

With such terrain, using boats is inevitable. From the issue of military strategy, Lord Nguyen focused on developing the shipbuilding industry with diverse forms and functions. (The Tay Son Navy has a substantial fleet of warships, newly built with high technology, making Westerners admire.

Since 1796, Nguyen Anh has promoted boat building at a breakneck pace, "each ship was built in only three months, with 1,200 warships under Nguyen Anh's command." In addition to serving domestic needs, Nguyen Anh also built boats for Thailand due to the connection between Nguyen Anh and Thailand (Siam) in the fight against the Tay Son. 1879

Long Xuyen 10 ships, Kien Giang 3, Tran Giang 5, Phu Quoc 8. These boats were completed in 1791 and transferred to Thailand (Siam) to exchange weapons to equip the war against the Tay Son. To serve this purpose, many boat factories were established along the river.

The first factory area was located east of Gia Dinh citadel, along the Tan Binh River (Saigon River) to the banks of the Binh Tri-River (Thi Nghe Canal), established in 1790. The second factory is located on the bank of Long Ho River, Vinh Thanh town. The third workshop is Trang Thuyen Tu, located on the Tam Giang Nha Be River (HCMC) banks.

Technically, warships are often built in the European style, while private merchant ships or transport boats are often built in the style of vessels from the Central region (VN). Gourd boats have become a popular type of boat in the South. The technique of dividing compartments has improved. If one container absorbs water, it does not affect the remaining compartments. By the end of the 17th century, many significant advances and developments had occurred.

Boats are present in every resident's daily life and contribute to forming living habits, behavior, understanding, and experience in dealing with nature, rivers, and landscapes. Forming a beautiful, long-standing river culture, people live in harmony with nature.

Since 1722, the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) in China has encouraged rice trade between Southeast Asian countries and China. Rice is a bulky commodity with high transportation costs, so it could be more profitable. Therefore, traders need to build boats in Southeast Asia or Vietnam. In 1747, Chinese merchants came to Vietnam and Thailand to hire boatbuilders to ship to China.

The Mekong Delta and Siam (Thailand) are key rice production centers in Southeast Asia (XVII-XIX), where there are excellent and abundant sources of wood. Many Spanish merchants regularly came to Dan Trong. These policies have caused the Mekong Delta.

They were becoming a bustling place in Asia in the 18th century. Chinese traders also recruited workers from Vietnam to China to build boats for them. The cultural economy develops very strongly and attracts neighboring countries. Ships are built everywhere to serve this pace. That's why the factories are spread throughout the South, from Dong Nai, Saigon, Rach Gia, and Ha Tien. Spain, Portugal, China, Thailand... gathered in Vietnam.

Wherever the river expands, cultural and economic life develops. During the reign of Lord Nguyen (1802) (3,190 units listed) In his memoir *A Voyage to Cochinchina*, John White, a US Navy lieutenant who arrived in Saigon in 1819, highly appreciated and admired the boats in Vietnam during this period: "About 50 boats. The longitudinal sail is built partly in the European style while the bow combines European and Annamese designs." And also commented that one must be talented in water to build such good ships. Policy to promote the building of ships and boats to

take advantage of the terrain, consolidate the installation and use of vessels to serve activities adapted to the benefits of rivers, and serve national defense and navigation.

Minh Mang Dynasty (1820-1841) The state promoted boat building in the capital, Hue, focusing on increasing the number of boats and learning Western techniques. He developed the invention of the steam engine. Identify style. The role of vessel and river culture in life and trade

Dynasty Tu Duc (1848-1883) learned shipbuilding techniques from the British. Vinh Long and An Giang, the king, sent workers to Gia Dinh to learn casting in French workshops. * National History Shop of the Nguyen Dynasty, Dai Nam Thuc Luc, volume XXXI, Hanoi Social Sciences Publishing House, 1975, p.20. After the 1862 Nham Tuat Peace Treaty, the Nguyen Dynasty ceded three provinces in the Southeast region (Bien Hoa, Gia Dinh, Dinh Tuong) to France.

The Nguyen Dynasty regulated boat lifespans and divided them into nine types of boats (p.60 and 66.) More than 25 different types of vessels were listed. The royal ships were also named and decorated with engravings according to their positions.

The factories of the Nguyen court are rich in types, designs, sizes, quantities, etc., meeting daily needs, transportation needs, equipping the government apparatus, and ensuring national security—room and transporting grain goods. Vietnamese boats developed an extensive, technical, valuable life and waterway transportation network thanks to the Nguyen Dynasty's priority policy, the Tay Son Dynasty, and the Nguyen Dynasty kings, especially Gia Long and Minh Mang.

The diversity of boats also shows the variety of people's activities during this period, which took place on a vast scale. As time passed, the used ships entered the repair phase and focused on replacing them with new materials such as metal, cast iron, and steel.

At the end of the Tu Duc Dynasty, boat building stopped. (Difficulty competing with imperialist countries and the influence of social exploitation when France and other countries are dividing five years into seven to colonize Indochina countries and even Vietnam.

Boats in the South, in general, and Cai Rang Floating Market_Can Tho, in particular, are essential components in forming a unique river culture that shows the beauty of multiculturalism and is one of the tourist attractions to come to Vietnam. Cai Rang, a floating market, is currently located in the southern region (South of Vietnam, in Can Tho). This is one of the places where the viscous flow of the Mekong River passes. Hau Giang River is one of the largest and most important tributaries of the Mekong-Mekong River flow, bringing vitality and life source and spreading great cultural values to the entire delta River and forming a distinct river of the delta residents, especially the floating market culture. Before the 19th century, 100% of the residents' daily water was taken from the river.

With particular importance contributing to the development of Can Tho city as well as the whole southern region, different large and small floating markets such as Nga Nam Floating Market - Soc Moon, Nga Bay, Floating Market - Hau Giang, Cai Be Floating Market - Tien Giang, Tra On Floating Market -Vinh Long, Ca Mau Floating Market. With a history of more than 100 years of formation in Southern and river culture, floating markets crowded with boats and boats are an indispensable feature in the Western region. In the past, floating markets were formed because the

means of road traffic were not yet developed. Meanwhile, people gather on the river using canoes, boats, and gongs to buy, sell, and exchange goods. Though the road network has developed widely today, floating markets have become more crowded.

These values have formed the unique culture of river dwellers, also known as floating market culture. On March 10, 2016, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism officially recognized Cai Rang's floating market culture as a national intangible cultural heritage according to Decision No. 829/QD-BVHTTDL.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, in February of the year of the Tiger (1698), the Nguyen Dynasty went south. At that time, Nguyen Huu Canh was able to do so. Lord Nguyen Phuc Chu was appointed as Governor and sent to the strategic capital of Dong Nai (Southern Vietnam), according to (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences & Institute of History, 2022)

According to the book Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi, in 1732, Lord Nguyen Ha only ordered Long Ho palace to be built in Cai Be, called Cai Be Dinh. At that time, Cai Be cave was described as a place where "deep rivers flow," with many boats from all over the world flocking to focus on bustling trade. When the Hung Loi market (Dinh Tuong) was born, the characteristics of the floating market began to appear.

The French colonial period was based on geographical factors. When the Southern Delta was accreting, city planning depended on the river and the market on the river. "On the dock under the boat."

From the mid-19th century to the 20th century, when the French occupied Cochinchina, implementing the policy of "digging canals, establishing markets, opening roads," commercial activities had conditions for "leapfrog" development. Many floating markets were born one after another and have proven practical benefits. Typically, "Cai Rang floating market" was formed in the early years of the twentieth century when boats carrying household goods and ceramics came down from Bien Hoa, Saigon, and Lai Thieu; boats carrying roofing leaves, mats, mangrove charcoal, and cacti from Ca Mau and Rach Gia come to gather, buy and sell" (Nguyen Trong Nhan, 2012).

"The goods are adjacent to each other; the market is near the river. Commuters Park their boats to wait for the tide, so there are many boats selling food in the river" (Hoang Dieu Tran et al., 2010). Thus, the market spread to the river. This is a sign of the birth of the trading method on the river.

"The market is more prosperous than many district capitals, which is more successful than the provincial capital of Ha Tien. In the morning, when the group of boats and boats is so busy, we can circle through the five canals, passing from one ship to the other, parked next to a shrimp boat, eel boat, and coffee boat. Can Tho-style boats and canoes jostle each other in the salt water while boats and boats of the same line try to find a way out (Son Nam, 2017). The birth of Cai Rang and Nga Bay floating markets shows the perfection of the type of market grouping on the river on a large scale. The number of boats and boats increases, and more and more people gather, gradually making the market float. More affluence. All these stages are like the legs of the Vietnamese in the South. Later, the city concentrated on the center, so the floating market was only a heritage.

From the perspective of the world's intangible cultural heritage, boats in the South have the following aspects of cultural identity, social life, and contemporary tourism business:

Cultural identity

Among the cultural regions in Vietnam, the Southern Cultural Region has unique characteristics that retain Vietnamese culture's unity. "River culture" has two dimensions, including the influence of the biophysical context of rivers (specifically their fluctuating flow regimes and biological characteristics) on the expression of elements of human culture in general and the "learning from the river" aspect to develop technologies and management options aimed at maintaining and improving ecosystem function and diversity more sustainably (Karl M. Wantzen et al., 2016). People immediately think of the Southwest region as a prosperous alluvial land with vast fields and a system of interlaced rivers and canals. This directly affects the behavior and living culture of the residents here, forming a river culture with boats and markets, also following the intersection areas between the river sections or orchards. Harvest, buy, sell, and exchange agricultural products.

In social space and life, every social space is the outcome of a process with many aspects and contributing currents, signifying and non-signifying, perceived and directly experienced, practical and theoretical. In short, every social space has a history, one invariably grounded in nature, in natural conditions that are once primordial and unique. They are always and everywhere endowed with specific characteristics (Henri Lefebvre et al., 1992).

When a busy market was formed along tributaries or intersections with large rivers, boats were used as the primary means of transportation. They were likened to the feet of all residents here. The interlaced system of rivers and canals is a favorable condition for the people of the Southwest region to develop forms of transportation and trade in inland waterways. Floating markets usually meet where the focal point of waterway transport routes is associated with neighboring areas with undeveloped road traffic because this is the most convenient location in the region for sellers and buyers to cross the road. Ships meet to carry out trading activities.

Markets on the shore also face the river in an open direction, creating the position "on the wharf under the boat" of the Southwest region (Vo Van Son, 2016).

Because the meeting is on the river, transportation is entirely by water, so boats are:

The primary means of transportation. Transporting goods. Even merchants' residences for many generations in their families. Floating markets are full of typical elements of markets in general, which are various goods, meeting the necessary needs of the people, interference, adaptation, adaptation, and development of forms of existence. Diversity takes place right on the boats. This shows the critical role of boats in the conditions of the interlaced river and water terrain, like in the Southwest region, where people can still use and be creative to live, do business, and develop the best way economically.

In the beginning, the network of canals was expanded according to the geographical distribution of rivers. 17th-18th century: The French had the policy of "digging canals, setting up markets, opening cars." Forming areas for agricultural production, economics, and living for residents according to the system of rivers and canals. The line spreads to each garden and family. Boats are now the primary and indispensable means of society. They were initially used for transportation, such as carrying goods, fruits, rice, and agricultural products... from one area to another. With

the neighboring regions, the capacity of boats can be flexible from minor, such as canoes or gourds, from 10-15-20-30 tons to large boats over 50 tons, depending on the requirements. Over time, the commercial transportation of goods gradually developed. For the convenience of long trips, people live on boats and consider boats their second home, even the main house of many people—multiple generations of family. Since then, the elected boats have also been improved to add living areas for the family, not only to have a large capacity for goods but also to have a place to live such as eat, sleep, rest, and have a roof to cover the sun and rain, even plant trees or raise more animals.

"Ghe Bau" is one of the most typical boats when fully meeting the primary needs of traders. With a mild climate, the flow of fresh water in the South of Vietnam is gentle, and there are few abnormal fluctuations. Therefore, people often gather at markets with intersections of rivers and smooth currents, which is less likely to cause boats to drift and is convenient for anchoring and exchanging goods.

Boats try to be associated with the spiritual life of southern residents. Both conventional and simplified. The intersection of northern culture with 1000 years of influence includes conventions and laws in many procedures of spiritual life. However, since the beginning of the time, when the land was established and expanded to the south, most residents were also the second children in the family, living in the country, away from the court, and the regulations gradually decreased.

With an essential role in forming Southern culture, namely floating market culture. Ghe has gradually become a symbol of southern residents in most activities, from religion to belief to daily life. Over time, the development of urban areas gradually changed when encroaching on land and inland, and the residential areas of residents also moved. The process of urbanization and social progress includes:

Residential areas. Land-based markets or supermarkets.

Dominant forms of industrial production.

The terrain of many rivers and rivers is still a characteristic feature "on the wharf, under the boat" when merchants still transport goods and agricultural products by boats and boats.

Rivers and rivers, southern culture deserves to be cherished. Boats, in general, and Bau boats in particular, have been a beautiful symbol in the hearts of residents of the Mekong Delta when they always play an essential role in all activities, such as festivals, tourism, and experiences. Culture or art. It appears in movies, stories by the writer Son Nam, and paintings by contemporary master painters.

From the above, the boat is an artifact that reflects and indicates the society and culture of the people of the Mekong River Delta, Vietnam, which is in the river area and has created its own unique culture that has become a very interesting cultural river scape and can generate critical theoretical findings. However, it has yet to be studied through theoretical research. Therefore, the research project "The Social Life of Boats and Cultural Riverscape in Mekong Delta, Vietnam" serves this purpose.

2. Purpose of Research

2.1. To study physical space and cultural riverscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

2.2. To study the boats in dimensions of the socio-cultural identity of the Mekong Delta people

2.3. To study the Social Life of Boats and the Special Cultural Riverscape in 'Cai Rang Floating Market' at Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

2.4. To study "Ghe Bau": analysis of research units.

3. Research Questions

3.1 How do geographical location, topographical characteristics of rivers and landscapes, and physical space impact and influence human behavior and culture?

3.2 What is the relationship of each type of boat to social life? Many factors clarify the relationship between people and vessels.

What role does the group of boats that make up the boat network in the Mekong Delta (art book) play in society? How does each group of ships express the identity of the Southern region? What is the relationship of each type of boat to social life?

3.3 How can the material life elements of river cultural boats be clarified to create identity?

3.4 Details of the elements that bind boat life together. How has it changed from the past to the present?

4. Definition of Terms

4.1 Culture Riverscape

Ancient Vietnamese lived closely with rivers for centuries, forming a river cultural system. Vietnamese people are proficient in rivers, using boats, fishing, navigating canals, and understanding the rules of rivers. When the country is at war, rivers and waters contribute to achieving glorious victories along with people—rivers filled with boats replaced houses. When roads were not yet formed, travel was mainly on rivers. On Dong Son bronzes, people have seen boats, plaques, and rafts created by people since the time of Hung King. Ancient Vietnamese lived closely with rivers for centuries, forming a river cultural system. A series of cultural and artistic forms were born from rivers: Folk tales, oral traditions, folk songs, and proverbs related to rivers, such as the myth of Son Tinh-Thuy Tinh.

4.2 The Social life of the boat

Boats are closely linked to human life and river culture because most residents here have long been in symbiosis, cooperating with the natural conditions of an area with many rivers and canals. Boats participate in all activities in the lives of Southern River residents, such as spirituality, religion, festivals, and activities. Merchants and their families live on boats, floating on the river from generation to generation. Boats are both a home and a means of livelihood. Boats witness and accompany all residents' activities. That's why boats are also considered to have souls and customs related to changing people and boats. These syntheses form the rich social life of boats and their culture. Following the river's flow is also considered the flow of history and the prerequisite factor, which is the value of boats in the overview of social life. People in the Southwest are deeply influenced by river culture, also known as river nature. Rivers and waters are closely associated with the lives of ordinary people, entering into their activities and lives. Since then, the lives and activities of Westerners have gradually formed a unique and unmistakable river culture. At the same time, the diversity of culture and customs has created unique features of the Western River region.

4.3 Physical space and river culture

The Mekong Delta is mainly inhabited by four ethnic groups (Vietnamese, Khmer, Chinese, and Cham) with differences in language, social organization, and religious beliefs. It is that difference that creates the cultural diversity of a cultural region. However, in the process of exploration and development, those characteristics intertwine to create a unique cultural region unlike any other place in the country. Through exploring and living in the southern land of the Fatherland, the southern people have created a simple life and are closely connected to nature here. The climate of the Mekong Delta is characterized by two seasons: dry and rainy. In the dry season, people work, live in fields and gardens, and follow rivers to get water for daily use. However, when the flood waters rise, and growing rice or trees is no longer possible, people make a living by doing other jobs. Therefore, river culture was formed - a unique characteristic of this land. And the rediscovery of cultural values was formed from there...

Combined with natural conditions, which are understood as physical space and river cultural characteristics, it forms a larger space and more comprehensive meaning in the historical value and development of the entire region.

4.4 Floating market

For a long time, the Mekong Delta has formed a community-based river economy and culture. That is the floating market. The floating market is a typical cultural feature of the river region, like a living cultural museum for Western people. The markets have an age associated with the era of reclamation and exploration of the mysterious river land of the South.

The floating market is a model of people buying and selling on the river through boats and canoes with diverse goods, including food items, vegetables, fruits, seafood, and specialties. Products of each locality... This unique beauty is found only in the Southwest region, like a vivid picture of life. Born from the need to trade goods of people in river areas, floating markets in the Mekong Delta are now not only a place to exchange goods and agricultural products but also a typical cultural feature of the region.

The floating market was born from the inevitable law of commercial development, meeting the needs of distribution and consumption of goods of residents in the region when road traffic conditions were still limited. At the same time, it shows the travel and trading habits of residents of the Southern region on the river. The intricate system of rivers and canals is a natural characteristic of the Mekong Delta. Many confluences of tributaries have formed forks, crossroads, fifth, sixth, and even seventh intersections on the river. That is one of the critical factors contributing to the formation of floating markets on delta rivers.

With unique cultural value, Cai Rang floating market culture - one of the typical floating markets in the Mekong Delta has been recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage. Rough Guide travel magazine (UK) voted Cai Rang floating market, Can Tho, one of the ten most impressive markets in the world with canoes and boats selling colorful goods. Travel website Youramazingplaces has listed the Cai Rang floating market as one of Asia's most beautiful floating markets.

4.5 Dàng Trong

(Noi Mach/Cochinchina) in this study refers to the territory governed by Lord Nguyen, determined from the south bank of the Gianh River (Quang Binh province) inward. Quang Nam is considered a key socio-economic region of Dang Trong.

5. Scope of Research

5.1 Research area

We carry out the research project within the Mekong Delta; this is a unique administrative geography located in the central region of the South, with a terrain covered by a dense network of rivers from The Mekong River. The Mekong River is one of the largest rivers in the world, originating from the Tibetan Plateau where the river originates in China; the vast flow of the Mekong River passes through the countries of Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia and empties into the East Sea in Vietnam. Starting from Phnom Penh, the Mekong River divides into two branches: on the right is the Ba Thac River (in Vietnam, it is called Hau Giang or Hau River), and on the left is the Mekong (in Vietnam, it is called Tien Giang or Tien River). Both flow into the vast delta region of Southern Vietnam, about 220–250km long each. The Mekong River is also called the Lon River and Cai River in Vietnam. The Mekong Delta region is an alluvial plain formed by the Mekong River that has been transporting sediment for thousands of years, with almost no difference in elevation. The collection of all nine major river branches in Vietnam is collectively called the Mekong River.

This is a fertile delta with a dense system of rivers and canals, suitable for agricultural development and export of farm products. Because of these geographical conditions, the Mekong Delta region has been formed with its characteristic river culture. Most people live and trade by water, and the primary means of transportation is boats.

Waterway transportation has existed for a long time in Vietnam, but because the South has many rivers and canals, this type of transportation has developed diversely and richly. Boats for Southern residents are an essential item for human travel and transportation. In addition, it is also a means of catching aquatic products. The appearance of boats stems from the reality of Southern people's behavior with the river environment. That is evidence of a river civilization. In river and canal areas like the South, boats and canoes intertwine to form a marketplace to buy, sell, and exchange goods on the river and, from there, form a floating market. With boats filled with goods, now in one place, tomorrow in another. Sometimes, we weave our way into the canals and canals to bring goods to your doorstep, contributing to the unique features of the river market, also known as the Floating market.

Besides the colonial exploitation process, France has built many bridges and canals since 1877 in Tien Giang, My Tho, Go Cong, Vinh Long, Hau Giang, etc. This is also one of the factors that significantly influenced the expansion of the waterway transportation network, increased the unique characteristics of river culture, and shaped the social life of boats and merchants.

With typical characteristics of geography, history, and natural conditions, the Mekong Delta has formed a river culture imbued with national identity. Has a significant influence on the development of the entire region. The most typical is the formation of floating market systems as significant trade hubs of the region, such as:

Cai Rang floating market - Can Tho

Phong Dien floating market - Can Tho

Cai Be floating market - Tien Giang.

Tra On the floating market - Vinh Long.

Nga Bay floating market - Hau Giang.

Long Xuyen is a floating market - An Giang.

Ca Mau floating market.

Among them, Cai Rang floating market culture is typically recognized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism as a national intangible cultural heritage according to Decision No. 829/QD-BVHTTDL dated March 10, 2016.

The Cai Rang floating market space is also an attractive destination with local nuances. It attracts many domestic and foreign tourists, improves the lives of the heritage subject community, and contributes to socio-economic development for locals.

Today, although the road transport network has developed widely, the Cai Rang Floating Market is still growing. The market is located on the traffic route to provinces west of the Hau River, such as Ca Mau - Rach Gia. At the same time, this place is close to Hau River, an inter-regional and international waterway. Cai Rang Floating Market is a convergence of traders from all over, creating diverse cultural colors worldwide—floated market. Cai Rang's floating market's artistic space integrates many types of intangible cultural heritage: social practices and beliefs, folk knowledge, folk performing arts (Don Ca Tai Tu), etc. These legacies are still being preserved and passed down. However, there is an evolution, and the ability to maintain and develop remains. With the unique cultural and economic values of the Cai Rang floating market, Rough Guide travel magazine (UK) voted it one of the ten most impressive markets in the world, describing it as a highlight. Especially eye-catching with the "tropical colorful" sales boats. The website Youramazingplaces also lists the six most beautiful floating markets in Asia, including the floating markets of the Mekong Delta region, of which the Cai Rang floating market is a typical example. On the occasion of the 56th anniversary of Vietnam Tourism Day (July 9, 1960 - July 9, 2016), the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Can Tho City, in collaboration with the People's Committee of Cai Rang district, organized "Cai Rang Floating Market Tourism Festival," combined with the ceremony to receive the Decision to recognize Cai Rang Floating Market culture as a national intangible cultural heritage.

Today, combined with economics and tourism, there have been many changes in boats' functions and vessels' social life, from function and shape to material. This diversity is a unique sign, but there are still aspects worth noting for researchers, especially in terms of boats' social life.

5.2 Time

Boats and their social life have existed for a long time in Vietnam. Each area has interactions between people, society, and nature, which form the distinct cultural features of each region or historical period.

(1) River culture has long existed in Southern Vietnam and the Mekong Delta region. After more than 300 years of reclaiming and establishing land, Southern people have used unique and specific words. River culture and the priority use of boats have existed in Vietnam since the 7th BC. From 1545 to 1787, many documents were written on improved boat shapes.

The unique cultural blend of the southern region is also a highlight. Before Lord Nguyen officially opened the realm to Phuong Nam, this place was the Oc Eo cultural area, a disputed area between the Champa and Chan Lap kingdoms.

(2) Year 1698: Spring of Mau Dan 1698, Lord Nguyen sent governor Nguyen Huu Canh to the South to invade: Take Dong Nai land as Phuoc Long district, build Tran Bien palace, establish Gia Dinh land as Tan Binh district, build palace Phien Tran. The southern land at this time expanded thousands of miles, with a population of more than forty thousand households. The year 1698 was an important milestone, and the sovereignty of the Vietnamese people over the southern land they had worked hard to exploit was officially established. That is also a harmonious meeting between two aspirations: the people's aspiration to make a living and the Nguyen government's aspiration to open up, develop, and consolidate the land.

According to the historical process of operation and development since 1722, the Royal Court has prioritized boats.

(3) Boats appear in all social and military life, serving the Vietnamese people's lives and means of fighting. During periods of resistance against invasion, such as the Battle of Bach Dang and Ngo Quyen against the Southern Han army in 938 BC, the French colonial period (1858-1945), the Japanese colonial period (1940-1945), the Democratic Republic (1945-1976), etc., the navy and boats were indispensable means in a series of Vietnamese tactics.



From the reform period until now, the social life of boats in the Southern region has been a unique, typical, and notable highlight of both Vietnamese culture in general and the Mekong Delta region in particular. River culture entails the symbolic representation of boats with a unique social life that cannot be denied.

(4) This value milestone was officially marked in 2016 when "River Culture" in the Cai Rang floating market was formally recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage according to Decision No. 829/ Decision-BVHTTDL dated March 10, 2016.

With the development of road traffic, aviation, the convenience of science and technology, etc., the number of boats has decreased dramatically. Still, new functions or shapes have been combined to meet customers' needs. Usage needs to serve not only daily life as a necessity but also tourism and contribute to promoting the image of South Vietnam to the world.

5.3 Unit of analysis in research

The Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Bang): An essential and typical role associated with the lives of river residents. Unit analysis research: Characteristic structure of "Ghe Bau" and correlation in the social life of river residents.

6. Research Methodology

6.1. Population and groups

6.1.1. People Who know or use directly (Insiders)

- Merchants, boat owners: use boats every day and live closely with the social life of boats.

- Boat builders: interviewing boat owners who are currently primary.

- Experts: experts in the field of tourism culture.

6.1.2 Regular informal

- Government officials: interviewing and synthesizing documents, deciding that Cai Rang Floating Market is a national intangible cultural heritage.

- Tourists: interviewing tourists

- Traders: (merchants) interview merchants who are descendants of the previous generation of merchants about the history of their boats, their use, and maintenance costs.

- Artisans and artists create works of literature, art, and films that are interested in the traditional cultural beauty of boats.

6.2 Instrumentation

Instruments or tools for Data Collection: Interview form, field work note book, audio recorder, camera and video, etc

6.3 Data collection

6.3.1 Field working: to collect the data by key informant interview, general interview, general observation and participant observation, etc.

6.3.2 Documentary data: to collect the information from books, documents, images, media, including in the Internet, etc.

6.4 Data Analysis

This study is the qualitative methodology, and the writing method used is descriptive analysis combined with pictures and diagrams. After collecting data by field survey and literature review, I divided the data into groups:

Data collection was conducted throughout the study. The data is classified into two groups:

Group 1: Data on boats, culture, historical of floating markets in South Vietnam, Mekong Delta, Can Tho: Includes books, newspapers, magazines, research articles, scholars related to boats and river culture of South Vietnam.

Group 2: Data on boat building techniques, types of boats, and parameters. Includes video, interview photos, and notes.

6.5 Research presentation

6.5.1 Full paper of research: descriptive analysis.

6.5.2 Research article: International Journal.

7. Literature Review

7.1 Literature review about research text

The Social Life of Things: "The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective" is a book by Arjun Appadurai exploring commodities' cultural, social, and economic dimensions. Appadurai argues that commodities are not just objects of economic exchange but are also deeply embedded in cultural and social systems. It is an important contribution to the field of anthropology, providing a new framework for understanding the cultural and social. Follow this book, introduces the concept of "commodity as a social relationship" to describe how commodities acquire meaning through their social and cultural context and the ways in which commodities are transformed as they move across cultural and geographic boundaries, and how they are used to construct identities and social relationships.

Introduction to Cultural Ecology: Cultural ecology is one of the two main subdivisions of human ecology. The other is the human biological ecosystem. Books available for a class in cultural ecology focus too much on general ecology, too much on human ecology, or not enough on cultural ecology. Nowadays, human activities significantly impact the environment on which we depend, ultimately threatening our existence. Knowledge and dealing with these challenges is a complex but necessary task. Anthropology, including cultural ecology, differs from other fields in that it studies all people everywhere

"Cultural identity" is one of the most popular topics in contemporary society. In it, there are many concepts analyzed as cultural identity as identity in the process of globalization, the debate between traditional and modern issues, loss of tradition due to personalization and freedom, individualism, or identity re-imagining.

Research through exploring the connections from "The relationship between self and other, and the construction of identity". This introductory chapter lays the groundwork for the discussion of these issues throughout this book.

Part1: "Who Am I? The Search for the Self"

Part 2: Culture and the individual in western philosophy

Part 3: The anthropology of personal being

Part 4: Problems and some solutions

In the book Questions of Cultural Identity (Hall, Stuart and Gay, Paul du. 1996), there have been many debates in cultural studies and social theories about cultural identity. Contemporary questions about culture have become questions of identity. The question is whether the identities that have long defined modern

societies' social and cultural worlds - the distinct identities of gender, sexuality, race, class, and nationality - are in decline—reduced, giving rise to new forms of identity and modern fragmentation of the individual as a unified subject. Through debate, identity discourse can tell us more about the present-day state of human society than conceptual and analytical results. Questions about identity and culture studies are focused on chapter 6 of the book. The purpose of this chapter is to explore some of the questions about pre-modern cultural identity and to assess whether an 'identity crisis' exists, what it consists of, and in what direction it moves; the chapter addresses questions like What do we mean an 'identity crisis'? Have recent developments in modern society precipitated it? What form does it have? What are its potential consequences? As Hall (1991: 21) explained: 'Identity is a structured representation that attains its positivity only through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the other's needle eye before it can build itself. Therefore, the emphasis here is on the diversity of identities and differences rather than on a single identity. So, Cultural identity and logic of difference, Cultural identity and logic of the individual, and Cultural identity and logic of time. Similarly, Mercer (1992b: 33) describes the "major thing" about the racial politics of the 1980s as a result of the fact that "we actively built a self-selected community of belonging through many different activities" Perhaps Hall and Mercer would agree with the argument that, in specific contexts, identity can become a marker of people's existence in such a single community, where the community identifies The designation of a residence marks the way people belong in the structural bases of contemporary life. That would be an identity worth fighting.

In chapter seven, the issue of music and identity is homology, a structural relationship between material and musical forms. Music, like identity, is both performance and story, describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind; identity, like music, is a matter of ethics and aesthetics. We can point to the cultural capital embedded in technique and technology: people produce and consume the music they can create and consume; different social groups possess different knowledge and skills, share different cultural histories, and make music differently. Musical tastes correlate with class cultures and subcultures; musical styles are linked to specific age groups; we can take the connections of ethnicity and sound for granted.

Through the analysis of Hall and other authors, I have related the concept of preserving and promoting identity as a cross-cutting value and the inevitable operation of things about society in the past and present. A correct understanding of the subject's cultural space and social life is closely related to creating and forming "The Social Life of Boats and the River Cultural Landscape in the Mekong Delta." society has responded to nature harmoniously and appropriately. Specifically, regarding living and transportation, using boats has become a traditional and identity activity. The ship becomes a place to live, becomes a home, and is personified as a member with a hunch. Following the great flow of the river is a vivid story about boats. Boats transport goods and social, cultural, and spiritual stories, memories, and memories of each person and family who is a resident of the Southern region. The eyes of the boat are painted and decorated according to the characteristics of each area.

In terms of function, the boats in the delta also adapt to nature more clearly when they have a flat nose shape because the river is relatively calm and is not too strongly affected by storms or many waves and waves like at sea and in the ocean. Big to transport goods. The boat's eyes and nose are also designed and decorated according to the characteristics of each region. Through essential identification, it is possible to guess the location and region of the boat and the typical type of goods or the culture and lifestyle of the people in that area. Every season, when the water rises or falls when starting to use the boat or bringing the ship back to shore, there are rituals and ceremonies to pay respect to the water god. In short, the behavioral culture of the residents here is closely related to the geographical characteristics of the river area, and the most exceptional means of carrying the soul is the boat. A harmonious picture is full of beautiful colors and meanings of ships and people's social and cultural life in the Mekong Delta region - Vietnam.

Heritage, Memory, and the Politics of Identity New The principal effect of culturalism in the wide humanistic field, shared by the authors in this book, has arguably been a new, albeit often implicit, engagement with the issue of consciousness, as mediated through such counter-Enlightenment – as distinct from post-Enlightenment – projects as phenomenology and hermeneutics (White, 1999). Nowhere is this clearer than in the latest conceptualization of landscape and its increasingly popular coupling with identity.

The Tourist Gaze 3.0

Theory, Culture & Society caters for the resurgence of interest in culture within contemporary social science and the humanities. Building on the heritage of classical social theory, the book series examines ways in which this tradition has been reshaped by a new generation of theorists. It also publishes theoretically informed analyses of everyday life, popular culture and new intellectual movements

Monographie dessinée de l'Indochine

The Monographie dessinée de l'Indochine (Monographie dessinée de l'Indochine) is a massive series of 520 pencil drawings etc. lithographic, and mostly colored. The content of the picture depicts the landscape—the way of life of our people around the early 1930s. Four sets of the North, 1 of the Central, and 6 of the South exist. And two groups in Cambodia and Ai Lao. Painting at the suggestion of Mr. Jules Gustave Besson. Chief Inspector of Fine Arts and Fine Arts Schools in the South. I have also been the Principal of the Gia Dinh School of Fine Arts for more than ten years. Gia Dinh Drawing School students have participated in large numbers in implementing this program. The Society of Printing and Decoration has gathered their work, re-printed it, and printed it as « Vocabulary of Trade, Culture, Territory, and People of Gia Dinh Land.» Paul Geuthner

Publishing House published the book according to drawings made in 1935-1938 1943.

Southern Central Coast Boat and Southern Canoe Boat

The South Central Coast Ghe Bau and the Southern Canoe Collection gathers articles about the types of boats and canoes in this region by the author over the years. These articles have been published in journals and conference proceedings. Its content refers to the boat elected in the Central area and the types of ships and canoes famous in the South, especially with Ghe Bau (Nguyen Thanh Loi, 2014).

Indochina Sailboats

Those interested in wooden boat building, sailing, and traditional wooden boat building will find this book a treasure because of Piétri's attention to detail. He observed and described innumerable details of Indochinese ships, sails and moorings, boat building, and auxiliary equipment. This is a valuable document showing the ingenuity and creativity of the Vietnamese people, with excellent illustrations by the author himself. *Voiliers d'Indochine* is a technical book. On the one hand, the book provides some frank, clear illustrations and articles that help the general reader understand the ancient boats of the country with a long, diverse coastline and this impression. On the other hand, the book also describes in great detail how to sail and the equipment on the boat beyond the expectations and understanding of some ordinary readers.

Cultural behavior towards the river environment of the Vietnamese people in the *Southwest region*.

They are studying rivers and streams of Vietnamese people in the Southwest region as an artistic element. Preserving and raising awareness of cooperative behavior with nature is one of the measures to maintain and develop an excellent traditional culture.

Vietnamese character in the Mekong Delta.

The Vietnamese in the Mekong Delta yearn for freedom and do not succumb to harshness. Since 1698, the Mekong Delta is still a new land. Therefore, historical circumstances have created a mechanism of natural selection, converging people with character and ability.

The process of cultural and cultural exchanges in the Southern Vietnamese region

From the 16th century to the 18th century, Southern lands welcomed many people, such as Vietnamese, Chinese, Khmers, and Chams, to settle here. A long process of ethnic phenomenon caused the culture's exchanges and acculturation. The Vietnamese people and Vietnamese culture became the basic factor of the Southern culture. In other words, the Vietnamese people, the subject of the cultures, had an impact on the cultures of other peoples, the objectivity. The exchanges of acculturation among ethnic groups in the South were expressed through culturally valued material and intangible cultures.

Background theory of floating market tourism

Floating market tourism is an emerging activity based on the interaction of tourists with concentration trade activities of merchandisers on the river, community participation in tourism, and preservation and enhancement of floating market culture values to achieve sustainable tourism development.

Analysis of urban development trends in Can Tho City in the period 2004 to 2019

The study analyzed and evaluated the trend of urban growth in 2004 and 2019, supporting localities in planning urban development orientations in Can Tho city. Landsat images were applied using the Maximum Likelihood Classifier (MCL) classification to map the land use/land cover in Can Tho city and hotspot analysis to explore the urbanization trend.

Floating market southwest viewing from cultural personality

This article introduces some main features of the formation and development history of floating markets, the location of the markets, means of goods transportation, methods for product marketing, trading rules, religious beliefs, and the image of floating markets in literature and arts of the Southwest region of Vietnam.

Boatbuilding industry in Vietnam under the Nguyen Dynasty

This bibliographic book is based on official Vietnamese historical sources and information from the memoirs of foreigners who came to Vietnam in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. The book overviews the boat and boat-building industry in Cochinchina under the Nguyen Lords and Vietnam during the early Nguyen Dynasty (1802 - 1945). According to the author, the Nguyen Dynasty's policy of prioritizing the development of the boatbuilding industry created a new face for ships and waterways in Vietnam in the 19th century, which positively influenced the development of the shipbuilding industry—socio-economic development and strengthened the country's defense capacity.

The development of cai rang floating market tourism in Can Tho city, Vietnam: from policy to practice

This article aims to study, based on documentary, quantitative, and qualitative research, the development of Cai Rang floating market tourism in Can Tho city. It is proposed that Vietnam's policy on tourism has enabled favorable factors for the development of a floating market in the Mekong Delta, such as economic development plans, strategic orientations, and specific objectives. Nevertheless, there is still a gap between policy and practice, and this is a great concern for the development of Cai Rang floating market tourism

A study of cai ra g floating market towards Tourists' satisfaction at can tho city in Vietnam

This study aims to research the Cai Rang Floating Market towards tourists' satisfaction level of satisfaction in dealing with service of accommodation, infrastructure means of transportation, tour guides, sightseeing, and shopping at a1 Rang Floating Market in Can Tho City, Vietnam. The objective of this study is To study the service of accommodation, explore the infrastructure, describe the way of transportation, tour guides, sightseeing and shopping, and tourists' satisfaction with the Cai Rang floating market at Can Tho City in Vietnam. Floating markets can be looked upon as part of the river culture and ecotourism of Vietnam rather than simply as a tourist attraction, as they play an important part in the river-based culture of Southeast Asia.

Floating market history, status, and changes: insights from Vietnam

Floating markets are a unique form of traditional commercial business, playing an important role in waterway trade and featuring distinctively attractive local cultural values. Studies of floating markets not only provide insights into cultural heritage but also foster better conservation and effective destination marketing and promotion. Research data was collected from structured interviews with 80 merchants and 8 representatives of state management agencies responsible for culture and tourism. Moreover, unstructured interviews with 34 merchants were undertaken.

7.2 Literature review of research concept

7.2.1 Scientific research

In a study published in the scientific magazine of Can Tho University, author Pham Thi Hue, with the topic "The process of cultural exchange and acculturation in the southern region," stated From the 16th century to the 18th century, Southern lands welcomed many people like the Vietnamese, Chinese, Khmers, Chams to settle here. A long process of ethnic phenomenon causes the culture's exchanges and acculturation. The Vietnamese people and Vietnamese culture became the primary

factor of the Southern culture. In other words, the Vietnamese people, the subject of the cultures, impacted the cultures of different peoples through objectivity. The exchanges of acculturation among ethnic groups in the South were expressed through culturally valued materials and intangible cultures. This shows that this land is a place of diverse cultures. Fluctuating exchange is seen as a way to survive. This process takes place on two main aspects: material culture and intangible culture. From there, a unique Southern culture was formed. There are ethnic, spiritual, regional, and geographical factors, and rivers and boats are the main factors.

In an article published in the scientific magazine YERSIN, author Vo Van Son (2016), with the topic "Floating Markets in the Southwest Region of Vietnam Perspectives Cultural Studies," analyzed floating markets and floating market culture in the Southwest of Formed (JB Piétri, 2015). Ages ago, floating markets were the unique culture of the Southwest region of Vietnam (Mekong Delta). This article introduces some main features of the formation and development history of floating markets, the location of the markets, means of goods transportation, methods for product marketing, trading rules, religious beliefs, and the image of floating markets in literature and arts of the Southwest region of Vietnam.

The Southwest (Mekong Delta) is an area of 40,548.2km², spreading across 13 southern provinces and cities of Vietnam.

The Southwest is considered the land of rivers. There are many rivers and canals, large and small, intertwined like a spider web. This river element has impacted the people's lives here and created the "river civilization" (Son Nam, 2017). "River civilization is the result of the adaptation process of residents to the natural environment in the Southwest. This is clearly shown through lifestyle, way of living, housing, travel, and cuisine. Among them, the most obvious expression is the trading method of the community, typically the floating market" (Huynh Ngoc Thu, 2015).

Many researchers believe that floating markets in the Southwest region are considered a typical form of buying, selling, and living for residents of the Southwest region. Therefore, this cultural activity must be preserved and promoted in the current era. Thus, "floating markets are a valuable resource, a form of commercial civilization, a cultural and touristic characteristic, and the pride of the land and people of the South and the Southwest." Ministry" (Nham Hung, 2009), contributing to the cultural beauty of Vietnam

Floating markets in the Southwest have been rekindled since the footsteps of Vietnamese immigrants to explore this land in the 17th - 18th centuries. According to the book Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi, in 1732, Lord Nguyen ordered the construction of Long Ho Palace in Cai Be, called Cai Be Dinh. At that time, Cai Be Beach was described as a place where "the river runs deep, and the water flows," with many boats gathering for bustling trade. When Hung Loi market (Dinh Tuong) was born, the characteristics of floating markets began to appear: "Goods are next to each other, the market is near the river. People traveling around park their boats to wait for the tide, so the river has many boats selling food" (Nguyen Anh Tuan, 2007). Thus, the market spread down to the river. This is an early sign of the birth of trading methods on the river. By the middle of the 19th - 20th centuries, when the French occupied Cochinchina and implemented the policy of "digging canals, establishing markets, opening roads," commercial activities had the conditions to develop "by leaps and bounds." Many floating markets were born one after another and have proven

practical benefits. Typically, the "Cai Rang floating market was formed in the early twentieth century when boats carrying household goods and ceramics from Bien Hoa, Saigon, and Lai Thieu landed on boats carrying roofing leaves and mats. , mangrove charcoal, coffee trees from Ca Mau and Rach Gia came to gather, buy and sell" (Nguyen Trong Nhan, 2012).

During this time, Nga Bay floating market (Hau Giang) was also born and is considered a focal center and quite a busy floating market. Author Son Nam also noted the Nga Bay floating market: "The market is more prosperous than many district capitals that can be said to be more prosperous than the provincial capital Ha Tien. When the boat and boat market is so busy in the morning, we can circle through five canals, passing one boat to another, parking next to shrimp fishing boats, wet boats, and coffee boats. Can Tho-style sampans and sampans jostle each other on the water while ships and small boats try to find a way out (Son Nam, 2017). The birth of Cai Rang and Nga Bay floating markets shows the perfection of the style of large-scale river markets; the number of trading boats increased, and more and more people gathered gradually, making the market float more prosperously.

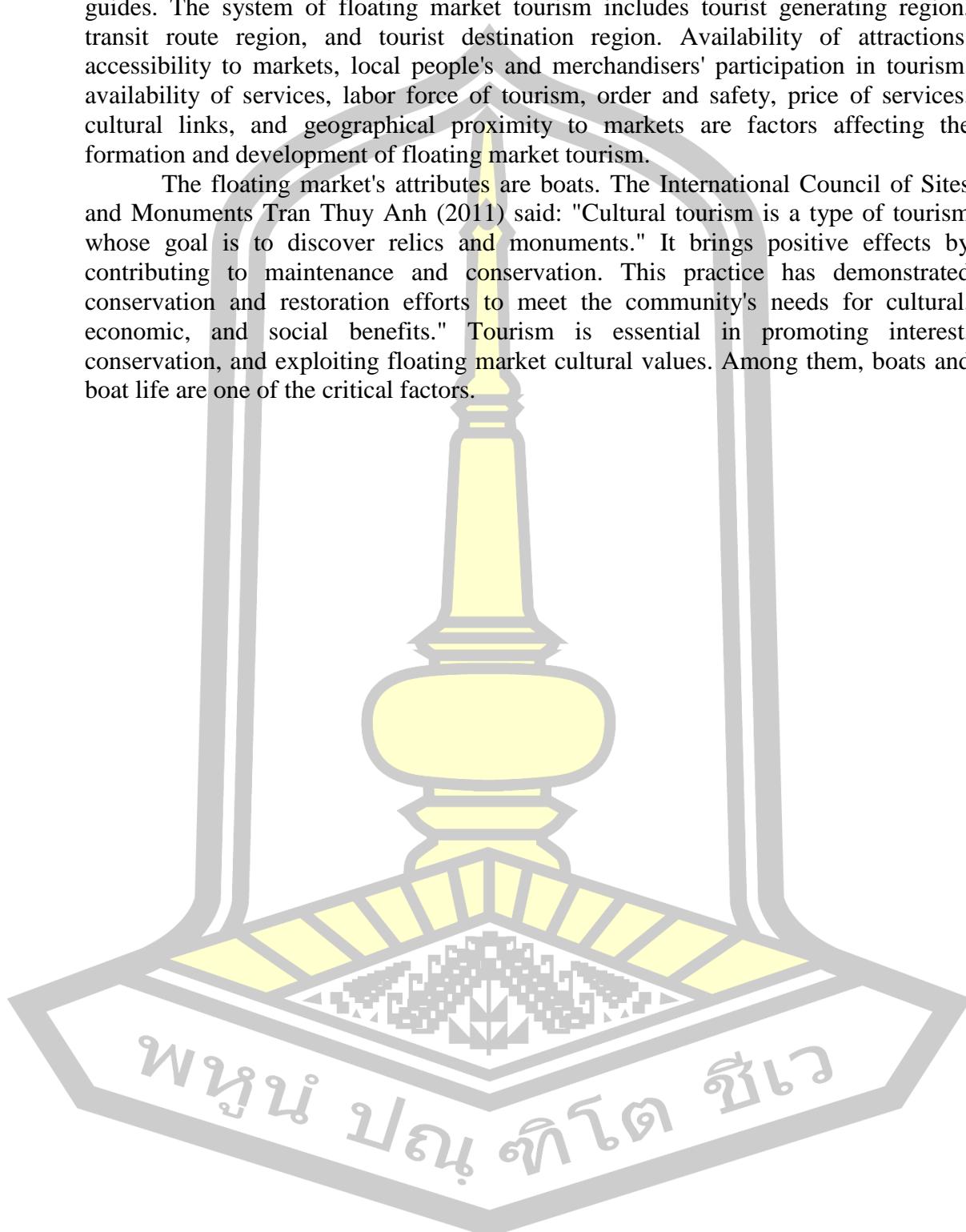
Boats and floating market culture are vital in the southwest region's socio-cultural and economic development process.

In the scientific journal of Can Tho University, Volume 57, Number 6A (2021): 11-21, author Nguyen Thi Hong Diep (2021) stated The study analyzed and evaluated the trend of urban growth in 2004 and 2019, supporting localities in planning urban development orientations in Can Tho city. Landsat images were applied using the Maximum Likelihood Classifier (MCL) classification to map the land use/land cover in Can Tho city and hotspot analysis to explore the urbanization trend. The results revealed that urban areas are mainly concentrated in Cai Rang, Ninh Kieu, Binh Thuy, and Thot Not districts. The urban area in 2004 was 6,400.2 hectares (ha), and 16,007.0 hectares in 2019. The urban share increased from 4.45% to 11.12%. The average annual urbanization rate in the whole city was 0.43%/year, with the highest rate in the Ninh Kieu district at 1.52%/year and the lowest rate in the Co Do district at 0.19%/year. Urban density in Ninh Kieu district is the highest value, at 45.9% in 2004 and 65.62% in 2019. The urbanization trends forming residential chains were along the Hau River, the Can Tho River towards the southwest, and main national highways. The research results show that Urbanization formed along the Hau River and increased at an increasing rate, affecting the development of other factors such as indigenous culture, river culture, boats, and the social life of ships and other institutions. Tourism operations, services, interests, and general boat life. This is one of the factors worth paying attention to.

In the scientific magazine Can Tho University, author Nguyen Trong Nhan (2012), with the topic "Theoretical basis of Floating Market tourism," researched Floating market tourism as an emerging activity based on the interaction of tourists with concentrated trade activities of merchandisers on the river with community participation in tourism, preservation and enhancement of floating market culture values to have sustainable tourism development. Floating market tourism belongs to the type of indigenous tradition and commerce tourism. Like other tourism types, floating market tours also positively and negatively impact destinations. To develop floating market tourism, destinations have to follow six fundamental principles. The stakeholders of floating market tourism include local authorities and tourism-related

departments, local people and merchandisers, tourists, tourist companies, and tour guides. The system of floating market tourism includes tourist generating region, transit route region, and tourist destination region. Availability of attractions, accessibility to markets, local people's and merchandisers' participation in tourism, availability of services, labor force of tourism, order and safety, price of services, cultural links, and geographical proximity to markets are factors affecting the formation and development of floating market tourism.

The floating market's attributes are boats. The International Council of Sites and Monuments Tran Thuy Anh (2011) said: "Cultural tourism is a type of tourism whose goal is to discover relics and monuments." It brings positive effects by contributing to maintenance and conservation. This practice has demonstrated conservation and restoration efforts to meet the community's needs for cultural, economic, and social benefits." Tourism is essential in promoting interest, conservation, and exploiting floating market cultural values. Among them, boats and boat life are one of the critical factors.



In a research article from the scientific journal of Ho Chi Minh City Open University, author Nguyen Doan Bao Tuyen (2008), with the topic "Culture of dealing with the river environment of Vietnamese people in the Southwest region," stated It is evident in the structure of research on the culture of taking advantage of the river environment in all aspects of life in the Southwest such as private interests in dealing with floods, people trying to adapt and take advantage of the benefits. It was brought from the river to serve life and production, such as using rice, vegetables, and fish for eating, taking advantage of the river environment in residence, transportation, and living... such as using boats to make food—primary means, even in fighting the enemy. In terms of qualitative and quantitative aspects, it can be seen that in the Vietnamese culture of dealing with the river environment, utilizing is always superior to coping. They have countless lessons to live in harmony with the river. The flexible and dynamic behavior of Vietnamese people in the Southwestern region is, therefore, also imbued with the characteristics of water.

Author Huynh Van Sinh's (2006) research on "Vietnamese personality in the Mekong Delta," Ho Chi Minh City Open University Science Magazine, No. 1 (1) 2006, stated that this place has a cultural and artistic stream. Rich in river scenery. The boats move back and forth along the water on the intricate canal system. The natural environment and social conditions play a significant role in forming a community's aesthetic viewpoint, ideology, psychology, philosophy of life, and spiritual life. They came here not with "spears and swords to open the world" but with wisdom and courage... That is also the integration process and the initial development of several Vietnamese immigrants on their way to the south. They have made many positive contributions to exploring and enriching Vietnam's common culture.

Authors Ngo Duc Thinh and Nguyen Viet (1984) with research on "Vietnamese traditional boats - Putting some issues from an ethnographic perspective" Journal of Historical Research, No. 219 (June 1984), 48-55. The endogenous data library, Hanoi National University, has clearly stated that transportation and transportation on water play an essential role in the river and sea environment. Until the 18th century, in the eyes of Westerners, transportation in our country was still: "This country has no big roads and is full of fields. Boats and rivers are the means of transportation. From the ancient past to the present, it has entered the material and spiritual lives of people and left strong marks in the cultures of ethnic groups. People here travel, live on boats, and build model houses—boat imitations, boat-shaped tombs, etc. Therefore, in the traditional material culture system of ethnic groups, boats are a critical and attractive area of research. From historical legends, the image of "Son Tinh - Thuy Tinh" refers to the types of boats, and the images of boats are motifs decorated on Dong Son bronze drums and many other artifacts of ancient Vietnamese people. The types of boats of the Dong Son civilization showed the diversity of designs and proved the high level of raft-building technology. This is also the primary type of activity in rivers and lakes. However, it does not exclude the possibility of using boats operating on the coast, especially for warboats. With its exploitation needs and resource conditions, the southern delta region creates favorable conditions for developing the art of sailing. Vietnam has had solid cultural contact with neighboring countries and territories, creating favorable conditions for the absorption of cultural influences in general, including boatbuilding techniques with

various characteristics. The country's boat scores produce a highly qualified boatbuilding technique. The boat is a means of transportation and a cultural product along with its customs, practices, and rituals.

In the research "Article on traditional boats in Vietnam" by author Thieu Thi Thanh Hai (2014), Department of History, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi National University, it is stated that boats are the only means of transportation. On the river historically, it has been considered a mirror reflecting cultural communication and cultural diversity through its shape, structure, and usage. The boat is a product of a culture, and many factors affect its structure and function: technology, raw materials, environment, economy, context, religion, society, ideology, and Thought. Boats are historically an integral part of maritime history.

In the research "We are in the same boat: Tourist citizenship," behaviors apply the concept of customer organizational citizenship behaviors (CCB) to the behaviors of tour participants. Tourist citizenship behaviors (TCB) are discretionary and altruistic while efficiently promoting the effective functioning of a tour. This study aims to explore TCB. A qualitative approach and content analysis were conducted, resulting in three categories of TCB: (1) facilitating communication and management to bring harmony and friendliness to the tour, (2) displaying benevolent acts toward fellow tour members, and (3) motivating and supporting service providers. This research contributes to the current knowledge of citizenship and tour group dynamics. Future research could develop a scale of TCB and explore its antecedents.

The research "Liquidness: Conceptualising water within boating tourism" discusses the elemental materialities of water mobilities, bringing the agentive qualities of water to the center of the theoretical discussion of tourism (Steven Rhoden et al., 2020). Analyzing data collected through qualitative interviews with and participant observation of British boating tourists, the analysis of watery materialities and the corresponding tourist assemblages are presented across water bodies: inland waterways and coastal areas. Examining the mobilities of the water materialities and the cooperation between water, boats, and tourists, we propose the water-boat-human assemblage for examining boating tourism in terms of liquid relationships.

In the research "Canal boat tourism: Application of complexity theory," This study applies complexity theory to explain how a cognitive-affective model indicates canal boat tour participants' desired behavior (Mehran et al., 2019). An in-situ survey was administered to collect data from 202 boat tour participants following a tour of the Canal du Faux-Rempart in Strasbourg, France. The study applies an asymmetrical analysis to investigate the cognitive-affective factors deriving participants' intentions to recommend canal boat tours. This study uses an asymmetrical approach to explore causal recipes from three configurations of socio-demographic factors with prior experience and cognitive and affective aspects, leading to high and low recommendation intention scores.

The social life of cultural value (Asif Agha, 2003)

In this article they discuss processes through which the values of cultural forms are formulated, maintained and communicated across social populations.

River Culture: an eco-social approach to mitigate the biological and cultural diversity crisis in riverscapes (Karl M. Wantzen et al., 2016)

The term "river culture" has been central to research on the interaction between river nature and humans, improving ecosystems, learning from riverbeds, and establishing priority values for sustainable development.

River Culture: Living with the River, Loving the River, Taking Care of the River (Karl M. Wantzen, 2023)

The natural flow regime of rivers, including periods of floods and low flows, has set the pace for cultural activities and biological evolution since the earliest days. "Religious geography" was mentioned in the study of Park (2004)

Insofar as rivers symbolize the vitality and continuity of the nation, their despoilment may signify national decline

Introduction: Riverscapes and the Formation of National Identity (Tricia Cusack, 2007)

The veneration of rivers and springs is very old and worldwide, and creation myths often begin with water as the source of the world

In the study of (Teeraporn Thongpanya, 2018) mentioned the positive and negative impacts on the community of floating markets.

With the research of (Dede Iswandi et al., 2023) Proceedings of the 4th Annual Civic Education Conference (ACEC 2022), it mentioned that Performing cultural preservation in floating markets can strengthen faith. When people have more faith, they try to avoid negative attitudes and can indirectly filter out foreign cultures being introduced.

7.2.2 Book

"Bau Boats in the south-central region and Listening to Boats in the South" by author Nguyen Thanh Loi (2014), a cultural and information publisher, 2014 mentioned the types of boats in the South and Central regions of Vietnam, including all the information discussed here—functions and characteristics of different kinds of boats. Compare the form and clearly state the value and historical data of some typical boats used on Vietnamese rivers—especially Ghe Bau in Southern Vietnam.

In this document, the author has researched and listed factors related to boats, including types of boats, characteristics, and classification—boat building profession and how boats operate in life. In addition, the author also mentioned social and cultural activities related to river culture as a vivid reflection of the social life of boats in all aspects. Typically, the festival, the origin of the boat racing festival, the origin of the custom of painting boat eyes, worshiping eyes, launching boats, taboos when using boats, etc. All of these factors reflect the profound connection of boats with the lives of residents as a factor that both transports and protects river residents, simultaneously contributing to the rich life of merchants. It also carries the soul or becomes the soul and symbol of the social life of river residents.

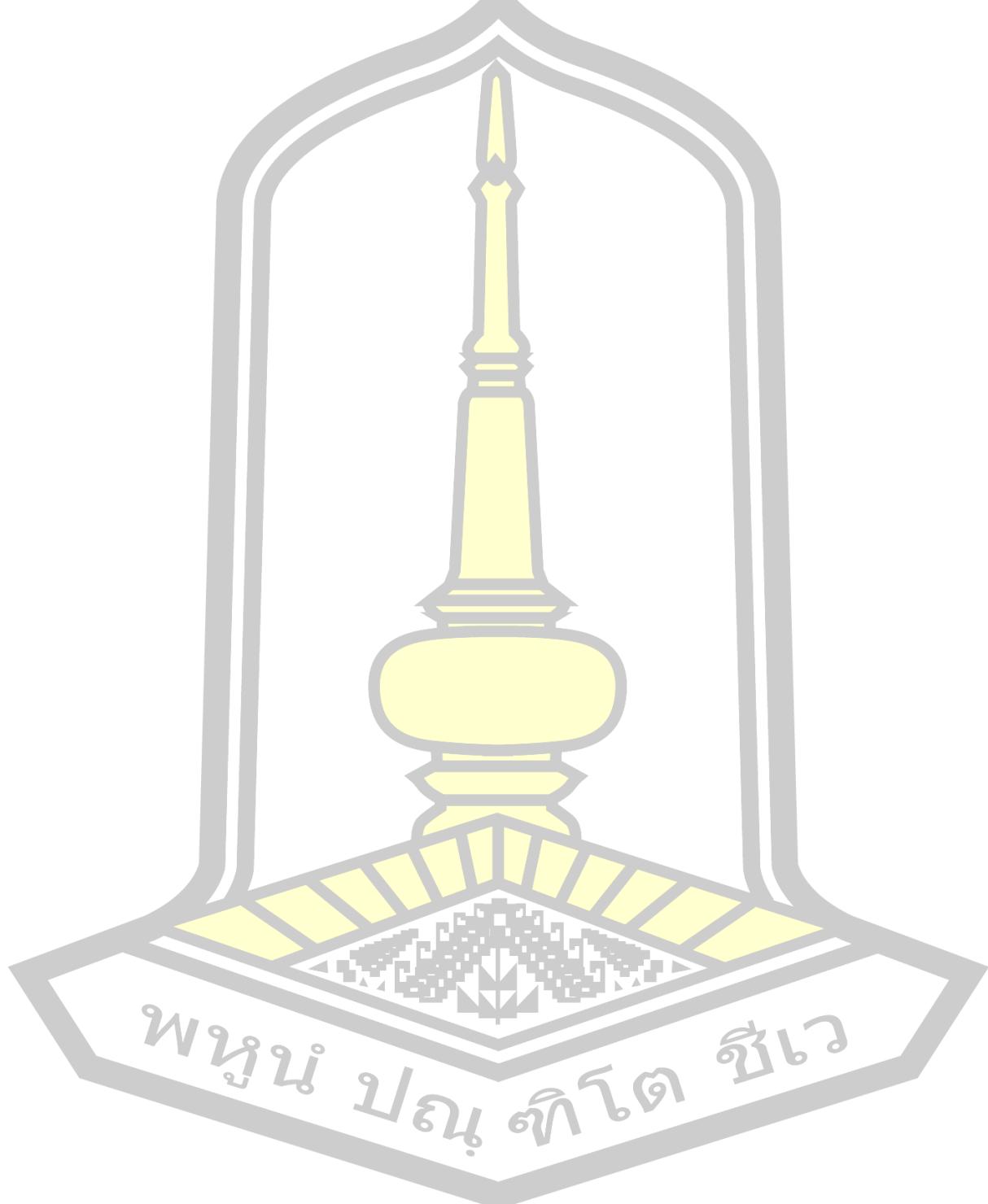
Riverscape and national identity (Tricia Cusack, 2019)

Reverence for rivers and streams is ancient and worldwide, and creation myths often begin with water as the source of the world.

Waterways and the Cultural Landscape, Francesco Vallerani and Francesco (Francesco Vallerani et al., 2017)

This book explores the role of waterways as a form of heritage, culture, and sense of place, as well as the potential for this to support the development of cultural

tourism. Taking a multidisciplinary approach across the social sciences and humanities, the chapters explore how controlling and managing water flows is one of the most essential human activities that transform the natural environment.



River scape and national identity (Tricia Cusack, 2019)

The author mentioned many special roles of rivers in religion or cultural characteristics.

In a study by (Park et al., 2004) it was mentioned that Rivers have played an important role in what is called “religious geography” the way religious expressions are influenced by geographical features

Water was particularly important in nature worship, as discussed in a study by Robert Charles Hope (1895),

The veneration of rivers and streams is ancient and worldwide, and creation myths often begin with water as the origin of the world (Tricia Cusack, 2019)

The waterscape played an important role in transforming the abstract idea of the nation into a powerful visual image. It not only provided a picture of the physical identity of the nation, but through aspects such as style, the characters depicted, and the nature of the implied audience, it presented a cultural ideal. (Tricia Cusack, 2019) Shipshape Societies: *Boat Symbolism and Political Systems in Insular Southeast Asia* (David G. Marr et al., 1986) boats are used as a metaphor for ordered social group

Waterways and the Cultural Landscape, Francesco (Vallerani and Francesco Visentin, 2018)

This book explores the role of waterways as a form of heritage, culture and sense of place and the potential for this to support the development of cultural tourism.

8. Concepts of Research

8.1. The social life of things *The Social Life of Things*: "The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective" is a book by Arjun Appadurai exploring commodities' cultural, social, and economic dimensions. Appadurai argues that commodities are not just objects of economic exchange but are also deeply embedded in cultural and social systems. It is an important contribution to the field of anthropology, providing a new framework for understanding the cultural and social. Follow this book, introduces the concept of "commodity as a social relationship" to describe how commodities acquire meaning through their social and cultural context and the ways in which commodities are transformed as they move across cultural and geographic boundaries, and how they are used to construct identities and social relationships.

8.1. Cultural Identity (Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay. 1996. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: SAGE Publication, *The Open University*) to examine Bình Phong of Hue in the dimension of traditional screens is directly related to Hue people in the past.

8.2 Conceptual of Image and Representation (*Lacey, Nick. 2009. Image and Representation. London: Red Globe Press, International Higher Education*) to examine the screen in the modern context and re-imagines identity, building an image representing the shaping of the individual identity of modern Vietnamese through innovative ideas created by artists and designers.

8.3 Local Knowledge and Community of Practice

The physical spatial context and local knowledge are essential in preserving the tradition of Mang Thit pottery village. To understand better, we need to consider the following factors:

Physical space: Natural spatial context and local knowledge are essential in preserving the tradition of floating market culture and social life elements in physical and river cultural spaces. The interactions and reasons boats become the most critical factor in the formation and symbolic recognition of the Mekong Delta. The effects of actual conditions, time, space and needs, functions and functions between boats and boats and between ships and social context, changes in shape and decoration, and use of converted ships for tourism. To understand better, we need to consider the following factors:

Physical space: Cai Rang's floating market and culture are recognized as an intangible cultural heritage of the World. The boat is the main element that exists, connects, parallels, and forms this characteristic. Over many years, boats have remained and maintained their social story. Boats are a significant factor contributing to creating an international cultural heritage. This interconnected system combines many factors, including culture, society, people, time, space, geography, etc.

Connecting with the community: Floating market culture is a highlight through tourism because boats have made efforts to communicate with domestic and foreign communities through cultural exchanges, preserving and promoting its unique beauty. Traditional beauty. Besides, the floating market, which transports and exchanges goods, is still one of its primary functions. With these functions, boats of various forms still maintain a traditional social life. Along with the sensitivity and impact of tourism, the floating market is not just a wholesale market providing agricultural products like before; boats are not only transporting goods but are now becoming a means of transporting tourists and trading specialty products and agricultural products in a new capacity. Some boats can even change shape, color, and material. This connection helps Can Tho locality preserve and promote traditional cultural values while adapting and spreading new good values by always approaching tourists directly. Scenes of daily life, social life, and boat images in the river system's latest social context are outstanding points that attract the world's attention and research. However, this change includes boats' function, structure, and shape, which are also worth considering. Suppose you know how to preserve and promote appropriately and understand the correct value. In that case, you can safeguard and sustainably maintain the unique value of boats and floating market culture in the Mekong Delta, bringing more incredible pride and opportunities in the international integration process of the modern context.



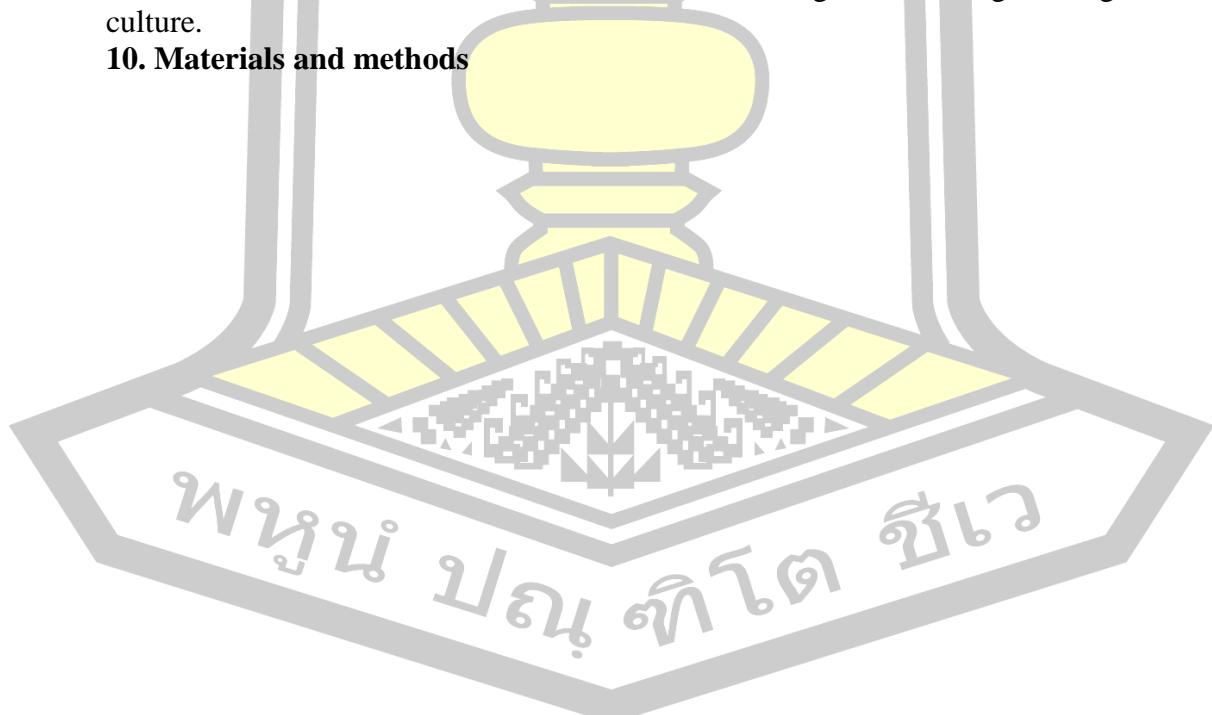
9. Theory and Conceptual Framework



Figure 1 Research concept framework

In this research structure, the social life of boats is taken as the primary research object. When analyzing the social life of ships, the unit of analysis is Ghe Bau in the context of life, landscape, and tourism. The transformation of style, materials, and adaptation to new functions combine identity in modern Vietnamese Society. The research method is qualitative research. The main concepts are Social life, social life of boats, Cultural identity, river culture, boats, floating markets, floating market culture, and the Mekong Delta. The main field of research is boats, which are a crucial element in the world cultural heritage of Cai Rang floating market culture.

10. Materials and methods



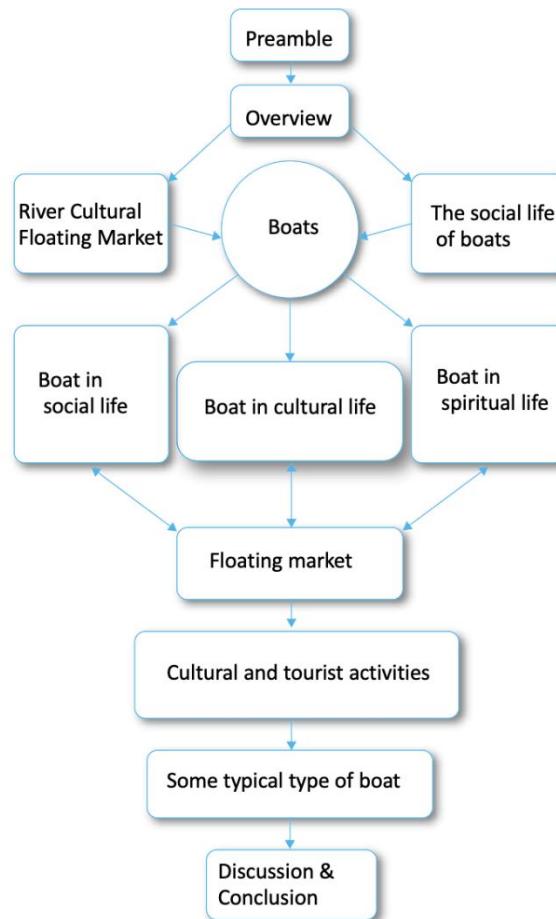


Figure 2 Research diagram

11. Chapter structure

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 1 focuses on a general introduction to provide an essential vision of the research topic. Factors such as geographical location, impact factors, and influences surrounding the research object are considered. These factors show the importance of the research topic.

Chapter 2: Physical space and cultural riverscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

The researcher clarifies factors related to the topic, especially physical space and terrain characteristics that affect people. Terrain affects human behavior.

2.1. Geographical location, topographical features of river and landscape

Terrain features: Geographic location, river topographic features, and landscape

Physical space impacts and influences human behavior and culture.

2.2. River landscape and river culture: Physical space influences human behavior and culture.

Geographic location, topographical characteristics of rivers and landscapes, and physical space impact and influence human behavior and culture.

Chapter 3 Boats in Dimensions of the socio-cultural Identity of the Mekong Delta People

3.1. Types and styles of boats in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

The researcher points out and classifies the types of vessels, clarifying the elements of each kind. The groups that make up the network of boats in the Mekong Delta (This section will have a detailed illustrated art book) play a role in society.

3.2. The network of boats represents the cultural identity of the Mekong Delta

From the urgent roles of vessels, it will be shown in detail how each group of ships represents the identity of the South. Set uniquely. All the boat network systems have demonstrated the cultural identity of the Mekong Delta impressively and timelessly.

The above factors show the relationship of each type of boat with social life.

Chapter 4 The Social Life of Boats and the Special Cultural Riverscape in 'Cai Rang Floating Market' at Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

The fourth chapter deals with the factors affecting the screen change in the modern social context of Vietnam. Shows the modernity of the screen in the process of Social Doi Moi through Re-Imagining the Identity of contemporary artists and designers to create distinctiveness in their compositions. Introduction and analysis of some authors and works representing the modern screen before and after the Doi Moi period.

After clarifying the relevant factors in the research topic, the researcher will point out the boats connected through the Cai Rang floating market.

Besides, the Cai Rang floating market culture is recognized as an intangible cultural heritage; having a boat life is a prerequisite. This clearly shows that boats are connected through the Cai Rang floating market. Ships and their social life are always present, participating in and influencing this entire cultural heritage system, including both material and artistic elements.

Chapter 5 "The Ghe Bau" in the Dimension of Unit Analysis

"Ghe Bau" research: analysis of research units.

The Bau boat is one of the most typical boats in the Mekong Delta when participating in all activities of river delta residents or merchants. The Bau appeared and tried to connect with all sectors when connecting residents living on the mainland and merchants. Bau boats have a unique shape and are in large numbers among all types of ships in the delta. In the central regions, there are also Bau boats, but the shape of Bau boats in the south, with shapes to adapt to geographical conditions, is also distinctively different. Details of the elements that bind boat life together. Changes from the past to the present of Ghe Bau. Through these factors, we can see the essential and typical role associated with the lives of river residents. The structural characteristics of "Ghe Bau" and the correlation in the social life of river residents are tight.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

The concluding chapter summarizes the research content and results, addressing all the findings from the above chapters. It also expresses concepts and recommendations on the role of a designer.

12. Benefit of Research

11.1 Benefit for academics: circle benefits to art history, product design, etc. Contribution is a research reference for scientific researchers on river culture and boats in Can Tho and the South, especially Ghe Bau or similar case studies.

11.2 Benefit for Society and community of research place: Contribution, common goal: Substantive cooperation between the two sectors towards the

management, conservation, and sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage in Can Tho, Vietnam, will have many possibilities and opportunities and many new achievements.

11.3 Making national or local government policies: Contributing to supplementing and adjusting the guidelines and policies of the State in the field of tourism business.

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14. New Knowledge after Research

The socio-economic development of the Mekong Delta region, especially the tourism industry, has led to changes and cultural exchanges between regions, from one province to another or from one country to another. Floating markets and floating market culture are important anchors that create the uniqueness of culture and people in the Mekong Delta. This is based on the social life of boats over many centuries. With research objectives from physical space, the study of vessels in cultural identity has been connected and linked through floating market culture. This process results in the change in function, style, and size of many types of boats to adapt to the needs of use in the new context. Sustainable development is significant in the general transformation of the region, especially the tourism industry. Thus, boats with the role of transmitting, connecting, and preserving culture in the new context both carry the primary function that already exists and change to adapt. Hence, it is necessary to have the proper orientation to ensure boats' integrity and inherent value from shape to decoration or function. As elements contributing to the creation of sustainable development values of the region, boats and the social life of ships in the river culture need to be cared for, preserved, oriented and developed appropriately.

CHAPTER II

Physical space and cultural riverscape in Mekong Delta, VN

Introduction

This chapter examines the physical space and cultural river landscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, clarifying issues such as geographical location, topographical features of rivers and landscapes, and how physical space is an essential foundation for impacting and influencing human behavior and culture.

Part 1: This is the geographical location and the river's terrain and landscape characteristics. This is a prerequisite for the formation of the cultural identity of each ethnic group. With its location in Southeast Asia, Vietnam has a long coastline and dense river network, creating favorable conditions for all aspects of trade and commerce. Natural conditions always directly affect the customs and lifestyles of the residents in the region, through adaptive methods to survive and develop, specifically in this case, understanding the climate, weather, geographical location, especially the river terrain.

Part 2: Physical space impacts and influences human behavior and culture. With a dense river system and long-standing living habits influenced by natural conditions, residents must adapt in harmony with nature. With a river network and flow characteristics, this place has formed a distinct cultural feature in life: the formation of floating markets. Even dense canals are deployed to suit natural conditions, promoting regional development based on water. Boats are one of the primary means of participating in life flexibly.

Part 1: Geographical location, topographic features of the river, and the landscape

Southeast Asia can be divided into two geographic regions. The mainland portion, connected to India and China, extends south into what has been called the Indochina Peninsula or Indochina, a name given to the region by France. This mainland region consists of the countries of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar (Burma). This region has been influenced historically by India and China. The islands or insular areas to the south and east consist of nations surrounded by water. The countries in this region include Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, East Timor, and the Philippines.

The three longest rivers of the realm, Mekong, Red, and Irrawaddy, are located on the mainland and have their headwaters in the high elevations of the Himalayan ranges of China. The Mekong River makes its way from the high Himalayas in China and helps form the political borders of Laos and Thailand through Cambodia to Vietnam, where it creates a giant delta near Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). The Red River flows from China through Hanoi to the Red River delta on the Gulf of Tonkin. The Irrawaddy River flows through the length of Burma, providing for the core area of the country. Another major river on the mainland is the Chao Phraya of Thailand. With its many tributaries, the Chao Phraya creates a favorable core area home to the country's largest population. Many other rivers can be found on the mainland and the insular region. The rivers transport water and sediments from the

interior to the coasts, often creating large deltas with rich soils that are major agricultural areas. Multiple crops of rice and food products can be grown in the fertile river valleys and deltas.

River landscapes and geographical conditions have a great influence on the identity of the people living in that geographical area (Tricia Cusack, 2019). This chapter will mention, analyze, and clarify the role of Physical space and cultural riverscape in the Mekong Delta, VN, to clearly show the influence of natural conditions on human behavior and culture. How do geographical location, topographical characteristics of rivers and landscapes, and the physical space impact and influence human behavior and culture?



Figure 3 Southeast Asia: The Mainland Region and the Insular Region (the Islands)

Source: <https://tinyurl.com/bp5f9z54> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

2.1. Geographical location, topographical features of river and landscape

Viet Nam is located on the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia. It has a long land border of 4,550 km, bordering China to the North, Laos and Cambodia to the West, and the Eastern Sea (South China Sea) of the Pacific Ocean to the East. On the map, Vietnam is an S-shaped land strip stretching from 23°23' to 8°27' North latitude. The country's total length is 1,650 km from the northernmost to the southernmost point. Its width, from the Eastern coast to the Western border, is about 500 km at the widest part and about 50 km at the narrowest part.

The country's diverse topography consists of hills, mountains, deltas, coastline, and continental shelf, reflecting the long history of geology and topography formation in a monsoon, humid climate, and intense weather exposure. The topography is lower from the Northwest to the Southeast, which can be observed in the flows of major rivers.

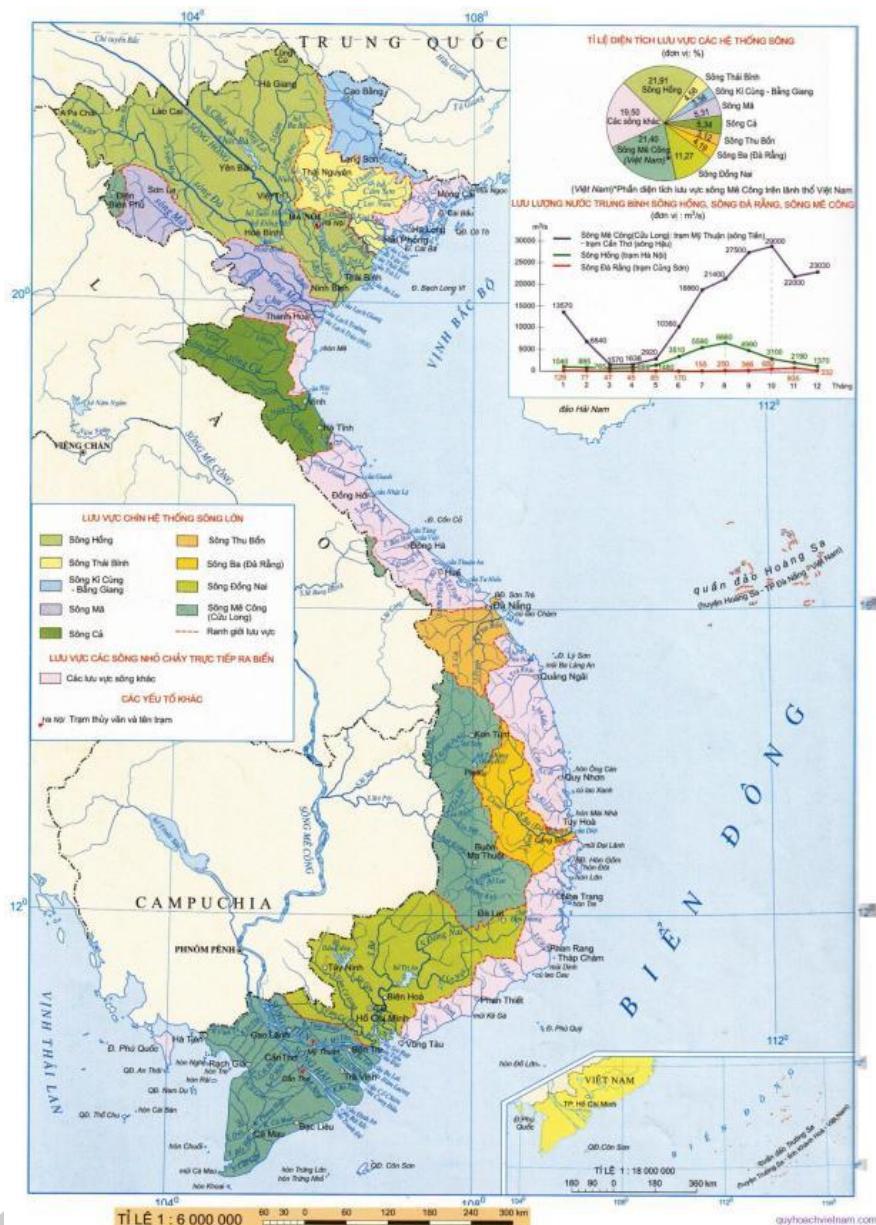


Figure 4 Geographical location, topographical features of river and landscape
Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y7khtpkf> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

2.1.1. Mekong River System

* Characteristics of the basin and mainstream

The Mekong River system is one of the largest in Asia and the world. Its basin area is up to 810,000 km², of which 20.7% belongs to China, 2.6% to Myanmar, 32.4% to Laos, 23.8% to Thailand, 19% to Cambodia, and 1.5% to Vietnam. The mainstream of the Mekong River is up to 4500km, but the part in Vietnam is only 230km.

The Mekong River originates from the Tibetan Plateau (at an altitude of 5000m) and flows mainly in the North-South direction except for two short sections in Upper Laos in the West-East direction. When reaching Phnom Penh, the Mekong River divides into three branches: the Tonle Sap branch flows into the Tonle Sap

Lake, and two branches flow into Vietnam, the Tien River and the Hau River. The Mekong River flows into the East Sea through nine mouths: Tieu Mouth, Dai Mouth, Ba Lai Mouth, Ham Luong Mouth, Co Chien Mouth, Cung Hau Mouth, Dinh An Mouth, Bat Xac Mouth, and Chanh De Mouth. The Mekong River in Vietnam is also called the Cuu Long River (nine dragons symbolize nine river mouths).

*** Flow system:**

The Mekong River system has many tributaries. There are 286 tributaries in Vietnam alone, from level 1 to level 6. The largest river is the Srepok River, 315km long, with a basin area of 30,384 km², a flow modulus of 22.7 l/s/km², and an average turbidity of 52.5 g/m³ (at Ban Don).

The two branches of the Tien and Hau rivers in Vietnam are the most important because they receive water from the entire Mekong River system with a vibrant total flow, reaching 507 billion m³/year, accounting for 60.4% of the total water volume of all rivers in Vietnam. Of this total water volume, the water supplied by China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, and Cambodia accounts for 88.5% (457 billion m³/year). At the same time, the portion produced in Vietnam is only 50 billion m³/year, accounting for 11.5%. When it first flows into Vietnam, the water volume of the Tien River at Tan Chau accounts for 80%, while that of the Hau River at Chau Doc accounts for only 20%. Only when the Tien River transfers water to the Hau River through the Vam Nao River does the water volume of these two rivers become equivalent. The water volume of the Tien River at My Thuan is 50.52%, and that of the Hau River at Can Tho is 49.48% of the total water volume of the Mekong River. The irrigation system typically influences the entire region's development with its characteristic water flow and river system.

The irrigation system is like the backbone of Vietnam's agricultural economy. For many years, Vietnamese people have lived, cultivated, and developed based on the system of rivers, canals, and ditches... Thanks to the extensive network of rivers and canals, farmers can bring water to the fields despite Vietnam's complex terrain.

According to the General Department of Irrigation, Vietnam currently has tens of thousands of irrigation works, including more than 900 large and medium irrigation systems with an area of 200 hectares or more.

The two large irrigation systems are also associated with the country's two largest agricultural regions, the Red and Mekong Rivers.

The Mekong River flowing into Vietnam is divided into two main rivers, the Tien River (Mekong) and the Hau River (Bassac)

The Mekong Delta (MD)

The MD belongs to Vietnam and is located in the Mekong River basin. The Mekong River is 4,200 km long, flowing through 6 countries: China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, with a basin area of 795,000 km², of which the Delta area is 49,367 km². The MD is the last part of the Mekong Delta, including 13 provinces/cities: Long An, Tien Giang, Dong Thap, Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, Hau Giang, Soc Trang, Ben Tre, An Giang, Kien Giang, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau and Can Tho City, with a total natural area of about 3.96 million hectares, accounting for 79% of the total area of the Delta and equal to 5% of the total area of the Mekong River basin.

The Mekong Delta has a rich system of rivers and canals, including natural rivers and canals. Of these, the Tien River and the Hau River are the two main rivers that strongly influence the development of this region. The Tien River plays an

important role right after branching off the Mekong mainstream due to its more significant water flow than the Hau River (86%/14%). After the Tien River divides some of its water to the Hau River through Vam Nao, the two rivers establish a balance (49%/51%). After My Thuan, the Tien River has successive large branches: the Co Chien River, the Ham Luong River, the Ba Lai River, the Cua Dai River, and the Cua Tieu River. The Hau River only divides into two before flowing into the sea about 30 km through the Dinh An and Tran De estuaries. The Vam Co River system, the Vam Co River includes two branches, the Dong and Tay Vam Co, both originating from Cambodia, flowing through the eastern part of the Mekong Delta to Cau Noi, merging to flow into the lower reaches of the Dong Nai River (Nha Be River) before reaching the sea through the Can Gio estuary. The Dong and Tay Vam Co Rivers have an independent water source associated with the Southeast region; the Tay Vam Co River is related to the Mekong Delta when receiving water from the Mekong River during flood and dry seasons.

The Cai Lon river - Cai Be river system is a tidal river originating from the center of the Ca Mau Peninsula that flows into the sea through the Cai Lon estuary. Because it is connected to the Hau River by many large canals, the flow regime of the Cai Lon-Cai Be River system is also influenced by the flow regime from the Hau River. Giang Thanh River: Giang Thanh River has a small source originating from the mountainous region of southwestern Cambodia, flowing along the Vietnam-Cambodia border and into the sea through Dong Ho Lagoon in Ha Tien town.

In addition, the Mekong Delta region has many other branches and canals running along the Tien and Hau Rivers. However, they have been somewhat deformed and gradually lost their natural character due to human activities; they still retain their natural features, such as the Hong Ngu Canal, Can Lo Canal, Ruong Canal, etc. The Mekong River belongs to the fertile Mekong Delta region, known as the whole country's rice granary. The Mekong River (also known as the Mekong River) is one of the longest rivers in the world. The river originates in China and flows through 4 countries, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia, before flowing into Vietnam and then into the East Sea through 9 estuaries. It is called the Mekong River, meaning nine dragons flowing into the sea.

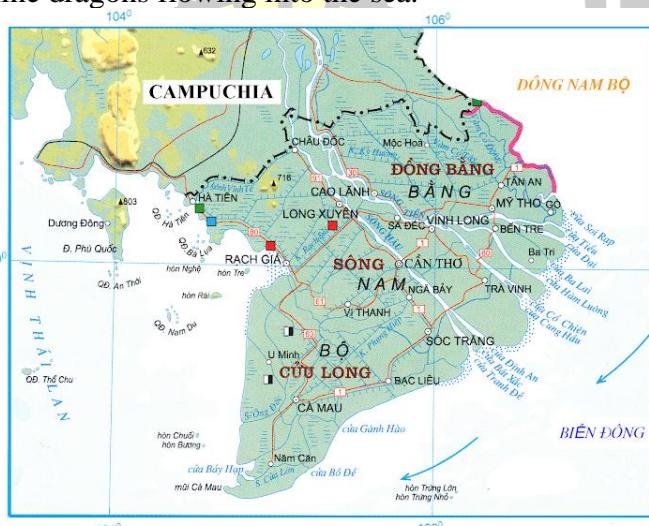


Figure 5 The Mekong Delta with dense river system
Source: <https://tinyurl.com/mwyhd5k9> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

The Mekong Delta gets its fresh water from the Mekong River and rainwater. Both sources are distinctly seasonal. In recent years, the average water volume of the Mekong River has been around 410 billion m³. About 17% of the total water flow flows through the Hau River at Chau Doc and 83% through the Tien River at Tan Chau. Further downstream, the distribution of this water volume is closer to the 50:50 ratio because a part of the water from the Tien River flows into the Hau River via the Vam Nao River. Providing fresh water all year round is very convenient with a system of large and small interwoven rivers and canals.

River and canal network

- The Mekong Delta region includes the Tien River and the Hau River (The two main streams of the Tien River and the Hau River strongly influence the development of the Mekong Delta). The Tien River plays a vital role after branching from the Mekong mainstream. It has successive significant branches such as the Co Chien River, The Ham Luong River, the Ba Lai River, the Cua Dai, the Cua Tieu Rivers, and the Hau River through Dinh An and Tran De estuaries.

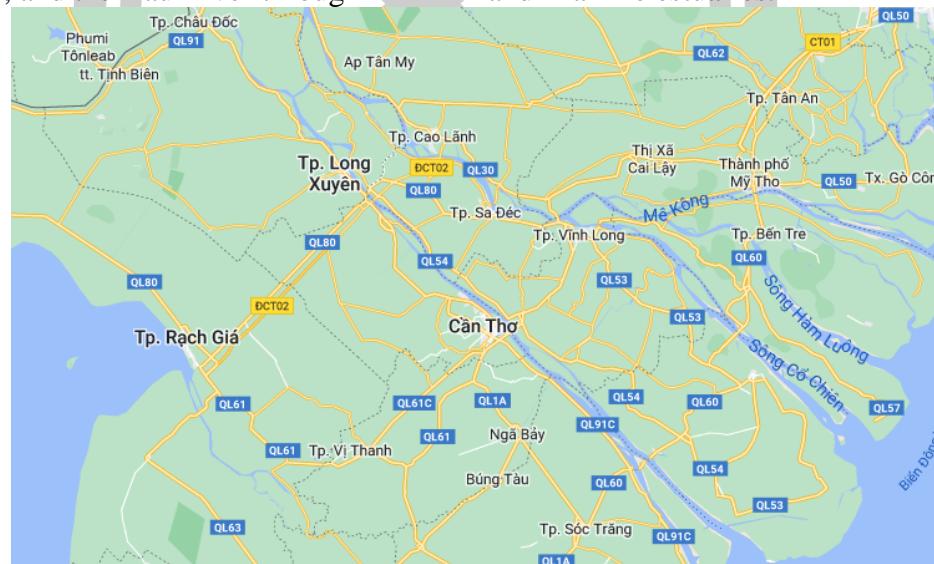


Figure 6 The Mekong Delta with dense river system
Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

The Vam Co River system consists of two branches from Cambodia, Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay.

The Cai Lon-Cai Be River (Cái lớn – Cái Bé) system is a tidal river originating from the center of the Mekong Delta that flows into the sea through the Cai Lon estuary.

The Giang Thanh River originates from the mountainous region of the Southwest of Cambodia. It is connected to the Vinh Te Canal, so the Hau River influences the flow regime.

In addition, there are many other rivers and canals, such as the Hong Ngu Canal, Can Lo Canal, Ruong Canal..., Ca Nai Canal, Mang Thit River, Can Chong Canal, O Mon River, and Can Tho River. The characteristics of these rivers and canals are that they have large, profound entrances but narrow very quickly when

entering the fields. Several rivers and canals flow into the Mekong Delta along the Vietnam-Cambodia border, such as the Chau Doc River and So Thuong-So Ha River.

Tien river (Mekong river)

It starts flowing into Vietnam from Tan Chau town, An Giang, and Hong Ngu district, Dong Thap. Tien River flows to An Binh islet, Vinh Long, and divides into two branches: Tien River (Mekong) and Co Chien River

Tien river: It continues to flow and divide the two provinces of Tien Giang and Ben Tre into four smaller branches: Cua Tieu River, Cua Dai River, Ba Lai River, and Ham Luong River. Corresponding to the four river mouths below:

- Cua Tieu: belongs to Tan Thanh commune, Go Cong Dong district, Tien Giang province
- Cua Dai: near Thoi Trung islet, belongs to Tan Phu Dong district, Tien Giang province, and Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province
- Cua Ba Lai: this river mouth belongs to the Ba Lai river branch, located between Bao Thuan commune, Ba Tri district, Thoi Thuan commune, Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province. This is the smallest of the nine river mouths
- Cua Ham Luong: this river mouth belongs to Ham Luong River, An Thuy commune, Ba Tri district, Ben Tre province

Co Chien river:

This river flows through the Vinh Long and Ben Tre provinces. When entering Tra Vinh province and near the sea, it is divided into two mouths by Long Tri and Long Hoa islands:

- Co Chien mouth
- Cung Hau's mouth

Both of these mouths belong to Chau Thanh district, Tra Vinh province.

Hau River (Bassac River)

It starts flowing into Vietnam from Long Binh town, An Phu district, An Giang province. Then, it flows through a series of provinces, finally flowing into the sea right at Dung island (Soc Trang province), divided into two branches flowing into three mouths:

- Dinh An mouth: belongs to Dinh An town, Tra Cu district, Tra Vinh province
- Tran De mouth: belongs to Tran De town, Tran De district, Soc Trang province
- Ba Thac (Bassac) mouth: this mouth was filled in from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century. Currently, there is only one small river, Con Tron River, flowing from the center of Dung island to join Tran De mouth and flowing into the East Sea

2.1.2. Canal system

In addition, during the French colonial exploitation of the dense river network of the South, they saw the critical strength to promote trade was to take advantage of rivers and use boats as an essential factor. During the colonization of southern Vietnam, France built many canals connecting the lands, provinces, and districts to develop the waterway network. Especially in Hau Giang province, with more than ten canals named in numerical order. The canals were built on a large scale and contributed significantly to promoting the development of the Mekong Delta region.

In the South, there are the three most extensive canals with the oldest history from the Nguyen Dynasty: Vinh Te Canal, Thoai Ha Canal, also known as Rach Gia—Long Xuyen Canal, Bao Dinh Canal, which connects the Vung Gu Canal, and My Tho River.

From the beginning of the 17th century, the Vietnamese started digging canals under the Nguyen Lords. At first, the people dug them themselves, and then the Mac Cuu family (1652 - 1735) organized and implemented them. After its establishment (1802), the Nguyen Dynasty made great efforts and devoted many resources to forming an extensive canal system.

Several strategic canals affect a large area's development in that system. In the West, there are the Bao Dinh, Thoai Ha, and Vinh Te canal systems. In the East, there is a system of auxiliary canals for water transportation to the center of Gia Dinh/Saigon.

The Bao Dinh Canal, connecting the Vung Gu Canal and My Tho River, was started by Nguyen Cuu Van in 1705 when he brought troops to protect this newly pacified land. Because the silting up made it increasingly difficult to trade, in 1819, King Gia Long ordered Nguyen Van Phong, the governor of Dinh Tuong town, to command the dredging of this canal. The project began on February 23, 1819, and was completed on May 28, 1819. King Gia Long named the canal Bao Dinh Giang.

Thoai Ha Canal, also known as Rach Gia - Long Xuyen Canal, was commanded by Vinh Thanh Governor Thoai Ngoc Hau (1762 - 1829) to be dug in 1818, 51m wide, more than 30km long, from Long Xuyen Canal, passing through Sap Mountain, merging with Kien River of Rach Gia, Kien Giang Province, connecting the flow from Hau River to the West Sea. Thoai Ha Canal helps Vinh Thanh connect with other regions, avoiding having to go around the sea and, at the same time, draining water from the Hau River to the Rach Gia Sea during the flood season, helping to reduce flooding in this area.

Vinh Te Canal is nearly 100km long and 40m wide, connecting Chau Doc with Ha Tien. It started at the end of the year Ky Mao (1819) and was completed in May of the year Giap Than (1824) with the initial goal of consolidating the Chau Doc defense area. This canal is a waterway and an irrigation system. King Gia Long named Vinh Te Canal after Mrs. Chau Vinh Te, wife of Thoai Ngoc Hau, the person in charge of digging the canal.





Figure 7 Vinh Te Canal 1929
Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

In addition, in the Gia Dinh/Sai Gon area, the Nguyen Dynasty also ordered digging several canals to facilitate the circulation of rice and products from the West to Gia Dinh. The largest is the Ruot Ngu Canal, which connects the Tau Hu Canal to the Rach Cat River, where one can turn left to Can Duoc, Can Giuoc, or right to Cho Dem, Ben Luc. The canal is nearly 3km long and was dug in 1772 under the reign of Lord Nguyen Phuc Thuan.



Figure 8 Vinh Te Canal section through An Phu commune, on the left side of the canal, is a branch canal that diverts water when the main canal is drained to break up reefs

Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)



Figure 9 Vinh Te Canal flows through An Giang and Kien Giang provinces.

Source: <https://angiang.gov.vn/vi> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

In 1819, King Gia Long ordered the old waterway to be replaced and a new An Thong canal to be dug, connecting the Ruot Ngu Canal and Ben Nghe Canal, and two roads were built along both sides of the canal. Along with dredging the old canal and digging a new one, the Nguyen Dynasty also encouraged and supported people to reclaim fields and establish hamlets so that the Mekong Delta became the country's rice granary. The Gia Dinh rice trade route was opened, turning this place into the center of the South.

Understanding the South's important military and economic position, the French advocated strengthening security and immediately exploiting the area's resources after occupying the six provinces. In 1867, they established a committee under the Governor of Gai Gon to study and organize the dredging and expansion of the canal system. However, at this time, they mainly dredged small canals without any large projects.

In 1875, they continued to establish a standing committee on the completion of the waterway system from Saigon to the Western provinces. In less than five years, by 1879, in addition to dredging old canals, many new canals were dug, such as Cot Co, Nuoc Man, Hien Binh, Tra On, Cho Gao, Set Nay, Phu Tuc, and Xanh Ta.

From 1880 - 1890, most of the dredging and expansion of existing canals, such as Ba Lang, Cai Con, Carabelli, Bocquillon, Ke Sach, Thanh Loi, Ba Tich, Tra Noc, Ong Truong, and Cai Muong, took place. In total, 2.1 million cubic meters of canal land were dug, increasing the cultivated land by 169,000 hectares compared to the Nguyen Dynasty.

In 1895 - 1897, the colonial government allowed Governor Tran Ba Loc to invest in digging a large canal 45km long and 10m wide from the Ba Teo canal. This canal surrounded the entire My Tho area and then flowed into the Ruong Canal near Sa Dec. This canal was called the Tong Doc Loc Canal.

From 1899 - 1903, Lagrange was the Tan An Resident in charge of digging the canal connecting the Vam Co Tay River at the eastern end and the Phuoc Xuyen Canal and Dong Tien Canal at the western end at the Co Den intersection. After many dredgings, the canal was 45 km long, 40 m wide, and 4 m deep and named Lagrange (other names are Ong Lon Canal and Cung Canal).

In 1903 - 1904, 3.4 million cubic meters were dug, including two new large canals, Tra Ot, and Saintenoy.

In the following years, a series of medium and small canals and streams, such as Ba Rinh, An Tap, Tiep Nhut, and Rach Vop in Soc Trang; Pho Duong—Tra Long in Can Tho; O Mon, Xa No, Tra Bong, and Tan Phuoc in Can Tho—Rach Gia—Soc Trang, continued to be dug or dredged.

The canal digging process in the South significantly changed when Paul Doumer became Governor-General of Indochina (1897 - 1902). On September 8, 1900, he established a council of civil engineers, provincial governors, and representatives of French landowners to plan a canal-digging program for the entire Mekong Delta. In 1901, the Indochina River and Public Works Company was established. The annual plan was allocated 2 million francs from the Indochina budget and 240,000 francs from the Cochinchina budget for this program. From this program, many large projects were carried out. Xa No Canal was dug by machine from 1901 to July 1903, with a water surface of 60m wide, a bottom of 40m wide, and a budget of 3.6 million francs to exploit tens of thousands of hectares of land in Can Tho.

From 1904 - 1906, the Man Thit River was renovated and expanded, the Ba Xuyen - Thanh Loi Canal was dug, and the Lap Vo Canal and the Co Chien Canal were moved to Tra Vinh.

From 1906 - 1910, dug an additional section of the canal in Saigon parallel to the Tau Hu Canal; dug the Hau Giang - Long My Canal; deepened and expanded the Cho Gao Canal in Can Tho - Soc Trang; continued to develop the Saintenoy Canal; dug new canals: Phung Hiep, Pho Duong, Xeo Von, Carabelli, Mang Ca, Ba Rinh, Lacote. I began digging the Cai Lon Canal to Trem Trem. In the area between the Tien River and the Hau River, dug and split the May Islet, expanded the Co Chien - Tra Vinh Canal, deepened the Man Thit River; dug the Chang Re, Nang Ren, Thot Not - Cai Be Canals.

From 1911 to 1913, the Bassac - Long My, Ba Xuyen - O Mon, Soc Trang - Phung Hiep, Hau Giang - Long My, Bac Lieu - Ca Mau, Tiep Nhut, Mo Cay canals were expanded. From 1905 to 1913, the volume of excavation and embankment was 37.5 million cubic meters.

The canal digging program for 1913 - 1918 was implemented on May 23, 1913, but due to World War I, the work underwent many changes and lasted until 1929.

From 1914 to 1929, 177 million cubic meters of soil were dug for 1,664km of canals, including the new excavation of Ba Rinh, Soc Trang - Bo Thao, and Cai Lon canals; renovation and expansion of the O Mon - Thi Doi canal. The largest is the digging of a new Rach Gia - Ha Tien canal, including a central Rach Gia - Ha Tien canal running parallel to the coast, 81km long, 3.5 - 3.8m deep, 28m wide, connected to the sea by four branch canals with a total length of 81km, draining water to the West Sea to expand exploitation of over 220,000ha of the Long Xuyen quadrangle. This is also a critical traffic route from Ha Tien to Saigon.

After 1930, the irrigation program in the South was maintained and increased. In 1936, 1,360km of main canals, 2,500km of secondary canals, and thousands of kilometers of small canals were dug.

With the irrigation system during the French colonial period, the cultivated land area in the South expanded, rice output increased daily, and the crop structure

became more diverse and rich. Waterway transportation developed. The commodity market was formed and expanded. The social structure changed. In particular, this irrigation system has long-term effectiveness, serving as the foundation for continued improvement.

“Khen Xang Xa No” Canal - according to the locals, this name is a mispronunciation of the Frenchman who commanded the dredger that dug this river: “Saint-Tanoir.” According to writer Son Nam, Xa No originates from the Khmer word “Srok Snor,” which means the Dien Dien tree- a type of tree that lives in the south and becomes a unique food in the flood season; the flower of Dien Dien has the yellow and remarkably delicious, it makes the special foods for this land.



Figure 10 Xa No Canal

Source: <https://vithanh.haugiang.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

Xa No Canal was the first significant waterway project in the South, connecting the Can Tho Canal through Hau Giang and then opening to the sea at Rach Gia, passing through Chau Thanh A district, Vi Thuy, and Vi Thanh city of Hau Giang province. “Xa No canal was completed in July 1903. The surface width was 60 meters; the bottom was 40 meters, and the cost was up to 3,680,000 quan. The dredge was powered by steam with iron buckets. The dredge engine was 350 horsepower; each iron bucket could scoop 375 liters, blowing mud up to 60 meters away.” (according to Son Nam - History of land reclamation in the South). The birth of the Xa No canal transformed a large area of land; the area and rice output increased significantly; the lives of the people here became more and more prosperous, many markets sprung up, and the landscape along both banks changed a lot. Realizing the great value of Hau Giang land, the French also dug more small canals to fully exploit the potential of this land and the advantages of the canal. The horizontal canals were cut straight into the fields; every 500 meters was a small canal, and every 1,000 meters was a large canal, named from One Thousand to Fourteen Thousand, later forming the “Land of Thousand” of Hau Giang today. It was the Xa No canal that awakened the agricultural development potential of the entire barren land and, at the

same time, brought enormous value to the waterway transportation of the whole region. It brought fresh water from the Hau River to irrigate the vast rice fields, and from here, boats and canoes carried the rice to the Xa No canal, where large barges were waiting to "eat rice" and bring it to Can Tho, Kien Giang, Saigon, and many other places. Before this canal, Nam Ky only exported a few hundred tons of rice yearly, but since the Xa No canal was built, the export output has increased to more than a million tons. The Xa No canal has become a bustling "rice road" of the West.



Figure 11 Panoramic view of Nga Bay City from above

Source: <https://tuoitre.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

Can Tho City is located in the center of the Mekong Delta, stretching over 65 km along the west bank of the Hau River with a natural area of 1,401 km², stretching from 105°13'38" -105°50'35" East longitude and from 9°55'08" -10°19'38" North latitude. The city borders An Giang Province to the north, Dong Thap and Vinh Long Provinces to the east, Kien Giang Province to the west, and Hau Giang Province to the south. Can Tho has nine administrative units, including five districts (Ninh Kieu, Binh Thuy, Cai Rang, O Mon, Thot Not) and four districts (Vinh Thanh, Co Do, Thoi Lai, Phong Dien) (Can Tho City Electronic Information Portal, 2017)

Being in the Mekong Delta region with the advantage of a dense network of canals, Can Tho prioritizes promoting the development of the inland waterway system. As a "river city," Can Tho City Planning attaches importance to investing in upgrading, renovating, and developing the waterway transport system, especially critical waterway projects, to promote intra-regional and regional connectivity.

The Prime Minister has just signed Decision No. 1519/QD-TTg dated December 2, 2023, approving the Can Tho City Planning for the period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2050, in which Can Tho City is identified as the growth pole of the Mekong Delta.

The orientation plan will upgrade and renovate the city's critical inland waterways and dredge, as well as maintain and expand the remaining inland waterways to enhance the role of water transport in the districts. Specifically, the city prioritizes the development of 9 major inland waterways managed by the town with a total length of 125km. The routes include: Ba Lang River, starting at Can Tho River (Vam Ba Lang) and ending at Trau Hoi Canal (Cai Rang District); Phong Dien Canal

(Can Tho River), starting at Vam Xang intersection, ending at Cau NHIEM Canal); Cau NHIEM Canal, beginning at Cau NHIEM Canal intersection (Phong Dien District) and ending at Thoi Lai Town; Tra Noc River, beginning at Hau River (Binh Thuy District), ending at Can Tho River (O Mon District); Thot Not Canal, starting at Hau River (Thot Not District) and ending at Ranh Hat Canal - Kien Giang. In addition, there is the Xang O Mon Canal (Ba Dam Canal) route, starting at O Mon River (Thoi Lai District) and ending at Ranh Hat Canal - Kien Giang; KH8 Canal with starting point at Can Tho River, ending at Ranh - Kien Giang; Bon Tong Canal with starting point at Cai San Canal, ending at Thot Not Canal and the Standing Canal route with starting point at O Mon River, ending at Thot Not Canal.

Inland waterways managed by the Central Government will be implemented according to the Inland Waterway Infrastructure Planning for the 2021 - 2030 period, with a vision to 2050 approved by the Prime Minister and related plans and schemes.

In addition to developing waterways, Can Tho plans to build large, key inland waterway ports on the Hau River, Xa No Canal, Cai San Canal, O Mon River, and Thi Doi—O Mon Canal.

Accordingly, the city prioritizes the development of a system of large, critical inland waterway ports, including: a cluster of inland waterway ports on the Hau River (expected to be built in Cai Rang, Ninh Kieu, Binh Thuy, O Mon, and Thot Not districts); a cluster of inland waterway ports on Xa No Canal (Phong Dien district); a cluster of inland waterway ports on Cai San Canal (Rach Soi - Hau Giang Canal) with expected locations in Thot Not district and Vinh Thanh district.

At the same time, develop a cluster of inland cargo ports on the O Mon River, expected to be built in O Mon District and Thoi Lai District; a cluster of inland cargo ports on the Thi Doi - O Mon Canal, scheduled to be built in Thoi Lai District; a cluster of inland cargo ports on the Thot Not Canal, expected to be built in Thot Not District and Co Do District.

In addition, large, critical inland passenger ports on the Hau River, Can Tho River, and other routes should be developed. The ports are expected to be located in Ninh Kieu, Cai Rang, Binh Thuy, O Mon, Thot Not Districts, Phong Dien District.

At the same time, waterway bus routes should be formed connecting ports and harbors on the Hau River, Can Tho River, and other routes.

The planning notes that investment in inland waterway port and wharf projects in Can Tho city must be consistent with the Inland Waterway Infrastructure Planning for the 2021-2030 period, with a vision to 2050 approved by the Prime Minister and related plans and projects.

ພ້ອນ ປະ ດີ ຂ່າວ



Figure 12 Photo of waterway transport in Can Tho
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2024)

The historical process of using boats has always been focused on and is a strength of Vietnam from the past to the present.

Part 2: Physical space impacts and influences human behavior and culture.

2.2. River landscape and river culture: Physical space impacts and influences human behavior and culture.

Rivers are the source of life, and people have long respected them. They are indeed the source of many people's living habits and customs (Tricia Cusack, 2019).

The government's planning has also noted the strategic vision when developing the critical waterway transport system. This also means that the issue of using waterway transport continues to be concerned with preservation and development.

The Southwest (Mekong Delta) is an area of 40,548.2km², spread across 13 southern provinces and cities of Vietnam. The Southwest is considered a land of rivers and streams. Many large and small rivers and streams are intertwined like a spider web. This river element has affected the people's lives here and created a "river civilization" (Son Nam, 2017). "River civilization is the result of the adaptation process of residents to the natural environment in the Southwest. This is clearly shown through their lifestyle, activities, houses, transportation, cuisine, etc. The most obvious manifestation is the community's trading method, typically the floating market" (Huynh Ngoc Thu, 2015)

Many researchers have stated that floating markets in the Southwest are considered a unique form of trading and living for the residents of the Southwest region. Therefore, this cultural activity must be preserved and promoted in the present era. Thus, "floating markets are a valuable resource, a form of commercial civilization, a cultural characteristic and a tourist product, the pride of the land and people of the South and the Southwest region" (Nham Hung, 2009), contributing to the cultural beauty of Vietnam.

History of formation and development of the Southwest Floating Market: The Southwest Floating Market has been nurtured since the arrival of Vietnamese

immigrants to explore this land from the 17th - 18th centuries. According to the book *Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi*, in 1732, Lord Nguyen ordered the construction of Long Ho Palace in Cai Be, called Cai Be Dinh. At that time, the Cai Be estuary was described as a place with "deep rivers and flowing water," with many boats and canoes from all over coming to gather and trade bustlingly. When Hung Loi market (Dinh Tuong) was established, the characteristics of the floating market began to appear: "The goods were close together, the market was near the main river. People came and went, parked their boats and waited for the tide, so the river had many boats selling food" (Nguyen Anh Tuan, 2007). Thus, the market had spread down to the river. This was the beginning sign of the birth of the way of buying and selling on the river.

By the mid-19th and 20th centuries, when the French occupied the South and implemented the policy of "digging canals, establishing markets, and opening roads," commercial activities had the conditions to develop by leaps and bounds. Many floating markets were born one after another, and their practical benefits were proven. Typically, "Cai Rang floating market (4) was formed in the early years of the 20th century when boats carrying household goods and ceramics from Bien Hoa, Saigon, and Lai Thieu came down; boats carrying roofing leaves, mats, mangrove charcoal, and bamboo from Ca Mau and Rach Gia gathered to buy and sell" (Nguyen Trong Nhan, 2012)

During this time, the Nga Bay floating market (Hau Giang) was also born and is considered a bustling hub. Author Son Nam noted the Nga Bay floating market: "The market is more prosperous than many district towns; it can be said to be more prosperous than Ha Tien provincial town. In the morning, when the market is crowded with boats, we can go around in a circle through five canals, passing from one boat to another, mooring next to... shrimp fishing boats, on boats, ca dome boats, Can Tho-style sampans jostling each other on the salty water while boats and sampans noisily try to find a way out (Son Nam, 2017) The emergence of Cai Rang and Nga Bay floating markets shows the perfection of the style of market groups on the river on a large scale; the number of trading boats increased, and more and more people gathered gradually, making the floating market more prosperous.

After that, other floating markets were also formed and developed in the Southwest. Up to now, the Southwest region still has about nine floating markets operating. They are: Tra On (Vinh Long), Ba Ngan (Hau Giang), Long Xuyen, Chau Doc (An Giang), Song Trem, Nam Can (Ca Mau), Vinh Thuan (Kien Giang)... The critical feature of these floating markets is that they create a system of goods circulation from one market to another by waterway.

Currently, Cai Rang, Phong Dien, Phung Hiep floating markets (Can Tho City) and Cai Be floating market (Tien Giang province) are important wholesale markets in the floating market system in the Southwest. Traders often send large boats to pick up goods from these markets and then transfer them to Vinh Thuan, Nga Nam, and Ganh Hao markets... to sell to small ships for distribution to consumers. In general, the birth of floating markets was a creation of the people of the Southwest in the early days of stabilizing their lives, which was initiated and initially developed around the 17th - 18th centuries and gradually completed in the 19th - 20th centuries. The system of floating markets has marked a significant step forward in the development of the economy and created a unique cultural feature for the residents of

the Southwest region in particular and the South in general. On July 9, 2016, the Ministry of Culture - Sports - Tourism recognized the Cai Rang floating market in Cai Rang district (Can Tho city) as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage. After 100 years of formation and development, the Cai Rang floating market has become a typical tourism symbol of Can Tho City.



Figure 13 Aerial view of the Mekong River Delta, south of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Image is reproduced modified from (Bing 2019).

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

The South - a fertile land known as the country's rice granary, is blessed by nature with a dense system of rivers and canals. This network is not only a source of life but also a cultural feature, contributing to the appearance and strong vitality of the Southern region.



Figure 14 Tributaries of the Mekong

Source: <https://www.mekongeye.com/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)

The origin of the river system here mainly comes from the majestic Mekong River, the 12th largest river in the world. Nine river mouths flow into the East Sea, creating the vast and fertile Mekong Delta. In addition, large rivers such as Dong Nai, Saigon, and Vam Co also contribute to creating a dense hydrological network. From the large rivers, countless small canals were dug and built since the land reclamation

period, weaving everywhere, creating a convenient waterway traffic system, and making travel and transporting goods more accessible. Rivers and canals in the South have their unique characteristics. The semi-diurnal tide regime with water rising and falling twice daily has created a distinctive rhythm of life for this land. Alluvium deposited over thousands of years has created lush green islands, lush fruit gardens, and rice fields stretching as far as the eye can see. Abundant water resources and a tropical monsoon climate are ideal for developing agriculture and aquaculture. Trafish, basa fish, and tiger prawns are famous products that bring income to people and contribute to export and economic development.

The network of rivers and canals is not only a source of life but also creates unique cultural features. Cai Rang, Phong Dien, and Nga Nam floating markets are attractive destinations for tourists, with bustling trading scenes on the river and boats full of fruits and crops. The stilt houses along the river, the lush fruit gardens, and the boats carrying passengers up and down have created a charming and poetic picture of the Mekong Delta.

However, besides its advantages, the South faces difficulties due to natural disasters and human impacts. Floods in the rainy season, droughts in the dry season, riverbank erosion, and water pollution are issues that need to be addressed. Protecting and sustainably developing the network of rivers and canals is an important task, requiring the joint efforts of the whole community.

Rivers and canals in the South are not only part of nature but also part of the flesh and blood, the pride of the people here. Preserving and developing this system preserves cultural identity and ensures sustainable development for the fertile land of the South.

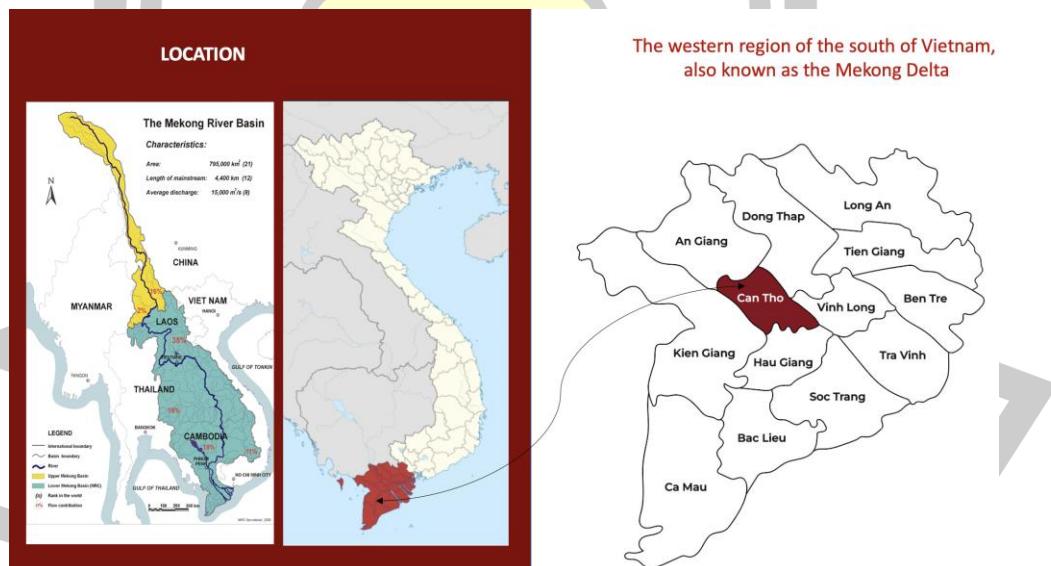


Figure 15 The Mekong Delta has 13 provinces and cities
Source: <https://www.researchgate.net/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

The Mekong Delta has 13 provinces and cities with a population (2019) of over 17 million people

The Mekong Delta (MD) includes 13 provinces and cities (Long An, Tien Giang, Dong Thap, Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, Can Tho City, Hau Giang, Soc Trang, Ben

Tre, An Giang, Kien Giang, Bac Lieu and Ca Mau), with a total natural area of about 3.96 million hectares, accounting for 79% of the total area of the delta and 5% of the Mekong River basin area.

The MD has a rich system of rivers and canals, including natural rivers and canals. The Tien and Hau Rivers are the two main rivers that strongly influence the development of this region. The Tien River plays an important role right after branching from the Mekong mainstream due to its more significant water flow than the Hau River (86%/14%). After the Tien River divides some of its water to the Hau River through Vam Nao, the two rivers establish a balance (49%/51%). After My Thuan, the Tien River has successive large distributaries such as the Co Chien River, Ham Luong River, Ba Lai River, Cua Dai River, and Cua Tieu River. Hau River only splits into two before flowing into the sea about 30 km through the Dinh An and Tran De estuaries.

The Vam Co River system, Vam Co River includes two branches, Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay, both originating from Cambodia, flowing through the eastern part of the Mekong Delta to Cau Nai to merge and flow into the lower reaches of the Dong Nai River (Nha Be River) before flowing into the sea through Can Gio estuary. Vam Co Dong River has an independent water source associated with the Southeast region; Vam Co Tay River is related to the Mekong Delta when receiving water from the Mekong River during flood and dry seasons.

The Cai Lon-Cai Be river system is a tidal river originating from the center of the Ca Mau Peninsula and flowing into the sea through the Cai Lon estuary. Because it is connected to the Hau River by many large canals, the flow regime of the Cai Lon-Cai Be river system is also influenced by the flow regime from the Hau River. Giang Thanh River: Giang Thanh River has a small source originating from the mountainous region of southwestern Cambodia, then flows along the Vietnam-Cambodia border and into the sea through Dong Ho lagoon in Ha Tien town. In addition, the Mekong Delta region has many other branches and canals running along the Tien and Hau Rivers. However, although they have been somewhat deformed and gradually lost their natural character due to human activities, they still retain their inherent natural features, such as the Hong Ngu Canal, Can Lo Canal, Ruong Canal, etc.

Regarding canals, the Mekong Delta canals have been mainly developed over the past century, with the primary purpose of developing agriculture and waterway transport. The canal system has been densely interwoven at all three levels: main canals, level I canals, level II canals, and intra-field level III canals. The developed central canal system connects the Hau River with the West Sea (Long Xuyen Quadrangle and Ca Mau Peninsula), the Tien River with the Vam Co Tay River (West of the Hau River), and the Tien River with the Hau River (Between the Tien River and the Hau River), playing an essential role in bringing water directly from the main river to the fields. The level II canal system has been expanded in many areas in the Mekong Delta, especially the intensive rice cultivation areas along the Tien and Hau rivers, connecting the main canals, with the task of distributing irrigation water and draining excess water for each area in the fields. Level III (intra-field canals) are the most minor but fundamental canal level because this canal system directly brings irrigation water to and drains excess water for each field. The above canal levels form a reasonably dense canal system, with a density of 8-10 m/ha. The Mekong Delta has

an average rainfall of about 1,600-1,800 mm, the West Coast from 2,000-2,400 mm, and the East Coast from 1,400-1,600 mm.

Rainfall is divided into two seasons: the rainy season from May to October and the dry season from November to September. August to October are the months with the highest rainfall in the year, usually reaching 250-300 mm per month. January to March are the months with the lowest rainfall in the year, usually no rain or insignificant rain. The number of rainy days in a year is from 100-140 rainy days, mainly concentrated in the rainy months, with 15-20 days per month. The average rainfall in the rainy season accounts for about 90-92% of the total annual rainfall, while the average rainfall in the dry season is only 8-10%. The Mekong Delta gets its fresh water from the Mekong River and rainwater. Both sources are distinctly seasonal. In recent years, the average water flow of the Mekong River has been around 410 billion m³. About 17% of the total water flow flows through the Hau River at Chau Doc and 83% through the Tien River at Tan Chau.

Further downstream, the distribution of this water gets closer to the 50:50 ratio because part of the water from the Tien River flows into the Hau River via the Vam Nao River. With a system of large and small interwoven rivers and canals, providing fresh water all year round is very convenient. From November to April, the Mekong River is the only surface water source in the dry season. During the flood season, which usually occurs in September, the river water is high, which causes flooding.



Figure 16 . Rice is the main crop in Mekong Delta
Source: <https://aicschool.edu.vn/> (Accessed on June 15, 2024)

Rice is the main crop, accounting for about 93% of the total annual cropland area. The yearly total rice cultivation area is about 4.2 million hectares, of which the Winter-Spring crop is 1.6 million hectares (accounting for 38%); the Summer-Autumn crop 1.7 million hectares (accounting for 40%); the Autumn-Winter crop is 0.7 million hectares (accounting for 17%) and the Summer-Autumn crop: 0.2 million

hectares (accounting for 5%). The total water demand for the agricultural sector is estimated at 17.91 billion m³. Aquaculture in the Mekong Delta has recently grown in both area and output, gradually developing into a large-scale, highly competitive commodity production profession, in which the brackish water aquaculture area fluctuates at 691 thousand hectares. The freshwater aquaculture area is 106 thousand hectares, and the total annual aquaculture area and the total water demand for aquaculture are estimated at 21.06 billion m³. According to the 2019 population and housing census, the Mekong Delta has about 17.3 million people, an increase of 1 million people compared to 2009; the proportion of the population under 15 years old in the Mekong Delta accounts for 22% and the population aged 65 and over accounts for 8.4%. This means that the Mekong Delta is in the golden population period. In 2019, the total product in the area contributed over 12% to the country's Gross Domestic Product. The region's agriculture alone accounted for 34.6% of the total Gross Domestic Product of the agricultural sector, contributing 54% of rice output, 70% of aquaculture output, and 60% of the country's fruit output. The average Gross Domestic Product per capita in 2019 reached 51.3 million VND, 18% lower than the national average of 62.7 million VND. Due to the purely agricultural nature of the regional economy, the proportion of agriculture, forestry, and fishery in the gross domestic product structure is high at 31.5%. The industry and construction sector accounted for less than 25.3% of the total product of the Mekong Delta in 2019. The service sector accounted for 41.2% of the Gross Domestic Product of the Mekong Delta, equivalent to the national average.

Vietnam is located in the lower Mekong River, which means it is being strongly impacted, directly affecting socio-economic development and population stability. This is a significant challenge, requiring a comprehensive, long-term strategy to adapt. According to experts, to develop the Mekong Delta sustainably, it is necessary to calculate and ensure harmony in three aspects (economic, social, and environmental). These calculations must be based on practical, scientific, and awareness of the crucial role of water resources for the Mekong Delta.

The data shows the close connection between the river terrain and social life. Most of the river network profoundly influences all aspects of the life of the residents here. The dependence on waterway transportation supports the development of irrigated agriculture, boat travel, and the formation of cultural systems with spiritual beliefs suitable for natural conditions. The waterway trade also creates a unique, peaceful, and tranquil river culture. Floating market clusters are formed as "the most bustling and bustling cultural and trading centers" of each region and area. Places to gather to buy and sell, places where water flows intersect or are convenient for exchanging goods, and irrigation activities all depend on the convenience of the water flow and the boats of merchants or residents. Irrigation water in the fields and gardens is also led through small canals for boats to move and is a water source for households living along the river or in fertile alluvial lands to settle down and make a living. Wherever the water source goes, life flourishes and expands. Wherever there are rivers and canals, there are boats. Each family has at least one small boat or a large boat as the primary means of transportation, like "legs" for residents to move, live, and trade. The Southwest (Mekong Delta) is an area of 40,548.2km², spread across 13 southern provinces and cities of Vietnam. The Southwest is considered a land of rivers and streams. Many large and small rivers and streams are intertwined like a

spider web. This river element has affected the lives of the people here and created a "river civilization" (Son Nam, 2004, p.30). "River civilization is the result of the adaptation process of residents to the natural environment in the Southwest. This is clearly shown through their lifestyle, activities, houses, transportation, cuisine, etc. The most obvious manifestation is the community's trading method, typically the floating market" (Huynh Ngoc Thu, 2015).

History of formation and development of the Southwest Floating Market

Floating markets in the Southwest have been kindled since the arrival of Vietnamese immigrants to explore this land from the 17th - 18th centuries. According to the book Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi, in 1732, Lord Nguyen proclaimed to build Long Ho palace in Cai Be, called Cai Be Dinh. At that time, the Cai Be estuary was described as a place with "deep rivers and flowing water," with many boats and canoes from everywhere coming to gather and trade bustlingly. When Hung Loi market (Dinh Tuong) was established, the characteristics of floating markets began to appear: "The goods are close together, the market is near the main river. People move their boats to wait for the tide, so there are many boats selling food on the river" (Nguyen Anh Tuan, 2007) Thus, the market has spread down the river. This is the **beginning sign of the birth of the way of buying and selling on the river.**

By the mid-19th - 20th centuries, when the French occupied Cochinchina, implementing the policy of "digging canals, establishing markets, opening roads," commercial activities had the conditions to develop "by leaps and bounds." Many floating markets were born one after another and demonstrated practical benefits. Typically, "Cai Rang floating market was formed in the early 20th century when boats carrying household goods, ceramics from Bien Hoa, Saigon, and Lai Thieu came down; boats carrying roofing leaves, mats, mangrove charcoal, and caring from **Ca Mau, Rach Gia gathered to buy and sell" (Nguyen Trong Nhan, 2012).**

During this time, the Nga Bay floating market (Hau Giang) was also born and is considered a bustling hub. Author Son Nam also noted about Nga Bay floating market:

"The market is more prosperous than many district towns; it can be said to be more prosperous than Ha Tien provincial town. In the morning, when the market is crowded with boats, we can go around in a circle through five canals, passing from one boat to another, docking close to... shrimp fishing boats, sculls, ca vom boats, Can Tho-style sampans jostling on the water while boats and sampans are noisy, trying to find a way out (Son Nam, 2017). The emergence of Cai Rang and Nga Bay floating markets shows the perfection of the style of large-scale river market groups. The number of trading boats increases, and more people gather, gradually making the floating market more prosperous. After that, other floating markets in the Southwest were also formed and developed. Up to now, the Southwest region has about nine floating markets that are still in operation. They are: Tra On (Vinh Long), Ba Ngan (Hau Giang), Long Xuyen, Chau Doc (An Giang), Song Trem, Nam Can (Ca Mau), Vinh Thuan (Kien Giang)... The critical characteristic of these floating markets is to create a system of goods circulation from one market to another by waterway. Currently, the Cai Rang, Phong Dien, and Phung Hiep floating markets (Can Tho City) and the Cai Be floating market (Tien Giang province) are important wholesale markets in the Southwest Boat floating market system. Traders often send large boats

to pick up goods from these markets and then transfer them to Vinh Thuan, Nga Nam, and Ganh Hao markets to resell to small ships for distribution to consumers.

In general, the emergence of floating markets was a creation of the people of the Southwest region in the early days of stabilizing their lives. It was initiated and initially developed around the 17th - 18th centuries and gradually completed in the 19th - 20th centuries. The system of floating markets has marked a significant step in the development of the economy and created a unique cultural feature for the residents of the Southwest region in particular and the South in general.

Characteristics of the Southwest Floating Market

Floating market meeting place

The dense system of rivers and canals is favorable for the people of the Southwest to develop forms of inland waterway transportation and trade. Floating markets are often held at the junction of waterway traffic routes connected to neighboring areas where road traffic is not yet developed. This is the most favorable location in the region for sellers and buyers to meet via waterways to conduct buying and selling activities. This is the primary condition for forming and developing floating markets: Nga Nam, Nga Bay, Cai Rang, Phong Dien, Phung Hiep, Tra On, Cai Be,...

Most floating markets are located at river junctions, river mouths, or on canals, rivers that are not too wide but not too narrow, not too shallow but not too deep, have a relatively stable tidal range and a slow flow rate, creating favorable conditions for mooring boats for trading. A ubiquitous feature is that all floating markets are located on strategic traffic and trade routes next to the Tien River, the Hau River and its tributaries, and long and wide canals. From the floating markets, goods can be transported to all localities in the Mekong Delta.

Another prominent feature of floating markets is that they are often held next to fixed markets on the shore, close to a densely populated area (town, township, city). Markets on the coast also face the river in an open direction, creating the "above the wharf, below the boat" position of the Southwest region. Most of the surveyed floating markets are located in towns (Nga Nam floating market in Nga Nam town, Nga Bay floating market in Nga Bay town, Cai Rang floating market in Cai Rang district, Tra On floating market in Tra On town, Cai Be floating market in Cai Be town, etc.). Therefore, floating markets play the role of a wholesale market in providing agricultural products to residents in the city.

In addition, floating markets are also located adjacent to garden and farmland areas, such as Phong Dien floating market (Can Tho city), located next to orange gardens, tangerine gardens, and strawberry gardens. Cai Be floating market (Tien Giang province) is located on the Tien River, adjacent to an area with many fruits such as Green-skinned grapefruit, Hoa Loc sand mango, and Lo Ren star apple; nearby is the Lach Ben Tre market area famous for durian, mangosteen. Along the canal leading to Nga Bay floating market is a garden with various fruits and vegetables such as Coconut, orange, watermelon, cabbage, tubers, etc.

Means of transport and goods in the floating market

Initially, traders in the floating market gathered by sampans, sampans, and three-leaf sampans. Nowadays, goods transported in the floating market also include sampans and motorboats. Shoppers also go to the market by sampans and sampans. The small sampans skillfully weave through hundreds of sampans and boats with rare

collisions. Residents in the Southwest are inherently honest and loyal. They buy, sell, exchange goods, and behave very harmoniously, without scenes of fighting over goods. Each sampan is a “mobile” family on the river, including two-generation families. They consider the sampan as their home and customers as relatives and neighbors.

Goods in the floating market

Today, it can be affirmed that the goods in the floating market in the Southwest are vibrant and diverse, almost no less than the markets on shore. “In the early days, the goods available in the floating market were probably food and drinks supplied to people on long-distance boats. In the popular period, the goods in the floating market were multi-sector, diverse, and supplied to the merchants, and they met the needs of residents. In the developed period, the goods in the floating market were most concentrated in Fruits and vegetables, and the main trading method was wholesale” (Nham Hung, 2009)

Like the onshore market, floating market goods are also divided into different groups to meet all the needs and conveniences of people living along the river. Mainly, these are the following groups of goods: Agricultural products (fruits, vegetables, tubers, flowers, ornamental plants, etc.); Fresh food (fresh meat, fish, animals); Handicrafts (bowls, cups, plates, glasses, jars, pots, baskets, winnowing baskets, sieves, bamboo, nets, fishing rods, fishing poles, forks, etc.); Transportation goods (gasoline, kerosene, engine oil, oil, gas, etc.); Household goods (clothes, shoes, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, sugar, milk, salt, needles, thread, combs, mirrors, etc.) are sold on floating grocery boats or mobile cargo boats. Locals and neighboring areas often use medium-sized boats to transport agricultural products here for consumption, while traders use large sampans to purchase. From here, the goods will follow the traders downstream to everywhere. Although it is held on the river, and the traffic is entirely by water, the floating market still has all the typical elements of a market in general, which is a variety of goods meeting the necessary needs of the people. This shows that, in the conditions of a dense river terrain like in the Southwest, people can still take advantage and be creative to do business and develop the economy in the most favorable way. Product introduction

The style of advertising and marketing products using “Beo poles” is a unique cultural feature of trading that only exists in floating markets. Vendors often use a long bamboo pole (also known as a pole) 3 - 5m long. The beo pole is usually hung at an average height, not too high or too low, and easy for customers to see. On the beo pole, people “Beo” suspend the goods on the boat, a little of each item called a sample so that when customers come, they see this seller “Beo” something, it means that the boat is selling that item, customers going to the market go straight to the ship and buy It can be said that “Beo poles” are the unique feature of floating markets and are widely used because the vast space of the river combined with the sound of the engine will somewhat drown out the cries of the seller. This is a primitive, simple, but very effective form of advertising (marketing). Until now, the "Cay Beo" is still the only "advertising" method that has existed the longest in the Southwest.

In addition to the traditional form of the flagpole, residents in the floating market also use modern methods of introducing products, such as Zoning areas for goods (Tra On floating market, Nga Nam floating market, Cai Rang floating market: Each group of goods, fruits are divided into separate regions of the market); using

signs, light boxes, posters, banners; using loudspeakers to play pre-recorded sales calls; ringing gongs to call for goods; using mobile phones to call for goods.

Methods and principles of trading products

Two-way trading is the favored method of trading with floating market residents. Goods from the garden are transported back by boats or sampans; they do not anchor for as long as before but go down to remote areas, into canals to sell and exchange products, for example, exchanging fruit for fish, exchanging vegetables for chickens and ducks, not necessarily people can only buy with money. Out of stock, they buy back the products of that locality... and bring them back to trade with the garden. This back-and-forth journey has created a unique feature for the Southwest floating market that is not easily found elsewhere.

The author surveyed the Cai Rang Floating Market:

Regarding the floating market, the boat owners said they always have a network of small traders in the gardens in the floating market area. When they need goods, the boat owners will call the traders to help them collect goods from the garden owners. Once they have enough goods, the boat owners will transport their goods for redistribution. These traders are located in different areas but spread along the floating market routes. After the boat owners take goods from this floating market, they will move to another one to continue bringing more goods. While waiting to take more goods, they also sell some goods on the boat. According to many boat owners, their selling journeys usually last three days to a week.

In particular, the people of the Southwest often have the principle of buying and selling quickly and neatly and value the "willing buyer, willing seller" sentiment. In particular, the word "trust" is highly valued by traders. In the markets held on the river, transactions usually take place in a short time. When the seller offers his goods, the buyer calls to come near the boat to see and buy the goods. Thanks to the respect for credibility, even though the volume of goods is tens of tons, the transaction is only verbal, without haggling or haggling over the price. Everyone is imbued with the conventions and practices of buying and selling on the river, so they have agreed on their own, outlined a formula, and a separate trading order, thanks to which the buying and selling activities occur quickly.

Forms of exchange and measurement of goods in floating markets

Floating markets are the same; many boats of traders from many regions and localities come to trade. Their standard trading method is to offer goods through the form of "cay beo" hung in front of the boat. You stop at any ship you want to buy, just come and look at the goods and bargain; fruits are of type one, type two, type three, ... and other items. The two sides negotiate, agree on which type, and then buy and sell that type according to the agreement. In addition to negotiating the price calculated by unit, they must also agree on how to use weighing, measuring, and counting tools to satisfy both sides. Therefore, traders in floating markets often determine the measurement of goods by weighing, measuring, and counting; they can even estimate the quantity and weight of goods by hand or by eye.

According to the author's survey, floating markets in the Southwest used to have two essential buying and selling styles: wholesale and retail. If the buyer wants to buy wholesale, the seller will sell at a lower price than the retail buyer. The two types of wholesale and retail are specified by common measurements, which are: Gia (20kg of rice), liters, bottles, cans, kilo, ... and counting, there are thousands (equal to

1000 units of goods), hundreds (equal to 100 units of goods), tens (10, 12, 14, 16, 18 units of goods), counting pieces, counting pieces, sometimes calculated by baskets, crates, tearing rods, ... All of these methods of measurement have been set and approved by the merchants themselves. From there, they have used them as an unwritten rule.

Buyers and sellers calculate and measure according to them. The method of buying, selling, and measuring goods at floating markets is a unique creation of the people living in the river area.

Religious customs and taboos in floating markets

People who trade on the river "here today and there tomorrow" drift from one floating market to another, from one region to another, and their religious life has its characteristics. They often arrange a Buddhist altar in the boat's interior or worship Thuy Long, Ba Cau, and Than Tai. When going on the river water, they usually worship Quan Am Bodhisattva, praying for safety. If a "disaster" exists, they will be protected by "the higher." Every night, they burn incense with sincerity and a few prayers. On the full moon day and holidays, they also buy fresh fruits to display on the altar. Like on land, people who trade often buy fresh flowers, cakes, and fruits to make offerings on the second and sixteenth day of the lunar month. "According to the beliefs of the merchants, they often pray to Lady Thuy or Ba, the gods who govern the river where they trade, which they consider sacred. If a conflict occurs in business and there is no solution, they often swear that Lady Thuy or Ba will witness the purity of their business" (Nguyen Thi Thoa, 2011).

Psychological factors greatly influence the character of floating market residents. Therefore, they form taboos in trading. They are very averse to using harsh, sour, and strange words and avoid using the phrases: Upside down, flip, fall, fall, fall, fall, stumble, turn, roll, fall, tumble, etc. On the way to trade, people sitting on boats avoid encountering snakes and geese swimming in front of the ship and avoid carrying cats and turtles (even the captain and boat owner do not eat cats and snakes). On the contrary, encountering a dog wading across the river is a lucky omen, and seeing many fireflies flying is a good omen. In addition, when sitting on a boat and accidentally dropping a knife into the water, they must dive to retrieve it because losing the knife at the bottom of the water is taboo.

In addition, they believe in luck, good luck, and bad luck. They think that trading on the river is a "Mrs. Cau" profession; a good start leads to a good end, buying quickly, selling quickly, buying well, and selling well. So when customers come down to the boat to purchase goods, they always welcome them warmly, politely, and friendly, working quickly and not letting the buyers wait long.

Every morning, they pray to meet a lucky person to open the shop for a good sales day. For good luck, when opening a store, the seller often advertises a close price but does not sell immediately. Instead, the seller waits for the buyer to bargain a few times to make the atmosphere more lively. When they agree to buy and sell, they feel delighted.

Conclusion

The emergence of floating markets is an inevitable rule of development in the field of trade. It meets the needs of distributing and consuming goods of residents in the region when road traffic conditions are still limited. At the same time, it demonstrates the habit of traveling and trading on the river of many residents in the

new land. The emergence and development of floating markets have affirmed the dynamic and creative spirit of the people of the Southwest.

Each floating market has gathered all the elements: it is a focal point for the consumption of agricultural products, a transit point of goods in the region, and a source of significant employment for local people.

In addition, many floating markets are also places that attract domestic and foreign tourists to visit. Over the past generations, floating markets in the Southwest have retained this characteristic activity. From here, fruits and seafood will follow traders downstream to spread throughout the country.

With many rivers, canals, and streams... the intersections of water sources or river branches became the most convenient areas for boats to gather for markets. From the above conditions, many floating markets were formed in critical areas along the rivers that were convenient for trade. Previously, many groups of floating markets existed in many places along the river, but they still exist today; we can name the typical floating markets.

1. Long Xuyen floating market - An Giang

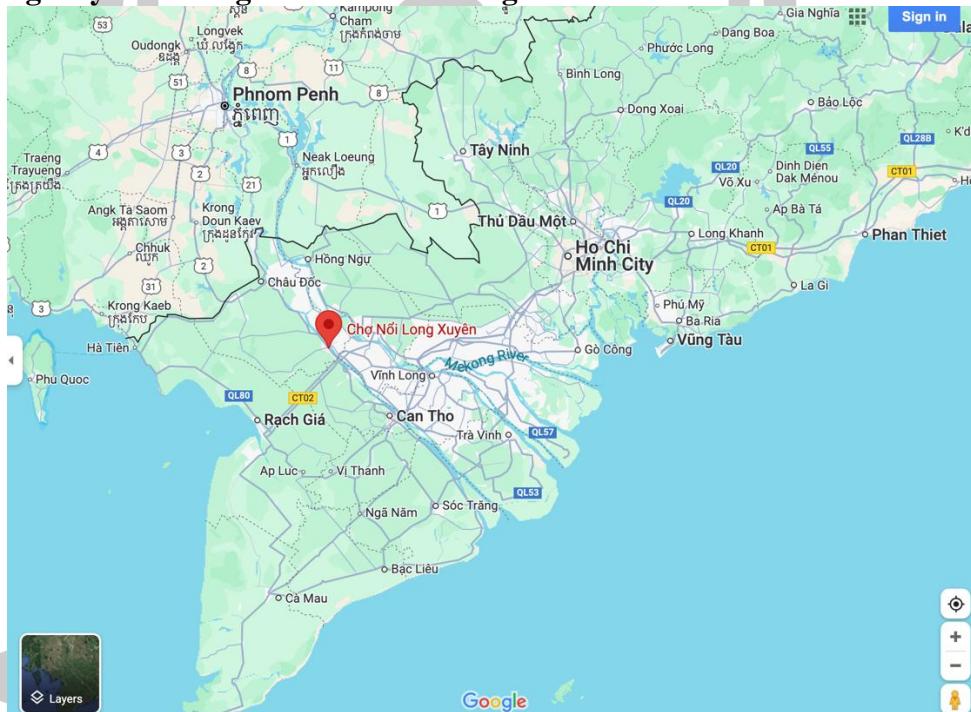


Figure 17. Long Xuyen floating market - An Giang

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)

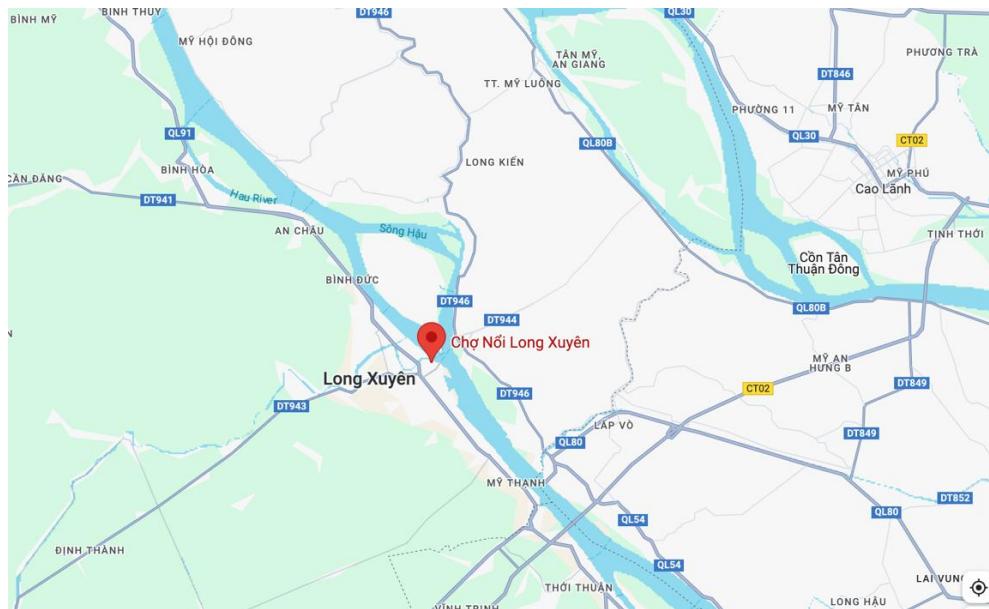


Figure 18 Long Xuyen floating market - An Giang
Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)



Figure 19 Long Xuyen floating market - An Giang
Source: <https://angiang.gov.vn/vi> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

Long Xuyen floating market is smaller than other markets but is a place tourists should visit on their floating market tour to find the simple, peaceful, and pristine features of the people and the rivers here. The market is about 2 km from Long Xuyen City, along one side of the Red Hau River with heavy alluvium. Long Xuyen Floating Market is located on Hau River, in My Phuoc ward, Long Xuyen City, An Giang province. Because it is not affected by commercialization, this market is more bustling than many other floating markets.

Long Xuyen floating market is most crowded in the morning. The primary goods are vegetables, melons, squash, cabbage, and famous dishes of An Giang, such as fish noodles and pork skin cakes. The people here live and trade all year round on boats, so they consider this their home.

The primary goods here are crops such as vegetables, melons, eggplants, cabbage, squash, and potatoes, as well as famous snacks from An Giang such as fish noodles, rice cakes, pork skin cakes, etc. The remarkable thing is that the goods are bought and sold without any challenges, bargaining, or selling, as said because the floating market here has few tourists visiting; the people are friendly, honest, and unaffected by the commercialization of tourism.

2. Cai Be floating market – Tien Giang

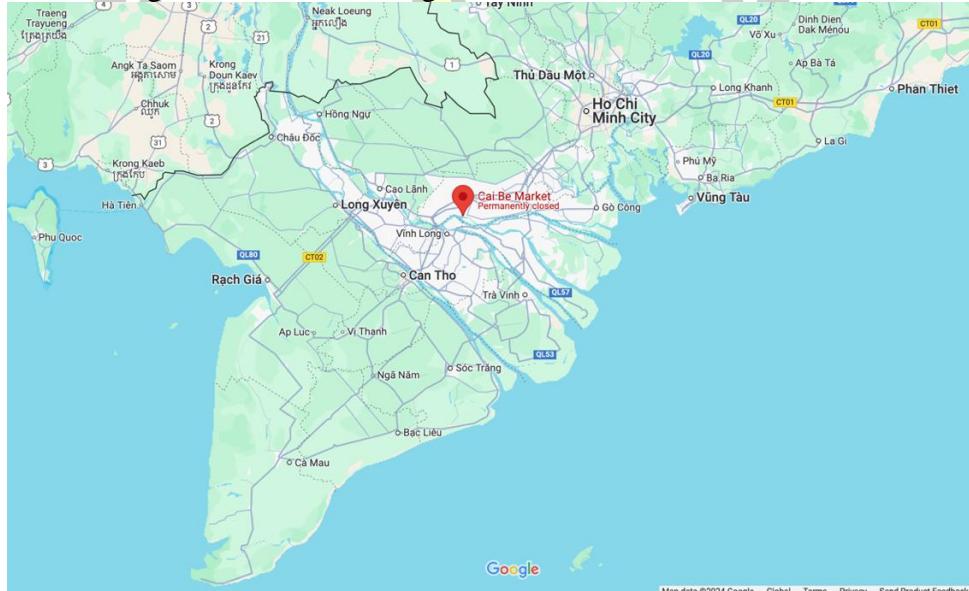


Figure 20 Cai Be floating market – Tien Giang (Map)

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)

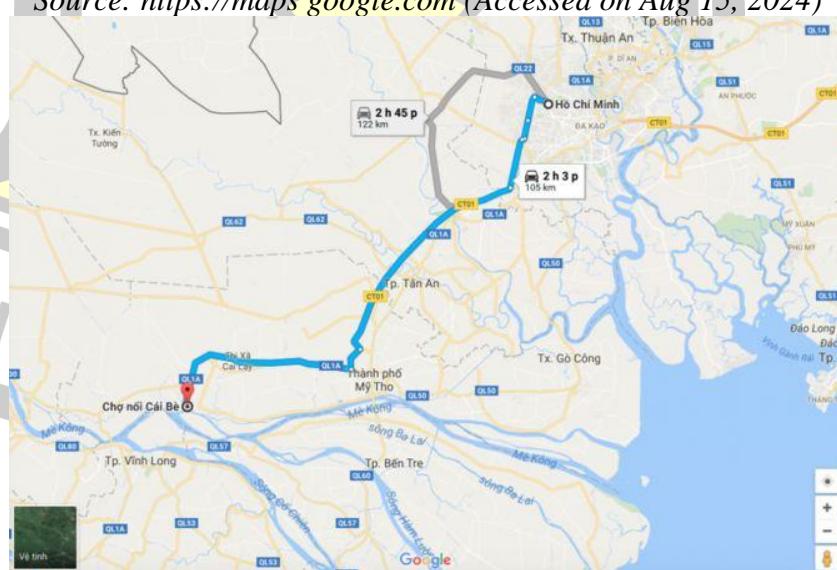


Figure 21 Cai Be floating market – Tien Giang

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)



Figure 22 Cai Be floating market – Tien Giang (With the church on the river)
 Source: <https://tiengiang.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

Cai Be floating market is located in Cai Be district, Tien Giang, on Tan Phong island on the vast Tien River bordering the three provinces of Tien Giang, Vinh Long, and Ben Tre. The market is a place to buy and sell goods, a transit station for fruits and products to all regions, and an attractive tourist destination in Tien Giang province. Cai Be Tien Giang is the largest floating market in the Southern region. The market appeared when road traffic was not yet developed, so it was highly bustling because most people had to buy, sell, and exchange right on the river. Not only in the past but also now, this place is still crowded with people visiting and exploring daily.

Every year, on the occasion of the Doan Ngo Festival, at Cai Be Floating Market in Tien Giang, there is a unique sandbar bathing festival called "Tam Con" (Con: is a small area of land rising above the river surface, and sandbar bathing is the act of bathing around this sandbar area). The festival takes place from around 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. when the water begins to dry up, revealing the islets. People flock here to bathe so that the whole river will be lively.

Unlike regular floating markets that only open in the morning, the Cai Be floating market starts trading from early morning until late at night. When dawn breaks, the floating market is bustling like a small street on the river. Boats selling goods such as pho, hu tieu, vermicelli, groceries, etc., run along the sides of boats and ships, looking lively. Sitting on a drifting boat, enjoying a bowl of hu tieu or a cup of aromatic coffee in the morning is an indescribable experience.

3. Cai Rang floating market – Can Tho

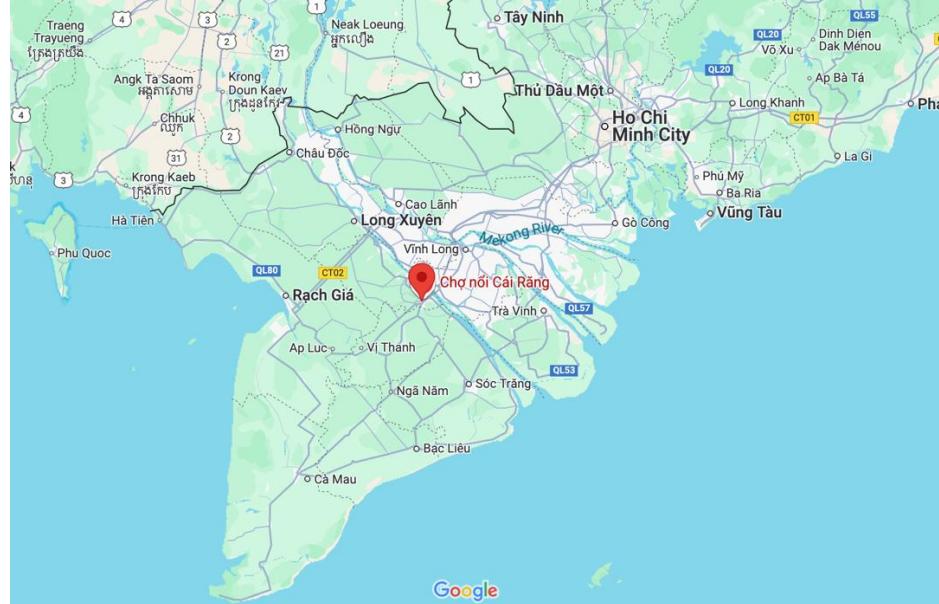


Figure 23 Cai Rang floating market – Can Tho
Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)

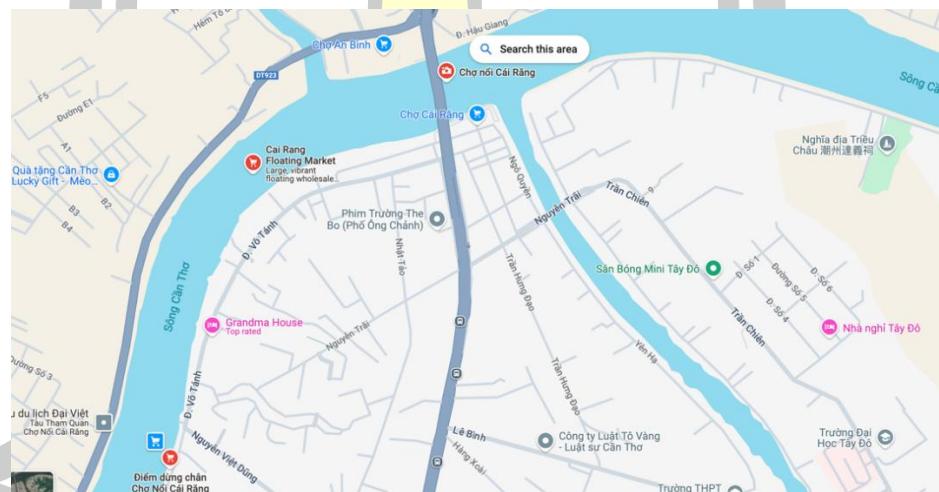


Figure 24 Cai Rang floating market Map – Can Tho
Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)

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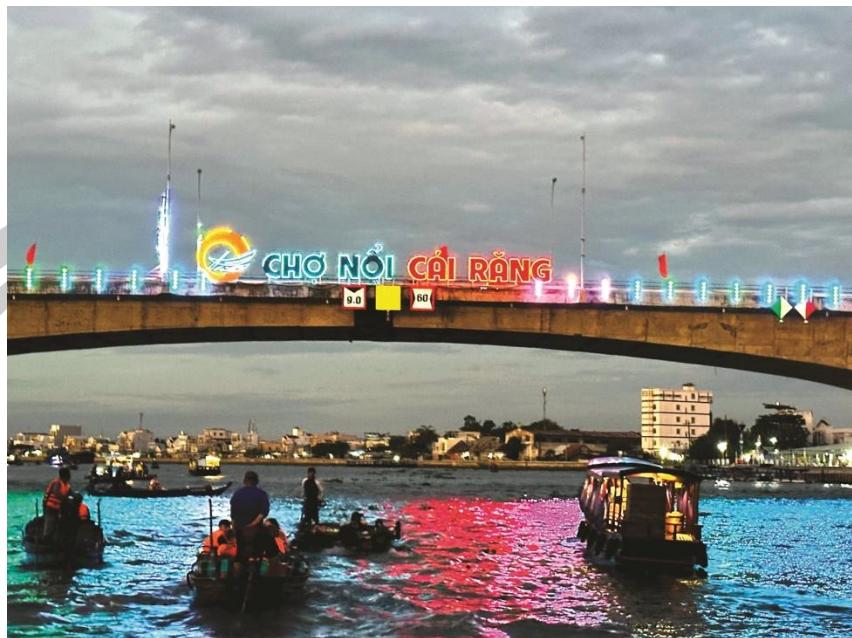


Figure 25 Cai Rang floating market Map – Can Tho
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)



Figure 26 Cai Rang floating market Map – Can Tho
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

Cai Rang floating market is located downstream of the Can Tho River, about 600m from the Cai Rang bridge. It has a reasonably large water surface area, convenient for floating market activities: the average width of the river is 100-120m, and the length of the river is about 1300-1500m. The relatively large water surface area is located in the Cai Rang district, with about 300-400 boats meeting at the market daily.

Using a pole is a unique form of offering goods at the Cai Rang floating market. Sellers of agricultural products hang their goods on a pole on the boat to provide them. The goods sold on the boat usually specialize in selling one kind of

product. In front of each boat is typically a pole on which the boat's type of goods hang. For example, if a boat specializes in selling sweet potatoes, a few sweet potatoes will be hung on the bamboo pole, and if a boat sells mangoes, a few mangoes will be hung on the bamboo pole as if to let buyers know that "Sweet potatoes are sold here" or "Mangoes are sold here." Such boats are called "the be." Cai Rang Floating Market usually opens early, from dawn, and closes around 8 or 9 o'clock. In the past, people often used three-leaf boats, five-leaf boats, and sampans to go to the floating market. Now, there are also motorboats. Buyers also go to the market by boat or sampan. The boat rowers are like artists who flex their oars to control the small boats, skillfully weaving between hundreds of boats without collisions. Southern people are inherently honest, while merchants on the rivers of the West are even more honest and lovable. Because they must work hard to make a living on the rivers daily, they live together with the love of the vast and open rivers and waters. Don't try to compete for victory, but choose each other, look at each other to go, choose each other to sell, give in, help, and share to live. That is the culture of humanity, which makes the culture of the Cai Rang floating market unique.

The market is most crowded around 7-8 a.m. It does not operate well on Lunar New Year (Tet's 1st and 2nd days) and the Doan Ngo Festival (the 5th day of the 5th lunar month). Due to the needs of market goers, there are not only fruit and agricultural product boats but also many other types of services: pho, hu tieu, coffee, floating pubs... Service boats (usually small boats) weave in and out to serve marketgoers and visitors.

The attraction of the Cai Rang floating market for visitors is to preserve and promote the characteristics of the river region and the freshness of the goods here, to feel their souls more open and generous, to feel the difference of life here, to see the rare sincerity, simplicity, and hospitality of the people of the river region in the West in general.

Not only preserving the cultural beauty of the river region, today, the floating market is an attractive tourist destination that tourists, especially foreign tourists, love to explore and experience. Every five boats entered. There were four boats carrying foreigners at the market. They were curious about everything from the scenery to the people of the river region, even the sweet "sugarcane" sales calls of the Tay Do girls.

Cai Rang Floating Market is also an attractive destination with local characteristics, attracting many domestic and foreign tourists, improving the lives of the heritage community, and contributing to the locality's socio-economic development. Today, although the road traffic network has been widely developed, the Cai Rang Floating Market is still growing. The market is on the traffic route to the provinces west of Hau River, such as Ca Mau - Rach Gia. At the same time, this place is close to Hau River, an inter-regional and international waterway. Cai Rang Floating Market is a gathering place for merchants from all over, creating diverse cultural colors on the floating market. Cai Rang Floating Market cultural space integrates many types of intangible cultural heritage: social customs and beliefs, folk knowledge, folk performing arts (don ca tai tu) ... and these heritages are still being preserved and passed down. Although there are changes, there is still the ability to maintain and develop. With the unique cultural and economic values of the Cai Rang floating market, Rough Guide (UK) travel magazine voted it one of the ten most impressive markets in the world, describing it as a unique place with "colorful tropical

boats" selling goods. The website [youramazingplaces](http://youramazingplaces.com) also lists the 6 most beautiful floating markets in Asia, including the floating markets of the Mekong Delta region, of which the Cai Rang floating market is a typical example. Cai Rang floating market culture was recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism under Decision No. 829/QD-BVHTTDL dated March 10, 2016.

4. Tra On the floating market – Vinh Long



Figure 27 . Tra On the floating market – Vinh Long

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)



Figure 28 Tra On the floating market – Vinh Long

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)



Figure 29 Tra On the floating market – Vinh Long

Source: <https://vinhlong.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

Tra On the floating market is the last on the Hau River of Tra On district, Vinh Long province. This is one of the oldest markets and is also associated with many cultural activities of the people in the area. Tra On floating market is located downstream of Hau River and about 250m from Tra On estuary. This place is a wholesale market because it sells many agricultural products such as taro, sweet potato, cucumber, Tan Thanh orange, Luc Si Thanh durian... Tra On floating market is about 250m from the Tra On estuary. This market is held according to the tide, so when the tide rises, the Tra On floating market gathers many boats to trade, extremely busy on the Hau River, which is more than 300m long. Sometimes, when the tide rises in the early morning, the market attracts hundreds of large and small boats from Vinh Long province and neighboring provinces to trade and exchange goods along with Cu Lao An Binh

In addition, beef noodle soup with banana flowers is considered a "specialty" of the market. So when you come here, don't forget to enjoy this unique Western beef noodle dish.

The unique feature of the Tra On floating market is that it gathers according to the tide; the market is crowded in the morning but is more bustling when the tide starts to rise; the higher the tide, the more crowded the boats and ships.

The river culture and Cai Rang floating market culture have been recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage... The floating markets that still exist today, although not as large as before, are still functionally bustling places for exchanging and trading goods and are the focal points and characteristics, unique symbols of the region. Some maintain the consistent purity of a simple river trading place, but some have become "places containing intangible cultural heritage, transported by typical boats.

From the specific conditions of trade, transportation, and daily life closely connected to the river, the habit of using boats is an inevitable factor. Each household typically has at least one boat or may have more than two, including various vessels with different capacities, designs, and materials.

5. Nga Bay Floating Market – Hau Giang

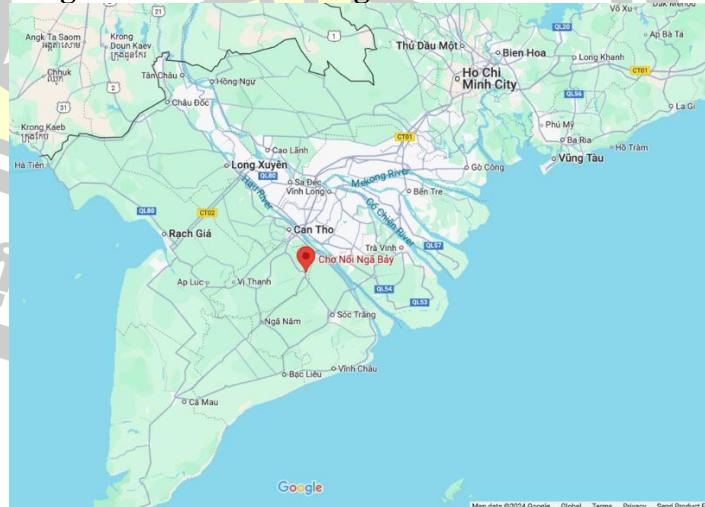


Figure 30 Nga Bay Floating Market – Hau Giang

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)

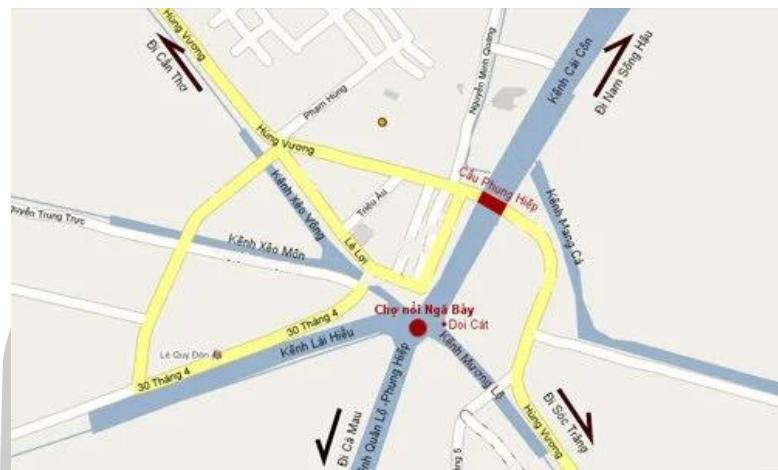


Figure 31. Nga Bay Floating Market – Hau Giang



Figure 32 Nga Bay Floating Market – Phung Hiep - Hau Giang
 Source: <https://ngabay.haugiang.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

Nga Bay Floating Market, also known as Phung Hiep Floating Market, was established in 1915 in Nga Bay town. It is one of the most famous and oldest floating markets in the West. The market is about 75km from Hau Giang center and about 35km from Can Tho. Its special feature is that it is located at the intersection of seven rivers. Nga Bay Floating Market, also known as Phung Hiep Floating Market, was once famous for its history of over a hundred years and the busiest trading atmosphere in the Mekong Delta. After ten years of digging canals here, the Nga Bay Floating Market was formed around 1915. The market is located at the intersection of 7 rivers: Cai Con, Mang Ca, Bung Tau, Soc Trang, Xeo Mon, Lai Hieu, and Xeo Vong. Many craft villages have been formed along the river, including boat building, weaving, and farming. With Nga Bay Floating Market, the gathering at seven river branches has become a unique feature that is difficult to blend in and will be a mystery that attracts those who love to travel to the West to explore because each river branch has a unique

craft village that is not the same... This place has also entered poetry and music, captivating people.

Nga Bay Floating Market often sells vegetables, household items, handicrafts, southern dishes, and fruits such as rambutan, mangosteen, and durian. In particular, there are also unique "items" such as snakes, geckos, birds, squirrels, turtles...

This is a famous market in Hau Giang province, where the buying and selling activities and exchange of goods of the residents of the Mekong Delta River region take place. Not only that, but it is also a place that attracts many tourists. Tourists will see colorful scenes of fruits, vegetables, and daily necessities in the river region. Especially the bright red color of rambutan and mangosteen and the fragrant taste of durian. Each boat sells only one type of fruit or item, and it will be suspended on a high pole called a beo tree to advertise.

6. Nga Nam floating market – Sóc Trăng

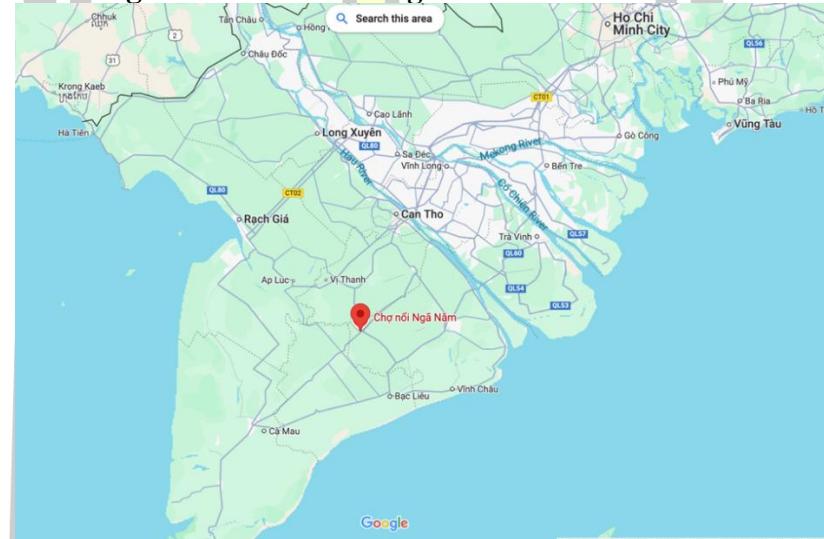


Figure 33 Map of The Nga Nam floating market – Sóc Trăng
Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)

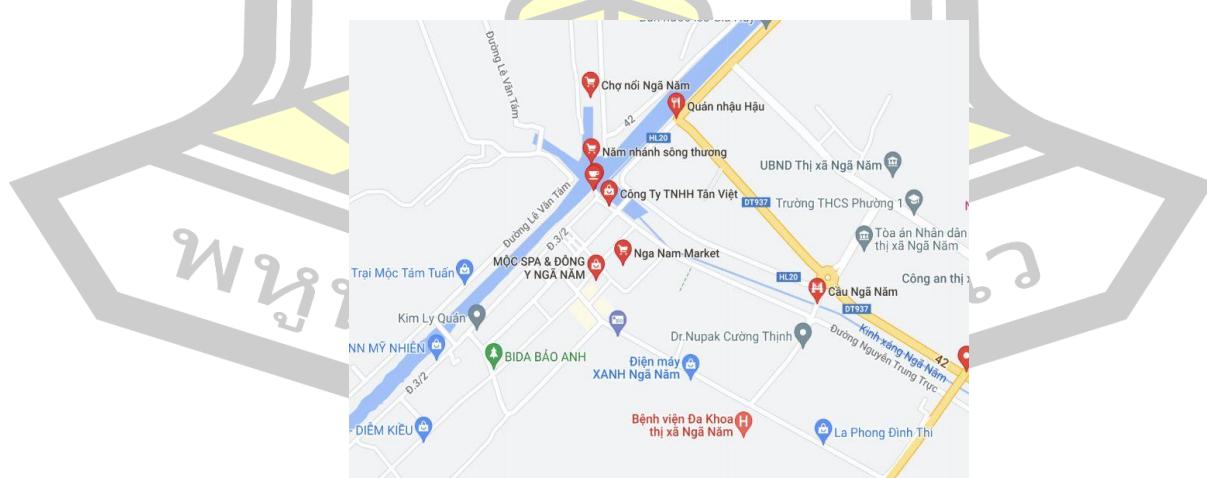


Figure 34 Nga Nam floating market – Sóc Trăng
Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on Aug 15, 2024)



Figure 35 Nga Nam floating market – Soc Trang
 Source: <https://soctrang.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 15, 2023)

It is the name of the famous floating market in Nga Nam town, Soc Trang province, located at the intersection of five rivers: Ca Mau, Vinh Quoi, Long My, Thanh Tri, and Phung Hiep. This is a relatively old and busiest floating market in the Mekong Delta.

Unlike other floating markets, the Nga Nam market starts at 3 a.m.; by 5 a.m., it is more crowded, but at 8 a.m., it begins to close. Visitors will see hanging poles with goods such as cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes, onions, garlic, chili, etc.

It can be said that Nga Nam floating market has most of the products of the Mekong Delta, from famous rice varieties of the Western rice granary to vegetables and fruits of the Southern gardens to shrimp, crab, fish, and other typical products of the river region. The market is bustling with the invitations of the boatmen, the floating mobile stalls such as porridge, noodles, fish noodles, coffee... serving the needs of tourists to enjoy. Nga Nam floating market still has attractive rustic countryside features, retains the typical soul of the Western floating market in the Ao Ba Ba, the sweet melodies of the Western folk songs, and the affectionate sayings imbued with the Southern character.

The behavior of using boats

Vietnam has a dense river network with thousands of large and small rivers widely distributed throughout the country and a coastline of more than 3,260km, so since ancient times, Vietnamese people have developed waterway transportation and shipbuilding techniques. Vietnamese people's lives are imbued with the image of boats and rivers, especially in the southwestern region. Attached to the boat and the river from generation to generation, that image, from being familiar and close when entering all activities and daily life, has gradually penetrated the hearts of each person and then become a unique and unique mark in the culture of the Vietnamese people. Through that, it can be seen that the boat has become an essential element in the lives of residents here. The boat participates in deciding many vital issues in human life. The ship is both a means of transport and a house, an indispensable "member" in every family for many generations. Today, although road traffic has developed, the river terrain and the habits and customs of the people here are still inseparable from

the boat. From preserving cultural identity to creating new roles for the ship, such as participating in tourism with many new and unique images. All of these factors further highlight the distinctive cultural features of the social life of boats in the southwest.

Cultural depth

It is no coincidence that most of Vietnam's cities in history have been places with river and sea ports. For example, Hanoi is on the Red River, Thanh Hoa is on the Ma River, Thua Thien-Hue is on the Huong River, Da Nang is on the Han River, Bien Hoa City is on the Dong Nai River, Ho Chi Minh City is on the Saigon River, Can Tho is on the Hau River...

If, in the past, the Central region had Hoi An, then in Tran Bien, there was Nong Nai Dai Pho, all of which were bustling trading ports, with boats on the pier and boats on the dock, meeting places for international trading ships at one time. Today, Hai Phong, Da Nang, Quy Nhon, Phan Rang, Phan Thiet, Vung Tau... all have sea ports.

In his work *Searching for the Identity of Vietnamese Culture*, Professor Tran Ngoc Them mentioned many times in detail: Among the motifs appearing on bronze drums of the Dong Son period, the most prominent motifs of birds and boats - symbols of the river region. Since the Dong Son period, the Vietnamese have built ships of various shapes with large carrying capacities, some copper-clad, to cross the sea to Southeast Asian countries. Many foreign historical documents record the development of our ancestors' sea-going boat-building techniques.

In Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi, Trinh Hoai Duc recorded the scene on the pier and under the boats very vividly as follows: "In Gia Dinh, there are boats everywhere, or boats are used as houses, or to go to the market, or to visit relatives, or to transport rice and firewood for trading, which is very convenient. Boats fill the river, going back and forth day and night without stopping..." .

The means of transportation and transportation on rivers of the Vietnamese people since ancient times have been wealthy, such as boats, canoes, rafts, ferries, ships, and boats... There are also many types of boats: basket boats, bamboo boats, fishing boats, frog boats, dugout canoes, sampans, dragon boats... And especially, boats are considered as people and have souls, so many localities have the custom of painting the eyes of boats, helping boats avoid being harmed by water monsters, helping fishermen find more seafood, helping lucky merchants find many shores that bring fortune...

The Vietnamese people's attachment to river life is reflected not only in their travel but also in their living conditions. People living by the river often use their boats, rafts, and means of livelihood as their homes. Then, many houseboats and rafts gather together and establish floating villages, fishing villages, and fishing hamlets on the river. As in Can Tho, the image of a floating market in Cai Rang is still a familiar, close image... to many people.

Deeply rooted in the heart

The image of boats and rivers has left a strong mark on the lives of Vietnamese people. It is clearly shown that most aspects of human life take boats and rivers as standards and objects of comparison. This not only appears in folk songs, proverbs, and idioms, but even today, in modern society, Vietnamese people, when using daily speech, use words with the mark of rivers and waters in a very natural and familiar Specifically, in folk songs, proverbs, and idioms, there are many

sentences with images of rivers and water, such as talking about determination and will; Vietnamese idioms and proverbs say: “*Chớ thấy sóng cản mà ngã tay chèo, Chết trong cơn sóng đục*”: Don't let the waves make you give up rowing “way It's better to die apparently than live muddy... Talking about carefreeness and lack of preparation, “*Nước đến chân mới nhảy*”: you must wait until the water reaches your feet to jump. Talking about the business experience: “*Buôn tàu, buôn bè, không bằng ăn dè hèn tiền*.” Eat a feast first, wade through the water later; Wait for a meal, then collapse; Build a bridge to walk on, no one will build a bridge to walk on... Talking about thrift, our ancestors had a bridge: Trading ships and trading rafts is not as good as being frugal. Our ancestors have a saying about women having difficulty giving birth: “*Dàn ông đi biển có đôi, dàn bà đi biển, mồ côi một mình*.”: Men go to sea in pairs, women go to sea, orphaned alone. When discussing human nature, idioms and proverbs say: : “*Dò sông dò biển dẽ dò/ Đó ai lấy thước mà đo lòng người; Sông sâu còn có người dò, Lòng người nham hiểm ai đo cho tường*” Probing rivers and oceans is accessible. Who can measure people's hearts with a ruler? Deep rivers can still be probed; the human heart is treacherous; who can measure it... Talking about love in folk songs and proverbs, our ancestors also borrowed many images of rivers and waters to express: “*Thuyền về có nhớ bến chảng, Bến thì một dạ khăng khăng đợi thuyền/ Thuyền theo lái, Gái theo chồng; Thuyền anh mắc can lén dây, Mượn dôi dài yém làm dây kéo thuyền...*” Does the boat remember the dock when it returns? The dock is still waiting for the ship. The ship follows the rudder, and the girl follows her husband. Your boat is stranded here, borrowing a pair of strips of your shirt as a rope to pull the boat.

Nowadays, Vietnamese still commonly use words that bear the mark of rivers: passionate eyes, immersed in thought, swimming in the stream of life, speaking fluently, soaking in documents, Covid-19 wave, low prices, diving in time...

Even when traveling on land, Vietnamese people still keep the habit of thinking and speaking the way of traveling by water; for example, when asking someone to help them for a distance, people often use the word "qua giang" (across the river), inter-provincial passenger buses are usually called "xe do" (buses)... Or on the day of the Kitchen God's Festival, families prepare offerings and carp for the Kitchen God to ride to Heaven. Then, when he returns to the other world, Vietnamese people also believe that it is a river area, so they call it nine springs, golden springs..., so they send him off in a boat-shaped vehicle. From the past until now, the thoughts and behaviors of each Vietnamese person have certainly known or used the above words and customs... Understanding this phenomenon's profound meaning and roots is like finding the roots of national culture again, another effective way to connect the traditional source with the previous generation.

In entertainment, film, and movies

“*Dat Rung Phuong Nam*” is the latest film in 2024 by director Nguyen Quang Dung, a famous director from Vietnam. The film is inspired by the film “*Dat Phuong Nam*” produced in 1997. It is one of the classic films of Vietnam. Through the story of a boy looking for his father on his adventure in the Southern countryside, boats play an essential role throughout the scenes through the context of war or life. Boats and floating market culture or river culture are the main settings that frequently appear. Boats for soldiers to patrol, people use small boats upside down on the river to avoid bombs, boats for the army to move into rugged terrain... Boats in people's daily

life... In 2024, when director Quang Dung produced a new version of this film, he had to restore, renovate, and build a film set at Rung Tram Tra Su, set up a floating market scene, rivers, more than 400 extras, and more than 50 boats for filming.



Figure 36 A scene recreating the floating market in the movie Dat Rung Phuong Nam

- The latest and most spectacular movie by Director Quang Dung - Viet Nam

Source: <https://vnexpress.net/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)



Quá trình thực hiện đại cảnh chợ nổi trong 'Đất rùng phượng Nam'

Figure 37 The process of making the floating market scene in the movie Dat Rung Phuong Nam

Source: <https://vnexpress.net/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)



Figure 38. A scene from the famous movie Dat Rung Phuong Nam 1. With the important appearance of boats in film and life.

Source: <https://vnexpress.net/> (Accessed on June 12, 2023)

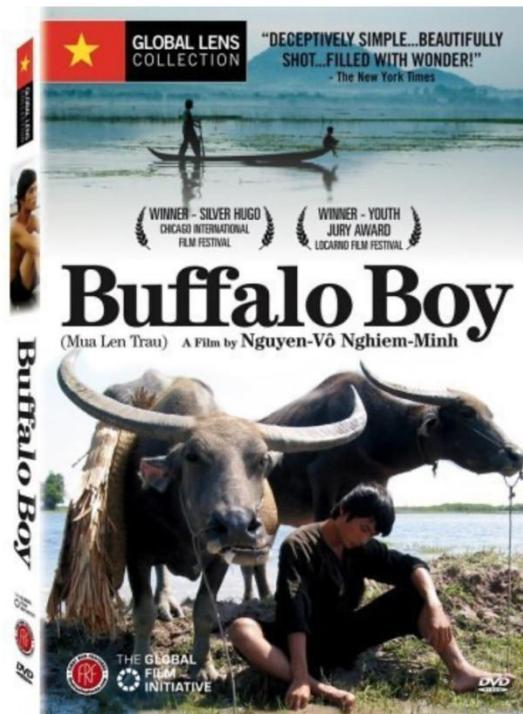


Figure 39 The film Buffalo Wool Season

Source: <https://www.imdb.com/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)

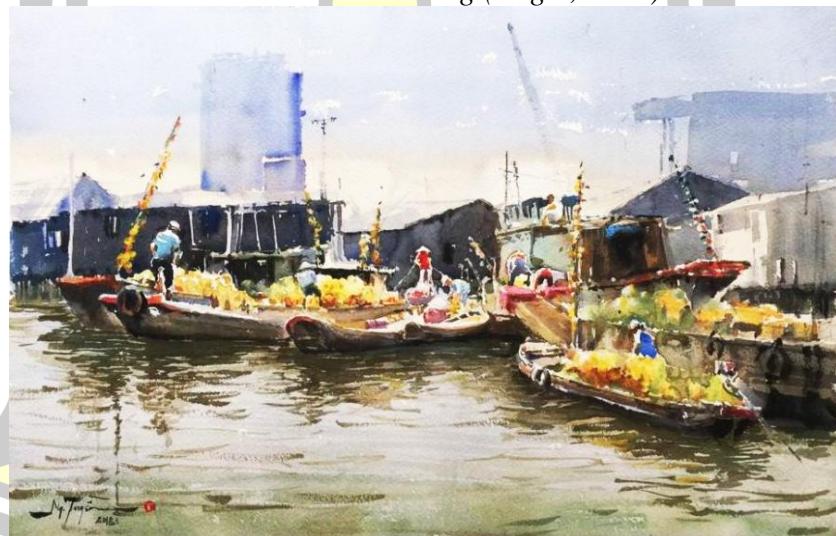
The film Buffalo Wool Season participated in nearly ten regional and international film festivals, winning significant awards: Special Prize at Locarno Film Festival, Switzerland; Best New Director Award at Chicago Film Festival, USA; Golden Unicorn Award (Grand Prix) at Amiens Film Festival, France; Special Prize at Amazonas Film Festival, Brazil; Top Prize at Asian Marine Film Festival, Mukuhari, Japan... After 20 years of release, the film still maintains its smoldering heat and many reviews on VieON, receiving a 5.0/5 rating. The film is set in the southwestern region, characterized by boats and rivers.

Artworks



Figure 40 Thuong Ho nghi Tet (80x200cm) watercolor – artist Ho Hung.

Source: Ho Van Hung (Aug 5, 2023)



. Figure 41 Can Tho floating market (38x56cm) watercolor – artist Tuyen Nguyen



Figure 42. Floating market oil painting – artist Dang Can

Many artworks inspired by Southern boats reflect the social life of the ships and the identity and culture of the people here. Thuong Ho nghi Tet (80x200cm) watercolor – artist Ho Hung, Can Tho floating market (38x56cm) watercolor – artist Tuyen Nguyen, Floating market oil painting artist Dang can.

The above evidence shows that boats have always been closely associated with the lives of indigenous people. Boats are decisive in forming people's habits, lifestyles, and attitudes in the friendly River region. Responding to nature also responds to the culture imbued with the region's identity. Thanks to the indispensable contributions of boats, the perfection of a natural, peaceful, simple, rustic, and energetic identity is maintained and beautifully developed through lifestyle, literature, poetry, films, and even artistic creations.

Boat quantity

For a long time, boats have been a means of transportation and a valuable asset. When roads were not yet developed, boats were the “legs” of many families in the rural areas of the Mekong Delta. Boats and sampans are used as a means of transportation from house to house, from hamlet to hamlet, from region to region, to visit, to parties, to transport, to buy and sell goods, to catch fish and shrimp, etc. Since the 17th century, generations of Vietnamese immigrants, along with the participation of the Chinese and Khmer people, have renovated the natural river network and dug many new canals to develop the Southern Delta. This is the foundation for developing the irrigation and transportation system to serve the largest rice granary in Vietnam for nearly 400 years. When the Vietnamese people were migrating, forming the settlement process, and due to the historical process of colonial exploitation by the French colonialists of the Mekong Delta, the exploitation of the dense river system was more effective. They made great efforts to dredge, dig canals, and dig canals to bring water to the fields while creating convenient waterways for travel and trade. When they came here to reclaim land and adapt to the environment, the ancestors of the Southern people created new lifestyles and customs, thereby forming the

characteristics of the riverine humanistic geo-ecological region. Riverine civilized life highlights the rich world of water transport means, such as canoes, boats, tugs, ships, and ferries. Each type has different forms to adapt to the characteristics of the rivers and canals of each region. According to Trinh Hoai Duc's "Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi" (1998) the ancient land of Gia Dinh, now the South, had many boat-building workshops such as Chu Su workshop (Phien An town), Thuy Su workshop (Bien Hoa town), Thuy Su workshop (Vinh Thanh town) and Thuy Su workshop (Ha Tien town)... To complete a boat, people needed forest trees. But, in the past, forest trees were not rare. Sao (Hopea), Sen (Madhuca Pasquieri.), Dau (Dipterocarpus Alatus), Ven Ven (Anisoptera Costata), and Kien Kien (Hopea pierrei Hance) were used to make planks. However, the best was still sao or sen wood - very water-resistant wood. People used mu you wood to make curved beams and steering wheels. The wood of the Lagerstroemia tree used to make oars was considered number one. To make anchors, people carved mango wood. After choosing the tree, people proceed to saw the wood, shape each part, and assemble them in the following order: put it on the roof, pin it, build the beam, build the eel, set in the rim of the hatch, close the curved roof, put the bolt, build the mouth, build the nose basin and the basin again, make the nose, the steering wheel, the hood, the tunnel and then plaster. For plastering, the talented artisans of this region used Son Cam Lam tree (steel wool or canarium in the mountains) mixed with Rái tree oil. To have a good boat, each camp has its professional secret, which people call "tips." That is the experience of the master craftsman, the specific technical parameters applied to each type of boat.



Figure 43 From 1976 to 1986, the Floating Market was home to nearly a hundred establishments that attracted thousands of skilled workers.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)

Nga 7 City, Hau Giang Province, has long been known not only as the confluence of 7 rivers, home to the century-old Floating Market, but also famous for its once glorious craft of building boats and canoes. According to many elders, the Nga Bay boat-building craft village was formed in the early 20th century. At first, only a few households set up camps to follow the craft, gradually becoming a famous craft village far and wide. Along with the prosperous Nga Bay Floating Market of that time, the boat-building town continued to prosper, helping many households have food and savings. The boat and canoe-building industry was most prosperous from

1976 to 1986. People in Nga Bay said that at that time, nearly a hundred establishments were here, attracting thousands of skilled workers. The sounds of chiseling, sawing, and planning echoed throughout the villages. Hearing them repeatedly became a familiar and indispensable rhythm of life here.

Boat and canoe building was mainly done by hand, so it took several months to produce a product. Later, with the support of machines, productivity also increased. Large and small boats and canoes traveled up and down the West, following each other.

Mr. Nguyen Van Loc, in Dai Thanh commune, Nga Bay city, Hau Giang province, shared: In the past, boat building was mainly done by hand, without saws or planers; it took 4-5 months to build one boat. Now, the progress is twice as fast, thanks to the support of machines.

In the past, the annual flood season was considered the “money-making” time for those who worked in the trade. Boats and canoes were likened to the legs of people living in the river area, so every family tried to buy one or two ships to “fish for their food.”

Ms. Le Thi Thu Cuc, Hiep Thanh Ward, Nga Bay City, recalled: 'Back then, there weren't many vehicles, and there were no roads, roads, or highways. Now, each family has to buy one or two boats; if they are generous, they can buy three more.

During the season, every establishment is busy day and night. Every establishment tries to make quality products and beautiful designs to please customers, which is also a way to “keep the relationship.”

Through the process of field surveys, data collection, and interviews, taking data from research subjects directly related to the boat-building industry in the Mekong Delta region and neighboring cities, it shows that the number of boat-building establishments "Trai Ghe," maintaining the traditional craft is not much anymore. Although boats still account for a large number and play a vital role in the lives of residents here, the number of newly built wooden boats has decreased significantly. Some boat owners, boat owners, boat builders, and reinforcers said that currently, the number of wooden boats is not much because the use of new materials in building and repairing boats isn't more popular than before. The reduction in the number of newly built wooden boats is equivalent to 80-90% compared to before, related to the causes of actual conditions and the development of social and technical conditions. The rare wood suitable for building boats is no longer the same as before, so the raw materials and quality will also decrease sharply. In addition, the appearance of new materials that are more durable and convenient, mass production in large quantities, and quickly has caused boat building workshops or skilled boat builders to no longer have job opportunities. Still, it will mainly be repairing boats used for many years, sometimes needing to patch holes or use materials such as a metal tool to cover areas prone to collision and damage, such as the boat's roof, boat hull, etc. People will mainly use boats left from previous generations (if they are wooden boats) or buy new small boats made of new, lighter, more durable, and more convenient materials such as composite. Large ships are also built with iron instead of wood. As life becomes more and more developed, the market for boats and canoes is shrinking, and the source of wood is less abundant than before. In addition, the appearance of ships and canoes made of light, beautiful, and durable composite also takes away a significant market share. The boat and canoe-building craft village in

Nga Bay is also gradually losing its prosperity. Ms. Tong Le Thuy, Hiep Thanh Ward, Nga Bay City, Hau Giang said: 'Nowadays, people prefer to use composite products more because they are light, without the need for expensive paint or plaster. Compared to wooden products, the price is much cheaper, but the quality is twice as good. Composite boats have a warranty of up to 20 years, and many companies have a lifetime warranty, so people like to use them. Faced with historical challenges, many boat and canoe owners have sought to preserve their profession. They have chosen to switch to building large ships, specialized vessels, and offshore fishing boats with a capacity of hundreds of tons, being creative and adapting to the new situation.

Mr. Nguyen Van Loc, in Dai Thanh commune, Nga Bay city, expressed: 'I want it to survive; this profession has been around since then, from my father's time until now. Now I am old, I will no longer do it, so my son will continue.

According to information from boat builders, boat workshop owners, boat owners... these people have had time to use, contact, and have direct expertise in approaching boats, the risk is high and very high that there will be no more new wooden boats built or even used in the next 50 years. Therefore, the opportunity to approach, directly contact, observe, experience, and use traditional wooden boats for the next generation is very noteworthy. With the change in technology and the form and material of boats, maintaining traditional boat models with wooden materials is facing the risk of being lost. People have replaced wooden boats with more durable and convenient materials such as composite or iron metal. Many small boats, such as canoes, Xuong, Vo Lai, and Tac Rang... have also been replaced enormously because of their convenience and durability. Some large boats, such as self-propelled barges (this vehicle has the same function and structure as a large-capacity boat, are often used to transport construction materials or goods in large quantities and volumes and can also be used as a mobile home on the river with full amenities, not much different from a house on land). Although the price can be a big problem, these new water vehicles' durability and convenience are significant advantages. It is worth noting that it is highly competitive with traditional wooden boats.

Changes in form, decoration style, and new functions of some types of boats in the Mekong Delta region:

Color change: For residents of the river area, each means of transport, especially boats, is considered their "legs." Suppose There are bicycles and motorbikes in ordinary families for road traffic, waterway traffic, small rowboats, or Thuyen May Duo Tom. In that case, they are considered equivalent to "bicycles, motorbikes" for an essential family when they do not have much economic conditions. Most of them do small-scale trading, "petty traders." These boats are used to earn a living, moving through floating markets or neighboring areas and short distances. The trading items of people using this type of boat are often aquatic, agricultural products such as fish, shrimp, or small quantities of fruit. In addition, there are also stalls selling food, drinks, refreshments, and snacks, such as coconut water, coffee, Bun Rieu, and Bun Ca (many kinds of nuddles, soup with fish or crap - living in the river). Due to the characteristics of these small boats, they will quickly sneak into the canals or follow large boats to serve "customers" when they are moving on the river by these large ships.

2012—exactly ten years ago, Gordon Ramsay, the world-famous British chef who has received 16 prestigious Michelin stars, created a long-running TV show

called "Gordon's Great Escape." In this series, the "Masterchef" visited many Asian countries, including Vietnam.

Here, he tried many specialties and familiar yet "strange" dishes from all over the provinces and cities. During his journey in Can Tho, Gordon visited Aunt Hai's famous bun rieu boat in Can Tho city's Cai Rang floating market area. The chef, who had cooked for countless heads of state and celebrities worldwide, was fascinated and praised the simple bun dish, which cost less than 20k VND/bowl at that time. A vermicelli boat of a vendor - her name is Aunt Hai at the Cai Rang floating market is painted in eye-catching red and blue colors. This vermicelli boat has been highly praised by the American chef Gordon. After hearing Aunt Hai's story that "she ate and learned to cook by herself," Gordon could still create a recipe with a rich, elegant flavor for more than 30 years. When he finished the vermicelli bowl, Gordon had to give Aunt Hai the nickname "Queen of Broth" as an implicit affirmation of the quality of the vermicelli bowl that Aunt Hai had given him.

When Gordon returned to Vietnam in 2013, he was still "fascinated." He could not forget this Vietnamese dish. So, it became a source of inspiration, and he chose it as the topic for the chefs who entered the Top 5 of the American Masterchef competition. Since then, Gordon Ramsay has visited Vietnamese dishes in general and Aunt Hai's vermicelli soup stall, which became famous when it appeared on mass media sites worldwide.



Figure 44 Gordon Ramsay, the world's most famous chef, visits the Cai Rang floating market - Can Tho.

Source: <https://vietnamnet.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)

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Figure 45. Gordon Ramsay, the world's most famous chef, visits the Cai Rang floating market - Can Tho. The noodle boat was visited and dined by the famous chef.

Source: <https://vietnamnet.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)

Typically, boats have the typical color of wood used on the water for a long time, such as brown or gray. When making boats, the craftsman still has the process of sawing lumber and assembling it according to the size of the drawing board and applying specialized waterproof glue for ships at the nailing places or joints of the boards. Finally, a specialized color layer is painted to waterproof and enhance the protection of the wood. Long-term use will turn it into the natural color of the wood. After the Covid 19 pandemic, the world economy has declined severely. Businesses in all countries are no exception. Therefore, small businesses, farmers, fishermen, merchants, middle-class families, and those with poor economic conditions are even more seriously affected. If they do small business, they will have more customers than before. Families with unstable jobs who make a living by doing small business on the river will have more difficulties when they have no customers. Competition in business is even higher when the number of tourists and visitors to the floating market has not increased after COVID-19. Each small business owner must find ways to survive, from changing jobs to investing in quality or business forms. Some small boat owners find that making their boats stand out can attract more attention from visitors. From there, attracting customers becomes more accessible. Usually, boats anchored in clusters and groups in the floating market have similar designs and colors. Visitors often observe from larger boats down to the anchoring areas of the boats and will quickly recognize boats with different colors. Therefore, some boats have decided to change the boat body paint; the boat's color is not the original brown or gray but is painted in other colors such as purple, pink, and blue. The boat owners arbitrarily decorate these colors according to their preferences; they are often colors with high light frequencies, such as red, orange, yellow, blue.

Starting from the idea of highlighting their boats for small businesses, such as selling snacks, they have changed the color of their boats to be eye-catching, choosing different, cute colors that stand out entirely on the river compared to other ships with natural colors. Moreover, changing the color is not too complicated or costly to implement. Regarding the conditions and capabilities of small traders, they have chosen bright colors such as pink, blue, and purple to cover their entire boats,

including items such as cooking pots, food bowls, hats, and costumes. This is also the simplest way to change the characteristics of boats.



Figure 46 The noodle boat has its color changed to create a special attraction for tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 47 The noodle boat has its color changed to create a special attraction for tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

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Figure 48 The noodle boat has its color changed to create a special attraction for tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

Some boat owners are even more creative in attracting attention by "synchronizing the brand" with a unified color from the item to the uniform, the boat color. This basic creation is quite friendly, cute, and eye-catching; the promotional effect is significant. It also shows the optimistic and creative spirit of the residents here, adapting to all conditions and always being positive and friendly with everyone in all contexts. Usually, the boats on the Cai Rang floating market only have blue or brown colors. Therefore, the ship is all pink, from the boat, conical hat, and costumes to the lid of the vermicelli pot..., which has attracted the attention of many people. "Boats in the floating market are the same, so the boat owner wanted to paint his boat differently so people can visit and take souvenir photos. In addition, the bright, cute pink color is loved by many young people, so the couple also wore pink clothes." The owners of this 'unique' boat are Mr. Ngo Bao Quoc (35 years old) and Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Linh (34 years old). Ms. Linh said she and her husband have been trading at the Cai Rang floating market for many years. When tourism recovered after the COVID-19 pandemic, the couple decided to repaint the noodle boat in all pink to create an exciting highlight for visitors to the floating market. Every day, the couple has to wake up at 2 am to prepare the broth, and at 4 am, they anchor the boat at the floating market to serve customers. Since "dressing" their boat in pink, Linh and her husband's business has become increasingly prosperous.

She sells more than 100 portions of noodles daily, and on weekends and holidays, she sells 2-3 times more. Thanks to that, her income has increased significantly. In particular, after the image of the pink boat was shared on social networks, many young people expressed their interest in this unique creation, so they flocked to experience eating noodles on the river and taking pictures. “My husband and I have been selling breakfast on this river for many years. However, since the renovation of the boat, it has attracted more visitors and diners. Thanks to that, the amount of noodles sold has increased 2-3 times compared to before. Before, we sold at most less than 50 bowls,” said Ms. Linh.



Figure 49 The noodle boats are painted in different colors to attract tourists. The noodle boats on the floating market are painted green instead of the usual wooden color.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2024)



Figure 50 The noodle boats are painted in different colors to attract tourists. The noodle boats on the floating market are painted green instead of the usual wooden color.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2024)



Figure 51. The noodle boats are painted in different colors to attract tourists. The noodle boats on the floating market are painted green instead of the usual wooden color.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2024)

The use of color creates novelty and attracts attention to the brand, which is relatively easy to do with the income of most small traders. In addition, the bright colors also show the optimistic and cheerful spirit of the residents of the river area. Some small and medium-sized enterprises have improved to highlight the tourist boat service. They have added equipment to serve according to the function, and the improvements from the popular-sized boat are reinforced with a canopy to support tourists, creating a more comfortable feeling in weather conditions. For vessels carrying more than 20 passengers, they are large and can install additional tables, chairs, and seats, as well as arrange a canopy above and on both sides. However, the boat's characteristic details, such as the boat's eyes and bow, remain the same. These boats do not need to move too fast because they serve tourism, so the additional equipment does not require too much investment in technical design. Sometimes, simple materials such as trees and bamboo ensure functionality and aesthetics. In addition, the roofs also need to provide a suitable height so that the boat does not sway too much on the water surface or in situations close to larger water vehicles such as large ships or large junks with tonnage calculated by ton or large passenger ships.

This is a Tu An tourist boat unit. With a business address on Vo Van Tan Street - Can Tho City. They have added a simple roof from small junks, not installed cockpits in the back like normal junks, but improved the whole thing. All the hulls of the boats use the flat surface inside the boat to mount tables and chairs and carry passengers. Details like normal junks are renovated for the most significant space. In addition, people also install many different styles of decoration or equipment so that tourists can enjoy the most comfortable feeling, such as sofas, tables, and chairs to create a space like a small mobile room on the river. People can organize meals and

sing on that tourist boat like their own home. They make the most friendly and comfortable feeling. These boats suit customers from various groups, such as family groups or companies. They often gather together to entertain on a rented tourist boat. Some passenger boats of the same size will have rows of seats arranged in rows to serve only to take visitors to sightseeing spots. During the trip, they will also be shared by tour guides about regional knowledge or organized fun games. And, of course, on each tourist boat, there is always river safety equipment according to regulations, such as life jackets. Each medium-sized boat carrying tourists has a small toilet behind the steering wheel. Tourist boats now only have the function of carrying passengers, so there is no middle area created as a private room for merchants; the front part is no longer used as cargo compartments, shrimp and fish, but the entire length is used as a "yard" with the most spacious space for tourists to sit according to the prescribed number of each load type of each boat size.



Figure 52 Ghe Bau is decorated in eye-catching purple and converted into a tourist boat.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 53 Ghe Bau with common functions and colors such as transporting rice, agricultural products, rice husks, construction materials

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 54 Ghe Bau with common functions and colors such as transporting rice, agricultural products, rice husks, construction materials

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 55 Ghe Bau with common functions and colors such as transporting rice, agricultural products, rice husks, construction materials

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

The Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Ban) has many loads equivalent to different sizes. Medium and small boats can take advantage of the conversion of decoration and function from carrying familiar goods of small traders in the river area to carrying people serving tourism services. The pure colors are also changed to different colors, attracting more attention and recognition in an area with too many boats simultaneously in the floating market. The river surface and flow here are pretty safe and mild in terms of weather, so the boat bodies are often round; the bow is large and does not need too much slope like the types of boats that need to withstand the harsh weather, dangerous as in coastal areas.

Depending on the conditions of use and design style or the identity of each brand, each company and unit participating in the river tourism culture industry in Can Tho will have ways to improve and innovate the types of boats in many different forms. The use of new colors is an initiative of each unit. In addition, changing the function and structure of the ships is enhanced in many other ways, such as improving aesthetics, creativity, harmony, and respect for natural beauty. They are creating new, beautiful, and poetic experiences. While small businesses choose colorful colors, medium and large companies pay more attention to aesthetics, preserving the natural beauty of the boats by keeping the primary colors. These units enhance customers' convenience, comfort, and visual satisfaction with more advanced decoration and service experiences. Not a popular style, these units also change the function of the boats. They often use small, medium, and large Bau boats (Tam Bang boats). Depending on the type of experience, the accompanying service will choose the type of boat to meet the equivalent function.



Figure 56 Passenger ships transport passengers and goods long distances
 Source: <https://www.camau.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)



Figure 57 Passenger ships are decorated with impressive designs and colors to suit transporting tourists.
 Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 58 Passenger ships are decorated with impressive designs and colors to suit transporting tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 59 Passenger ships are decorated with impressive designs and colors to suit transporting tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 60. Passenger ships are decorated with impressive designs and colors to suit transporting tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 61. Passenger ships are decorated with impressive designs and colors to suit transporting tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 62 Photo taken inside a long-distance passenger ship in 2012

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

Many types of boats in the Mekong Delta have different functions, structures, and shapes. The terrain, weather, and environmental conditions have directly affected the habits, living needs, and use of boats here. Most of the boats are both a means of transporting agricultural products and a "mobile home on the river" for the residents who are merchants. Therefore, the structural shapes of the boats are always focused on to suit each case of use. With new social conditions, boats with many functions and designs adapt to new functions. Most of the Tam Bang boats or Tail Tom (Duoi Tom) boats will have many variations because people cover them themselves according to their purposes and conditions, so there are many spontaneous "styles," from new paint with strange colors for trading to the large Tam Bang boats (Bau boats), Duc boats or previous passenger ships are also applied with many shapes and appear with tourism with a completely new role, even with changes in structure. A typical type is the passenger ship, also known as Do Doc (This is understood to be equivalent to long-distance passenger buses on land. Usually, people in the Mekong Delta only used passenger ships to move from one area or province to another.) Nowadays, passenger ships are converted into small-sized boats or long-distance boats. Usually, due to transporting passengers and goods over long distances, passenger ships had a hefty load capacity, both for passengers and for loading all kinds of goods. Nowadays, these passenger ships are only improved to transport tourists to large travel companies or prestigious hotels. If they have the means, they also invest in a certain number of passenger ships to provide the best customer experience in the services of that company.



Figure 63 Duc Boat has been renovated in design and function to serve tourism.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 64. Ghe Duc with the function of transporting fresh fish to neighboring areas by water. Photo of the process of transferring fish from the pond to the hull of the Ghe Duc (Duc Boat)

Source: <https://longxuyen.angiang.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)



.Figure 65 A giant Duc boat is being built.

Source: <https://longxuyen.angieng.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)



Figure 66 “Ghe Duc” Duc boat is moving on the river after releasing water from the fresh fish tank, it will float up high.

Source: <https://longxuyen.angieng.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)

There are many ways to transform the function, such as reducing the details of the walls and roofs, reducing the size to serve as a means of transporting tourists to places on the river or restructuring with a boat with a larger size, including many floors and even transforming into a motel, mobile hotel on the river. The types of boats used to transport tourists can also be improved with many functions, like using a yacht to move on the river. "Yachts" can have many floors or rooms for tourists to have areas to rest, entertain, and experience the rustic peace of the rivers of the West. On the Bassac 5* cruise, guests will rest in a cabin with air conditioning, free wifi, and a terrace. Rooms on the cruise are equipped with a wardrobe and a private bathroom with a shower and complimentary toiletries. The cruise also has a restaurant serving European and Asian cuisine and a daily continental breakfast.



Figure 67 Some types of boats are also converted into multi-storey tourist boats, combining the designs of many types of boats.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

More uniquely, on Bassac, there is always a team of kayaks for guests to paddle and explore the Mekong River along small canals. In addition, the large bar area is ideal for organizing cozy, luxurious, and compact parties right on the ship. Guests will also have a one-night stay at Nam Bo Boutique Hotel on the journey. The hotel is at 1 Ngo Quyen Street, Tan An Ward, Ninh Kieu District, Ninh Kieu Wharf, Can Tho. It is 70m from Ninh Kieu Wharf, Vincom Plaza Hung Vuong shopping center is about 1.8 km, and Vincom Plaza Xuan Khanh shopping center is 2.3 km. The hotel features a restaurant, bar, and views of the river. The rooms have air conditioning, a flat-screen TV with cable channels, a kettle, a shower, a hairdryer, and a desk. Each room is equipped with a wardrobe and a private bathroom.

The famous "Ghe May Duoi Tom" models have also been improved to serve passenger transport. These are very popular, common, and low-cost boat models. This famous group of boats occupies a large portion of the Cai Rang floating market. Residents who use these boat models add a bare roof for tourists. These boats are relatively small and often unsuitable for traveling long distances. Besides, the engine noise is also an obstacle because it is pretty noisy. However, in terms of flexibility, it is trendy because of its low cost and ease of getting into many places on large rivers or crowded floating market areas.



Figure 68 The Ghe may Duoi Tom" is a popular type similar to motorbikes and bicycles on the road, the boat is compact, convenient, small in size, cannot carry much but can easily get into narrow positions on the river

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 69 The Ghe may Duoi Tom" is a popular type similar to motorbikes and bicycles on the road, the boat is compact, convenient, small in size, cannot carry much but can easily get into narrow positions on the river

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

With high-end hotels 5* in Can Tho, such as Victoria, they also design boats with luxurious and eye-catching appearances from the famous "Ghe May Duoi Tom," a popular model with people with low salaries. With the new model of the ship, the improved roof is installed with rattan or cushioned seats, which are also very sophisticated and aesthetic, ensuring safety and high aesthetics. This segment of boats is only for high-end tourism services.



Figure 70 The sampan was converted into a luxurious and convenient model to serve tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 71 Small sampans (Ghe May Duoi Tom) are used as a popular means of transport for people living on the river.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

Designed in the style of the traditional sampans (Ghe Tam Ban) that have plied the waters of the Mekong for centuries, the flotilla of five private river vessels offer the chance to explore the floating markets, winding waterways and orchard gardens of the Mekong Delta, stay in a spacious private cabin featuring rattan, bamboo and exotic wood furnishings and enjoy delicious regional dining, produced by the talented on-board chef, explore the many cultures that have influenced the Mekong Delta aboard our three-day cruise such as Can Tho, Vietnam's so-called

“Western Capital”, known for its scenic floating market; Sa Dec, a tiny town bursting with Indochinese influences..

With the new design changing in size and creating a more elegant shape, the application for tourism has more advantages. The popular boat has become luxurious, sleek, and convenient, making the most comfortable and safe feeling for the most demanding tourists. In addition, people also equip small "Xuong Ba La" for applications such as moving to shallow waters, weaving through narrow rivers, or transporting other materials. They can anchor the large boat at a fixed location, such as a boat dock or floating market, and then use a small boat to move into the floating market areas; they can also use small boats as rescue equipment or many other functions.

The ferry is a rather unique form that only exists in the river area. The ferry is a means of transporting passengers and other road vehicles across large rivers without a bridge. Therefore, ferries are often huge, built with iron, and move slowly. It is understood as a type of "Do Ngan," a boat that takes people across the river from one side to the other, not along the river's length. These ferries will have many floors to maximize passenger capacity; vehicles are usually on the lower floor, and people and small vehicles can move to the upper floor of the ferry while the ferry moves across the river.

Depending on the river section, the ferry can be large or small. The small type used for small river sections carrying fewer passengers is called "Chet." Some smaller "chet" types are also used for garden irrigation. Chet is similar to a ferry with a vast body, usually rectangular, with the two ends and the tail being the same for convenience when docking at the dock without having to turn around. The ferry is also designed similarly, with both ends having the same docking function at the pier, which is very convenient for the driver. It is also safe and convenient for passengers to maintain the same posture and direction as the vehicle they move onto the ferry. Otherwise, when the ferry docks, they need to continue moving onto land in the right direction without turning around.

The current yachts in the center of Can Tho city have the same appearance and style as ferries, but the tourism application has changed much in terms of the primary function. Each yacht is often decorated in its own style. Still similar in shape to ferries, yachts are usually rectangular and have a hefty load capacity. People design each yacht floor as a floating restaurant with a staging area for cultural exchange, tables and chairs for diners, a kitchen, a toilet area, etc.

Usually, the cruise ships operate as a restaurant on the Can Tho River at night. Each cruise ship is generally divided into three floors, with a capacity of 70-80 guests per floor, depending on the size of each type of cruise ship. Still rectangular, the spaces on the floors of the cruise ship are divided into stage areas for singing and dancing, dining tables for guests to enjoy regional cuisine while watching the river scene at night, fresh air, and sparkling lights. Everyone can interact and perform music with bands and singers arranged on each floor. Usually, they will divide each floor into a musical style, with their singers and bands, or singers can exchange and move from floor to floor. Every night, tourism and entertainment activities connect this means of water transport with accompanying services, and people take place continuously in beautiful weather conditions. Cruises move around the river sections to see the city or get close to Can Tho Bridge - the longest cable-stayed bridge in

Southeast Asia. Some small boats have also begun to operate as cruises and create a picture of the happy, bustling, and dynamic Can Tho city by boats with nighttime river tourism services.



Figure 72 A ferry terminal and ferries on the river

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 73. Can Tho Ferry

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

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. Figure 74 Small ferry used in small rivers and carrying small loads. The ferry equivalent to "Chet" is also rectangular, Chet is used to carry large loads across rivers.

Source: <https://phongdien.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Aug 12, 2024)



Figure 75 Ferries are large in size and capacity and are used to transport passengers and vehicles on large rivers. The ferry has two ends for convenient docking on both sides of the river.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)



Figure 76 Similar in shape to a ferry, a cruise ship is often repurposed as a multi-story floating restaurant. The cruise ship is elaborately decorated with many details and serves food and entertainment while cruising around the riverbank.



Figure 77 Ferries are large in size and capacity and are used to transport passengers and vehicles on large rivers. The ferry has two ends for convenient docking on both sides of the river.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 12, 2024)

Through research, it can be seen that boats play an essential role in the social life here. From the geographical location and the landscape with many rivers to the indigenous culture and the behavior of the residents by nature. All these factors have formed a characteristic river culture known as "floating market culture" and recognized as a national intangible culture. With that foundation, facing the shift and development of a new society with the spirit of international exchange and integration but still maintaining its unique characteristics, the residents here have had flexible and diverse creativity through tourism and life. The application of boats to all essential activities of river tourism and daily activities is inevitable. From old boats with many sizes, designs, and functions, the residents have transformed them into more complex changes involving structure and even high-end aesthetics. Fundamental changes include color, structure, function changes, and the addition of many new functions. There are small boats that change their paint color to attract more small-scale trading, there are small boats that only have the function of moving and trading, but they are also equipped with rows of seats to pick up and drop off tourists, there are boats that have the function of transporting goods, agricultural products, and aquatic products, which are given new forms, change colors, add roofs, walls, and are not used for living. Hence, the body of the boat is like a small room, but it is completely changed into an ample space to install accompanying equipment for tourism, such as a resting room, seats, or a playground with sound and lighting equipment. Boats become mobile restaurants floating on the water with flower lights, or boats become mobile hotels on the river so that tourists can relax and feel most deeply about the Mekong Delta and the cultural and social life here. Boats now play a new role compared to before, but they still originate from the river culture, and the existence of boats is closely linked to the social life of the Mekong Delta residents.

CHAPTER III

Boats in dimensions of the socio-cultural identity of the Mekong Delta people

Introduction:

In this chapter, the author focuses on the study of boats in the direction of the socio-cultural identity of the people of the Mekong Delta.

How does each type of boat relate to social life? Are there many factors that clarify the relationship between people and boats?

What role does the group of boats that make up the network of boats in the Mekong Delta (art books) play in society? How does each group of boats represent the identity of the Southern region? Boats have been deeply rooted in life and socio-cultural identity as symbols noted and respected in many aspects of life, creating cultural identity values.

Part 1: Research on boat types and designs in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Each river terrain or function of the boat in social life is flexible, from shape, style, size, function, and even material conditions or season. The long-standing presence of boats in Vietnamese culture is the foundation for many Vietnamese cultural characteristics. All of these create a great richness of boat types and the uniqueness of river culture.

Part 2: The network of boats represents the cultural identity of the Mekong Delta. This part of the study clearly shows the connection between all elements of social life through the network of vessels. From the characteristics of typical floating markets to each type of boat, how people use boats, the spiritual culture, and the vibrant and unique festivals, boats are vital to social life.

Part1: Boat types and designs in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

The Southwest is a convergence of canals and rivers. Boats and canoes are attached to the river scene, which has become an indispensable image in the lives of the people here. Over the centuries, that familiar image has not been lost but seems to be increasingly honored and preserved because it is part of this place's unique cultural beauty.

From Tien Giang, Can Tho, to Ca Mau, everywhere you can see people busy with their lives on the river, such as Cai Be market (Tien Giang); Phong Dien market, Phung Hiep (Can Tho); Thoi Binh market in Trem river (Ca Mau)... always bustling with boats going back and forth to trade. On the days before Tet, the market is open almost all day; boats and sampans are full of fruits, vegetables, household items, agricultural products, Tet flowers... On the bow of the ship, they stick a long pole, on which are hung various products, that is a form of product introduction so that buyers know what the boat sells. Here, there are also food and beverage services with typical Western characteristics, such as noodles, coffee, floating pubs, and folk songs and the sounds of traditional music that promise to captivate people's hearts...

During Tet, many boats and canoes are busy selling their goods and need more time to get home. On the 30th of Tet, many families prepare a meal, place it on the boat's bow, pray to their ancestors, and celebrate Tet with their colleagues on the river in a warm atmosphere. The boats and canoes enjoy delicious food together. For the

people here, everywhere is home, everywhere is family. Their affection for the river makes them feel warm. The cultural space of the Floating Market in the Southwest region is not only a place for buying and selling goods but also introduces the typical cultural features and traditions of the people in the Southwest region.

In the past, boats and canoes needed human power to row and maneuver through large canals and streams. Nowadays, ships and canoes move faster and carry more people thanks to machines. However, large, modern boats and canoes cannot move through small canals and streams only 1 meter deep, so people here still use traditional boats and canoes to move here. In the West, boats, and canoes are distinguished by the people here as follows: Canoes (Xuong) are designed to be more compact than boats. Canoes are usually about 4m long, 1-1.5m wide, and can carry about 4-6 people. Types of canoes are named according to their structure, such as 3-leaf canoes are assembled from 3 pieces of planks, one piece of plank in the middle, two pieces of planks on the two sides, 5-la canoes are assembled from 5 pieces of planks (an improvement over 3-leaf canoes) so the level of vibration when moving is limited to the maximum. People in the West also used a motorboat with an engine to move faster.

Cai Rang Floating Market - Can Tho is a beautiful tourist destination that visitors must visit by boat. Cai Rang Floating Market is only about 30 minutes by motorboat from the center of Can Tho City. Inside the market area, hundreds of ships carrying goods, fruits, vegetables, and specialties of the West ... come here to trade. Because the market is only open for a short time (from 4 am to 8 am), visitors who intend to explore Cai Rang Floating Market when in Can Tho should wake up before 5 am to be in time to participate in this floating market the beauty of the West.

Visitors must rent a boat to visit the Cai Rang Floating Market most comprehensively. Depending on their budget, visitors can rent a private boat or boat with other groups of visitors. Many ships of people, sellers, and marketgoers gather in the floating market. On the floating market, many boats are "homes" of many people in the West.

Therefore, the Cai Rang floating market is considered the place that most clearly shows the culture of using boats of the people in the Southwest. This is a unique and highly genuine cultural feature of the people in the Southwest. Boats are concentrated in the Mekong Delta floating market because of their daily life, not "created" for tourism like some floating markets in some other countries.

A boat is a means of transport on the river with a deck that occupies more than half the length of the boat's body. This deck is a place for people on the boat to sit and rest. Meanwhile, the front half of the boat is quite broad, so it is used to store goods. The boat's structure also has a rudder under the hull behind the steering head and a control lever. However, the feature that many tourists choose to distinguish between boats and canoes is that on the front of every boat, there is a picture of a pair of eyes to ward off evil beasts and demons. The types of boats commonly seen in the West are sampans, bau boats, or fishing boats.

Boats and canoes in the Southwest have developed in many different and rich styles. From rowing boats and canoes, weaving through canals of all sizes, shapes, and depths to large ships and canoes, heavy-duty, carrying many people. Nowadays, moving on the river also has motor and motor boats running at high speed, which are used in parallel with the classic boats and canoes. Due to the progress in science and

technology, the boat-building profession has also changed somewhat in shape and assembly techniques. In the Southwest, people distinguish between very different boats and sampans.

There are several types of sampans: three-leaf sampans, motorboats, five-leaf sampans... The three-leaf sampan is, on average, 4m long and 1.5m wide, can carry 4-6 people, and is compact and discreet. It is called a three-leaf sampan because it has three planks, one in the middle and two on the sides, with a platform in the middle but lower at the bow and rudder to maintain balance. The five-leaf sampan is similar in shape to the three-leaf sampan; the only difference is that it consists of 5 pieces of planks joined together, so it sways less, and the two ends of the sampan are slightly different. The five-leaf sampan is an improved three-leaf sampan. The motorboat has an engine attached to it for faster speed. The sampan has a pair of windshields on both sides of the boat and runs the entire ship. The rudder of the motorboat is shaped like a square trapezoid.

There are many types of boats: sampan, bau (round boat), fishing boat, and flatboat... The (Tam Ban) sampan has a short roof with up to 9 or more pieces of wood. The boat has a pair of wind panels like a motorboat, the deck takes up half the length of the boat's belly, this place is used for resting, and the front part is used for loading goods. The boat has a rudder under the hull behind the steering head and a lever for control. At the bow of the boat is an eye painted, which, according to folklore, symbolizes warding off evil beasts or attacking dragons. In addition, there is also a type of sampan with an extended roof that takes up almost the entire length of the boat. This type looks like a house moving on the water. The bau (round boat) is a large boat with beautiful decorations for wealthy families. The hull is slightly tapered, and the belly is small and long; it is also called a dugout boat because it is made from a single tree trunk, carved and hollowed inside to form a boat. The boat looks simple, not curved at the two ends of the bow and rudder, and there are no stalls in the boat body like other types of boats. The fishing boat consists of many pieces of wood joined together and has two floors. The inside of the body is divided into two parts: the front part contains goods, and the back part is for boat passengers. The fishing boat also has a removable roof behind the cockpit used for bathing and cooking, which is used for people who travel long distances and live on the river.

In addition to the types of boats mentioned above, there are many other means of transport, such as tac rang, ferry, chet, and raft. These move quickly and carry light loads. Fishing boats carry goods. Raft boats and cage boats carry fish. Fishing boats catch shrimp and fish. Shrimp raft boats transport shrimp.

The profession of going by boat and canoe has long been familiar to the residents of the Southwest, existing in parallel with farming and gardening. Currently, in some localities in the West, road travel still faces many difficulties and obstacles, so rivers are still essential waterways in transportation, trade, and travel. Moreover, boats are also a means to convey folk culture everywhere. The image of boats and canoes on rivers and canals has been associated with the residents of the Southwest for life, so there have appeared folk songs and chants such as rowing boat songs, long-roofed boat songs, cut-roofed boat songs, Hau river songs, Dong Thap songs... and have created a unique cultural nuance of the garden civilization. Boats and sampans in the South play a vital role in waterway transportation in an area with a dense network of rivers and canals. Using boats and sampans as a means of

transportation has become a unique feature in the lives of residents in this area. It can be said that riverside residents almost have to use boats to get to the alley. Since our ancestors' land reclamation, traveling by waterway has been the most convenient and safest. The book Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi describes: "In Gia Dinh, there are boats and sampans everywhere, either used as houses or to go to the market, or to visit relatives, or to transport rice and firewood for trading, very convenient, and boats and sampans fill the river day and night, continuously coming and going."

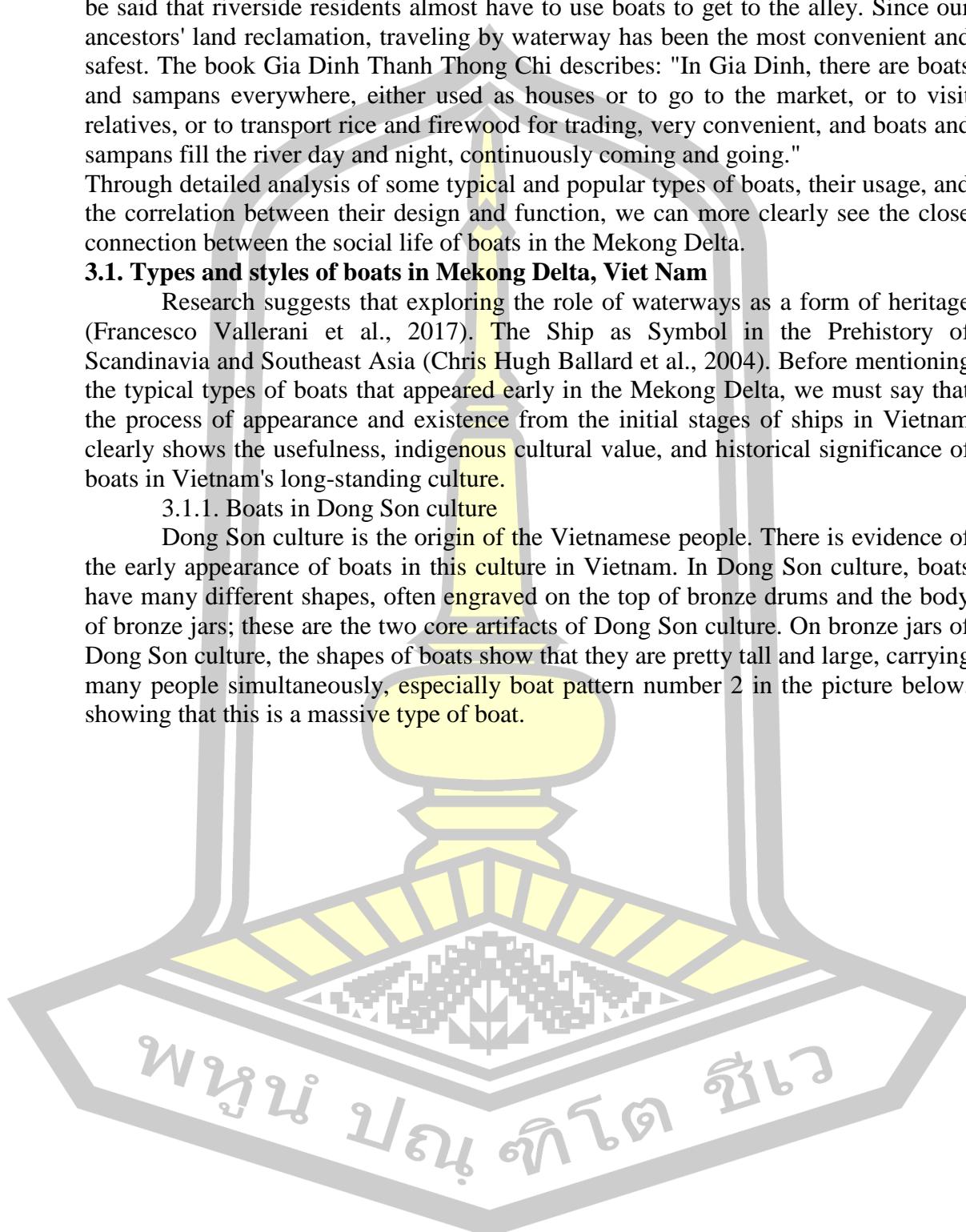
Through detailed analysis of some typical and popular types of boats, their usage, and the correlation between their design and function, we can more clearly see the close connection between the social life of boats in the Mekong Delta.

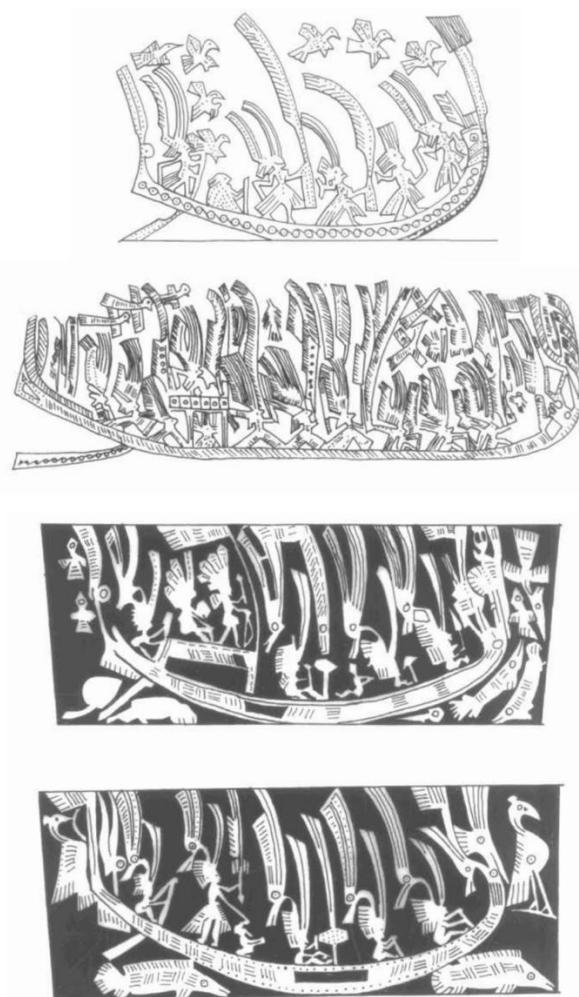
3.1. Types and styles of boats in Mekong Delta, Viet Nam

Research suggests that exploring the role of waterways as a form of heritage (Francesco Vallerani et al., 2017). The Ship as Symbol in the Prehistory of Scandinavia and Southeast Asia (Chris Hugh Ballard et al., 2004). Before mentioning the typical types of boats that appeared early in the Mekong Delta, we must say that the process of appearance and existence from the initial stages of ships in Vietnam clearly shows the usefulness, indigenous cultural value, and historical significance of boats in Vietnam's long-standing culture.

3.1.1. Boats in Dong Son culture

Dong Son culture is the origin of the Vietnamese people. There is evidence of the early appearance of boats in this culture in Vietnam. In Dong Son culture, boats have many different shapes, often engraved on the top of bronze drums and the body of bronze jars; these are the two core artifacts of Dong Son culture. On bronze jars of Dong Son culture, the shapes of boats show that they are pretty tall and large, carrying many people simultaneously, especially boat pattern number 2 in the picture below, showing that this is a massive type of boat.

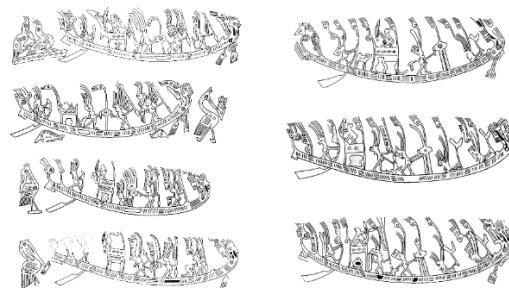




Hoa văn thuyền trên các thạp đồng văn hóa Đông Sơn: Đào Thịnh, Việt Khê, Hợp Minh, Lào Cai. [2]

Figure 78 Boat patterns on Dong Son jars, Dao Thinh, VN
 Source:<https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/>(Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

The boat patterns on bronze drums are often shown in a more expansive space than bronze jars. The most crucial boat pattern is the one below. This pattern is almost standard in the boats of Dong Son culture, showing many cultural elements: fairy birds flying into the head of the Dragon boat, birds, and fish of paradise. Overall, these boats are patterns of welcoming the Sun. Besides, other Dong Son bronze drums also depict many long boats with space only enough for one row, with many different ways of expression.



Thuyền trên các trống Ngọc Lũ và Hoàng Hạc. [3]

Figure 79 Boat on Ngoc Lu bronze drum

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquoocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

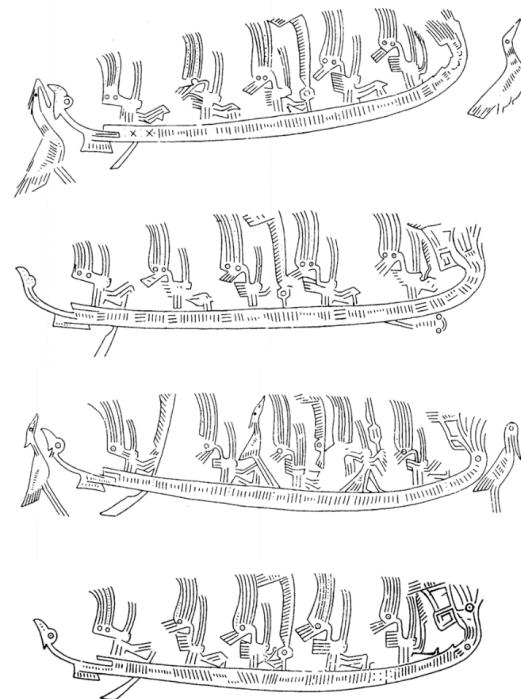


Figure 80 Boat on Ngoc Lu bronze drum

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquoocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

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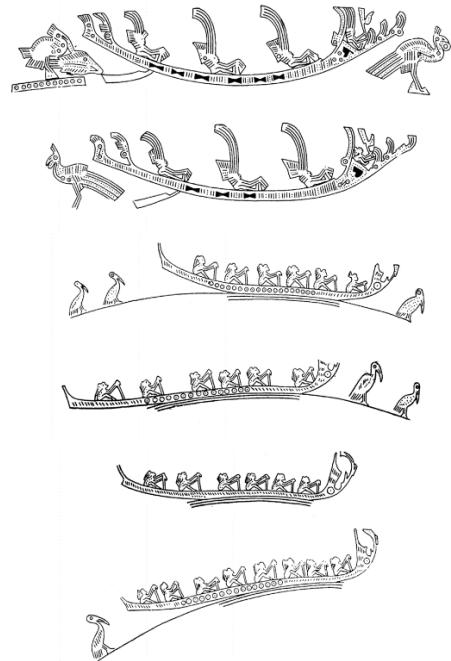


Figure 81. Boat on Ngoc Lu bronze drum
Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

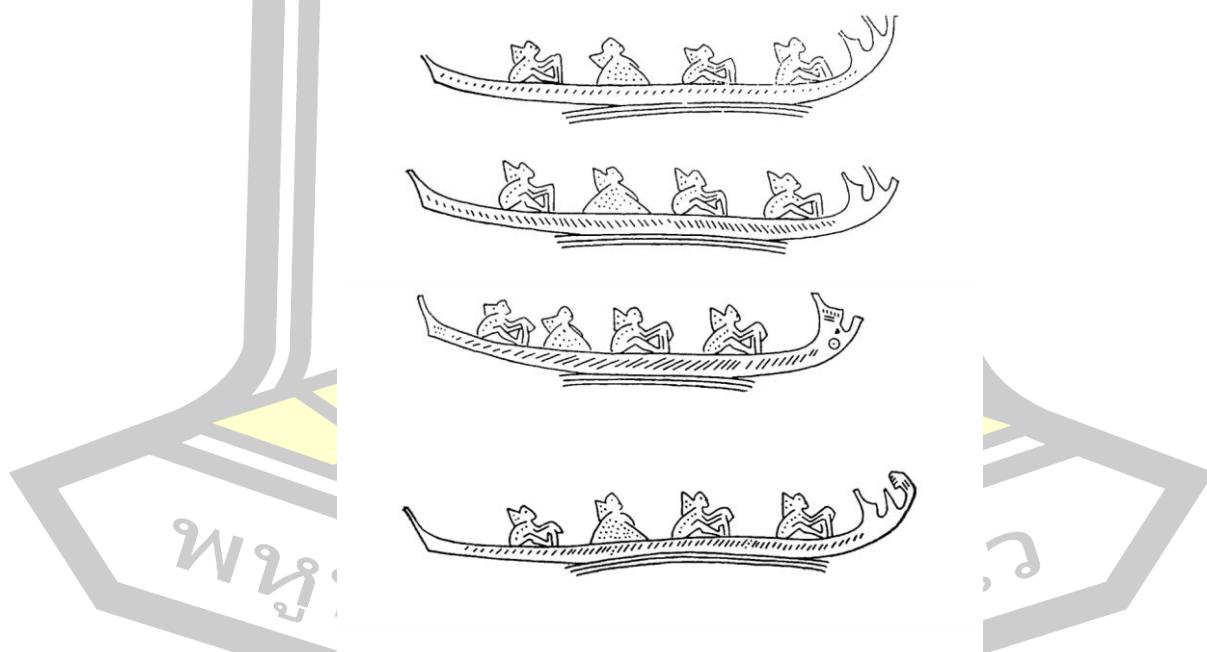
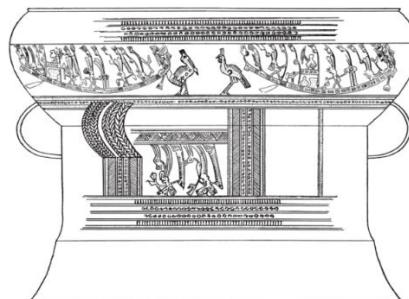


Figure 82. Boat on Ngoc Lu bronze drum
Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

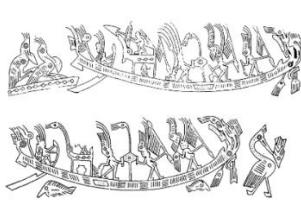


Hoa văn thuyền được trang trí trên đỉnh của trống đồng Ngọc Lũ. [Nguồn: Tạp chí Asia Art]

Figure 83 Boat on Ngoc Lu bronze drum

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

The first and most crucial form of boat is the boat that carries souls, which holds the Sun in both Dong Son and Egyptian cultures.

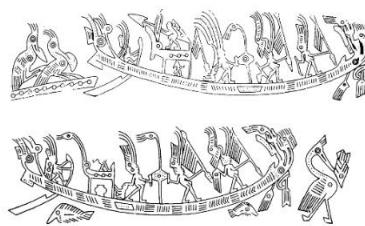


Thuyền Rồng đưa rước Mặt Trời văn hóa Đông Sơn và thuyền đưa rước linh hồn của người Ai Cập.
[Nguồn: 1. [3], 2. Bảo tàng Úc.]

Figure 84 The Dragon Boat carrying the sun of Dong Son culture is similar to the dragon boat carrying the soul of Egyptian culture.

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

The boat form of Dong Son culture is very similar to the ancient boat form of the Romans.



Thuyền của văn hóa Đông Sơn (thế kỷ 7-2 TCN) và thuyền của người Roman (thế kỷ 1 đầu công nguyên).
[Nguồn: 1. [3], 2. Bảo tàng Úc.]

Figure 83. Dong Son Culture boat of the 17th century and Roman culture boat of the 1st century AD

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

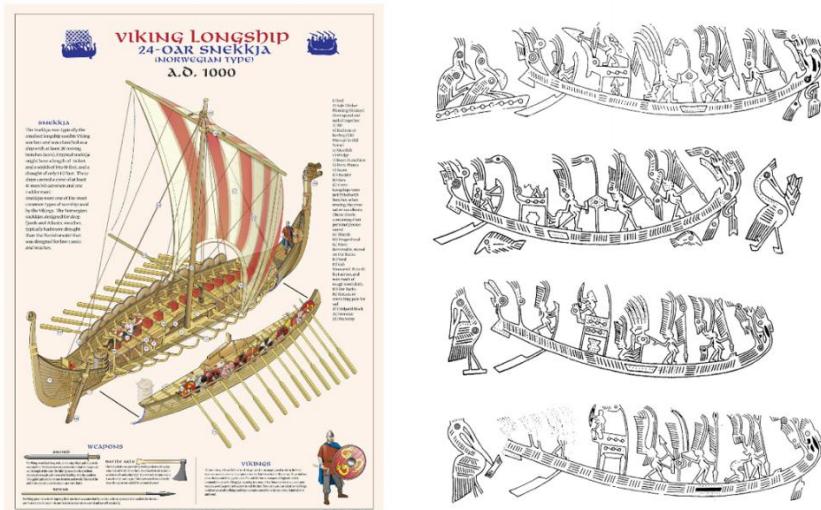


Các dạng thuyền trong thực tế của người Roman cổ đại. [Nguồn: tổng hợp]

Figure 86. Actual forms of boats of the ancient Romans

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

Besides the Roman boats, the Viking boats resembled the Dong Son culture boats with two ends decorated like Dragon boats.



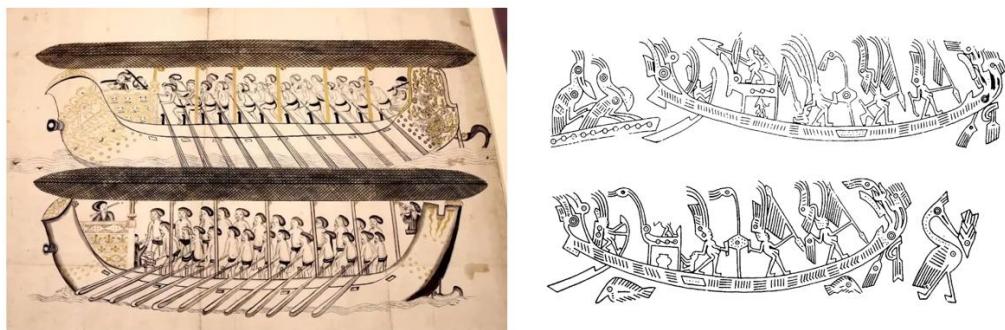
Thuyền của người Viking và thuyền văn hóa Đông Sơn. [Nguồn: 1. [dân](#); 2. [3]]

Figure 87 Viking ships and Dong Son culture ships

Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

Archaeological evidence suggests that there was likely contact between the Dong Son culture and the West via India [4], or at least indirectly from the Austronesian and South Asian peoples in southern Vietnam, who were influenced by the Dong Son culture during the Bronze Age with the West. It is possible that the characteristics of the Dong Son culture were transmitted through trade activities.

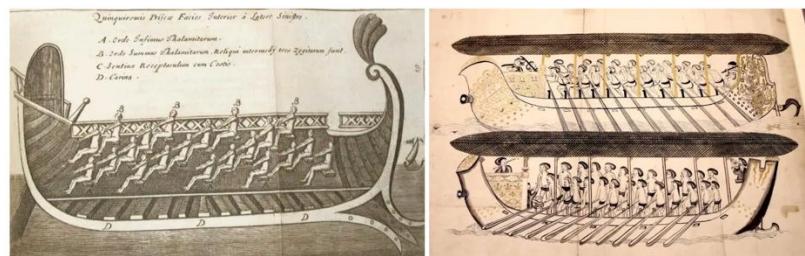
During the Nguyen Dynasty, the Vietnamese people built an exceptional type of boat, the Mong Dong boat, which had a structure very similar to the structure of the boat on the Dong Son bronze drum.



Thuyền Mông Đồng thời Trịnh-Nguyễn và thuyền Rồng văn hóa Đông Sơn. [Nguồn: 1. Samuel Baron, 2. [3]]

Figure 88 Mong Dong boats of Trinh - Nguyen period and Dong Son culture boats
Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

The Mong Dong boat form is very similar to the Roman boat; as we mentioned above, the Dong Son culture boat has remarkable similarities to the Roman ship.



Thuyền của người Roman và thuyền Mông Đồng thời Trịnh-Nguyễn. [Nguồn: 1. [dân](#), 2. Samuel Baron.]

Figure 89 Roman Boats and Mong Dong Boats of the Trinh - Nguyen Dynasty
Source: <https://baotanglichsuquocgia.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

The image of the boat in Dong Son culture plays a vital role in the ancient culture of the Vietnamese people. This culture is also profoundly expressed in the burial culture when the Vietnamese people of the Dong Son period often buried the dead with boat graves made of hollowed-out tree trunks as a means of taking the dead to heaven, according to the concept of the Vietnamese people during this period.

This information may show that boats and the cultural life of ships appeared in Vietnam long ago and that Vietnamese people have a long history of using boats.

3.1.2. Boats in the feudal period, reclaiming land to the South

Dang Trong is the southern land which the Nguyen lords developed and exploited. Starting with Nguyen Hoang1, they established a new kingdom, opposing Dang Ngoai of King Le—Lord Trinh. The kingdom existed for 220 years (1558 - 1777) through nine generations of lords. During these two decades, the Nguyen lords expanded the territory, built a powerful army, opened trade with foreign countries, developed the economy, and implemented many policies to appease the people.

The Nguyen Lords prioritized the development of the shipbuilding industry and implemented reasonable policies for recruiting human resources, exploiting materials, and acquiring shipbuilding experience from the Cham people. Thus, the shipbuilding industry in Dang Trong in the 17th—18th centuries achieved remarkable

achievements. Thanks to this, the Nguyen Lords had a powerful fleet of ships, notably the navy's warships, ensuring national defense, transportation, and trade needs.

In addition to the fleets of warships organized and directly managed by the Nguyen Lords, there were also transport and merchant ships built by the people to serve the needs of travel and trade. There is even an opinion that "state ships were formed based on private shipbuilding techniques".⁴ These private shipbuilding workshops were mainly concentrated in coastal localities, stretching from the south of Bo Chinh (present-day Quang Binh) to Binh Thuan and in the Mekong Delta (Southern Vietnam). The South is a land of rivers and canals, and the primary means of transportation is by boat. The book *Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi* describes the terrain of Vinh Long as follows: "Where there is the sea, where there is a river, where there is a lake, where there is land, it looks like the moon and stars are scattered, if there is no boat, it is not possible to travel, so many people here know how to row." In the book *Gia Dinh Thanh Thong Chi*, Trinh Hoai Duc (1765 - 1825) wrote: "In Gia Dinh, there are boats everywhere... Boats and boats fill the river day and night" (Trinh Hoai Duc, 1998); Vinh Thanh town (present-day Can Tho) has "a forced terrain, rivers and streams are mixed, without boats and boats, it is not possible to travel." ⁴ With such terrain and nature, it is necessary to develop the boat building industry in the South to provide enough means of transportation for officials and soldiers. On the other hand, the Tay Son dynasty, Nguyen Anh's opponent, had built a powerful navy.⁵ Therefore, to win, Nguyen Anh had to develop the shipbuilding industry and build a solid navy to confront the Tay Son navy.

The peak of the shipbuilding industry in Vietnam is often identified as during the Nguyen Dynasty (19th century), especially from 1820 to 1850.

During this period, the Nguyen Dynasty applied many new techniques in the shipbuilding industry, combining tradition with modern elements from the West. In addition, many shipyards were established in coastal provinces, such as Thua Thien—Hue and Quang Nam. This clearly shows the Nguyen Dynasty's focus on technical reform.

Strong development in form and quantity is also shown by the hundreds of new boats built each year, which meet the needs of transportation and trade. Many types of boats are built, serving both trade and border protection, contributing to the consolidation of the economy and national defense.

Therefore, boats play a vital role in trade. This promotes the development of commercial ports such as Hoi An and Thi Nai to become major commercial centers, where ships from many places come to trade, creating conditions for trade connections. Boats are essential to connecting regions and promoting domestic and international trade.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, shipbuilding facilities were highly developed. At that time, to expand the shipbuilding industry, the Nguyen Dynasty focused on developing the shipbuilding industry to serve both the military and commerce. This promoted a sharp increase in the number of boats. Many new types of boats were built, serving the needs of transportation and fishing, with large-scale shipyards. In 1793, Nguyen Anh bought an old ship from Europe and then disassembled it into pieces to study and take samples. Then, he reassembled it according to the old model to create a new boat. Nguyen Anh personally supervised this work. In this way, Nguyen Anh learned Western shipbuilding techniques to build

new warships to equip his navy. This event was recorded by priest Le Labouse in a letter dated April 24, 1800, to the Overseas Mission in Paris: "Nothing is more moving than the sight of thousands of people working enthusiastically under the eyes of the king (Nguyen Anh); he paid attention to everything, controlled everything and sometimes carefully instructed them on the dimensions. Nguyen Vuong only used artisans from Dang Trong but was able to build ships in the Western style. First, he disassembled each piece of an old boat he had purchased. He reassembled it according to the old blueprint but so skillfully that the vessel was more beautiful. That first achievement encouraged Nguyen Vuong to build a new boat, and succeeded. He then built two more. Those four ships made his name known everywhere. Nguyen Vuong completed the work very quickly. It took less than three months and was often completed faster. However, the ships were large and beautiful and carried 26 cannons; others carried up to 36 cannons, each with over 300 sailors.

Since the 1820s-1850s, the shipbuilding industry has had a long history of shaping technology. At that time, shipbuilding techniques were significantly improved. They are using new technology in shipbuilding, combining traditional methods with some modern elements. In addition to serving commercial needs, the critical goal of shipbuilding is to serve the military.

Therefore, since the 19th century, the Nguyen Dynasty has oriented the development of the shipbuilding industry, proposing policies to support and encourage the development of the shipbuilding industry and promote waterway trade. According to documents, hundreds of new ships are built yearly, meeting domestic and international transportation needs.

The transformation of the shipbuilding industry in Vietnam represents a significant milestone at the end of the 19th century when there were conditions for access to Western technology. The Nguyen Dynasty expanded the reception of shipbuilding techniques from the West, promoting modernization. At this time, the shipbuilding industry in Vietnam began to substantially transform with the appearance of larger motor ships and wooden boats.

In 1838, King Minh Mang ordered the purchase of a steam-powered ship from the French and brought it back for a trial run in Hue. The King said: "That type of boat moves thanks to steam, without needing wind or water, without requiring the strength of the oarsmen to push it forward; the machine is sophisticated. It must be purchased at a high price to imitate the method of building other large ships for permanent use." The successful trial construction of two steam-powered ships under the Minh Mang dynasty proved that Vietnamese artisans at that time could approach and master Western mechanical shipbuilding techniques. This significantly advanced the Vietnamese shipbuilding industry during the Nguyen dynasty. The successful construction of steam-powered ships opened up the possibility for the Nguyen dynasty to apply this technology to develop the fleet of steam-powered ships of the Nguyen dynasty. However, after King Minh Mang passed away, King Thieu Tri (1841 - 1847) succeeded and only built two more ships before stopping completely. Building many motor ships cost a lot of effort and money, while at this time, buying steamships from Europe was more accessible than before. Therefore, King Thieu Tri prioritized the development of a fleet of copper-clad ships rather than continuing to build motor ships. During the reign of Tu Duc (1848 - 1883), the state initially intended to maintain the construction of steamships as previous dynasties had done

and sent people to Hong Kong to study shipbuilding techniques in British factories. In 1866, King Tu Duc ordered the two provinces of Vinh Long and An Giang to select 20 highly skilled artisans and send them to Gia Dinh to study advanced technical skills such as casting iron guns, building ships, and manufacturing machinery in French factories in Gia Dinh.⁴ With the help of the British, the group of workers of Hoang Van Suong and Le Ban successfully built the first copper-clad steamship in Hong Kong. In October 1865, the copper-clad ship and a group of workers led by Hoang Van Suong arrived at Thuan An estuary (12 km east of Hue Citadel). The royal court named them Man Thoa Mechanical Engineering Great Bronze Boat.⁵ Meanwhile, the steam engines built by the Minh Mang and Thieu Tri dynasties had become old and damaged after use. Therefore, King Tu Duc stopped repairing these ships and ordered new ships built by foreign countries.

After 1858, the shipbuilding industry was affected by invasions, influenced by the war context. However, it retained some of its traditions. After the wars, efforts were made to restore the industry, focusing on developing traditional boats.

Evidence of essential milestones related to boats from historical periods shows that the shipbuilding industry during the Nguyen Dynasty made significant strides in quantity, quality, and technology. These milestones shaped Vietnam's culture and economy during that period.

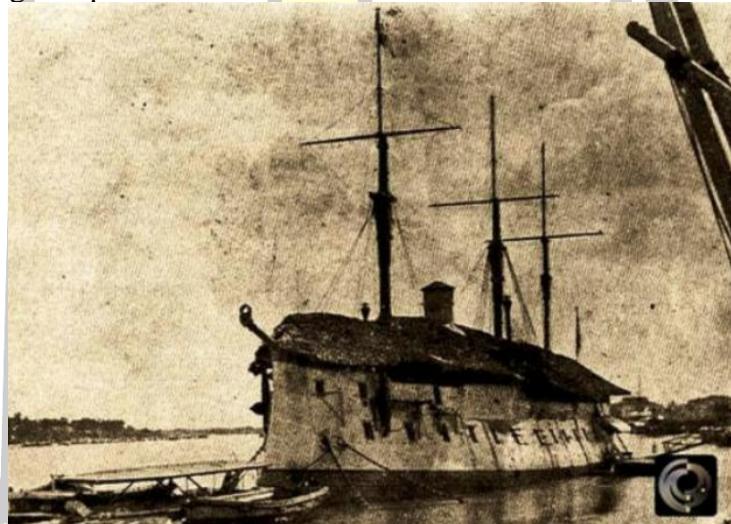


Figure 90 Steam locomotive of Nguyen Dynasty
Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

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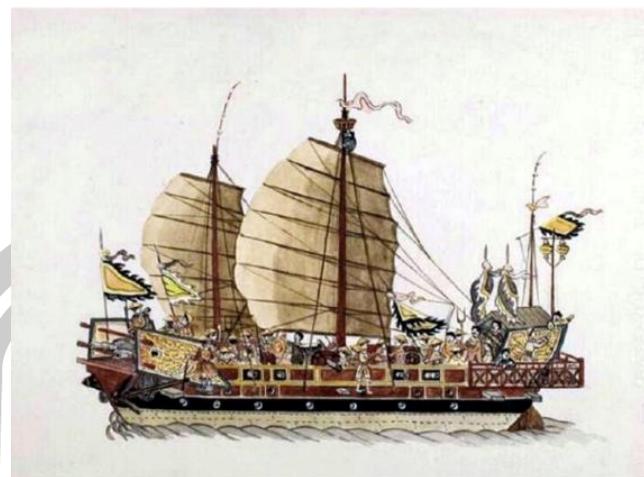


Figure 91 Nguyen Dynasty warships

Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)



Hình 6: Hình thuyền đa tác/sách (多索船) ở trên Cao đinh



Hình 7: Hình thuyền lâu (樓船) ở trên Nhàn đinh

Figure 92 Multi-purpose boat in Cao Dinh, Boat house in Nhan Dinh

Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)



Hình 8: Hình thuyền mông đồng (艨艟船) ở trên Chuong đình



Hình 9: Hình thuyền hải đạo (海導) ở trên Nghi đình

Figure 93. Mong Dong boat in Chuong Dinh, Hai Dao boat in Nghi Dinh
Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)



Hình 10: Hình thuyền đinh (艇) ở trên Thuần đinh



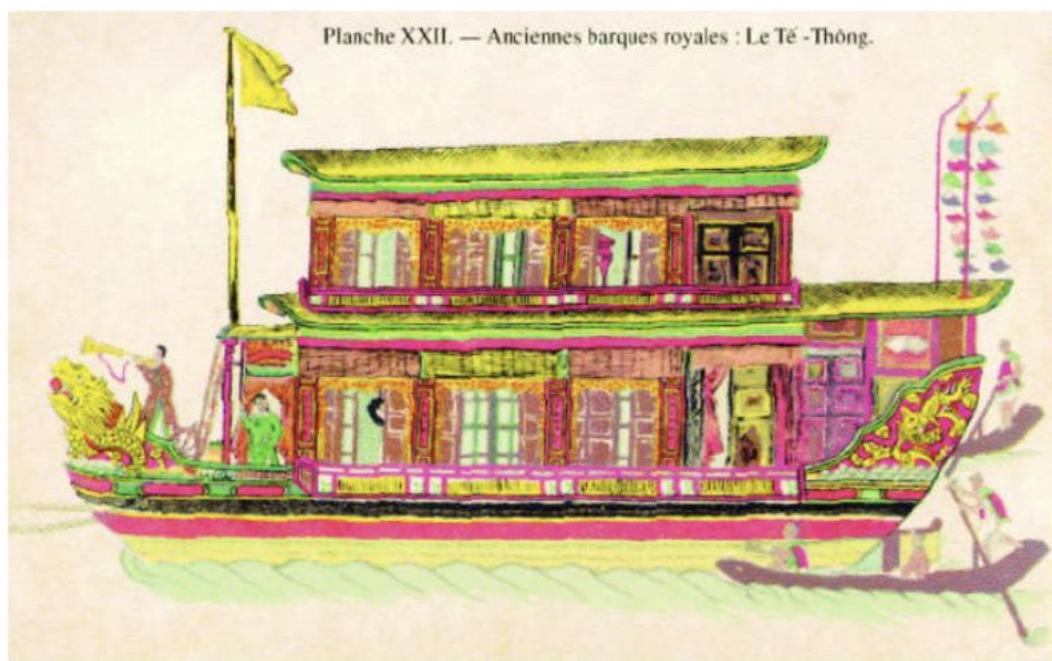
Hình 11: Hình thuyền lê (梨船) ở trên Tuyên đinh

Figure 94 Dinh Boat on Thuan Dinh, Le Boat in Tuyen Dinh
Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)



Hình 12: Hình thuyền ô (鳥船) ở trên Du đinh

Figure 95 Boat O in Du Dinh
Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)



Hình 13: Thuyền ngự Tế Thông thời Nguyễn. Hình vẽ trong BAVH năm 1916



Hình 14: Thuyền ngự Tường Long thời Nguyễn. Hình vẽ trong BAVH năm 1916

Figure 96 Royal boat of Nguyen Dynasty - Royal boat of Truong Long Dynasty
 Source: <https://tuoitre.vn/> (Accessed on Feb 12, 2024)

According to the author's research, more than 40 types of boats are used in the Mekong Delta. Each type of boat corresponds to a different function. Depending on the purpose of use, people create various shapes, sizes, and decorations for multiple ships. Besides, historical stories also affect the names of boats. There are many ways to name or classify boats, such as naming them according to their shape, function, or historical story and the appearance of that type of boat, even according to the name of the maker or the region where that type of boat was born. The names are mostly very simple and rustic, close to the life of the river residents here. Due to the geographical conditions of the rivers here, although densely crisscrossed, the use of waterways is inevitable. Still, the weather and waters are very peaceful without big waves and strong winds like in large seas, so most boats are used to transport goods in large quantities. Hence, the structure and design of the ship focus on the load, safety level, and load capacity.

The boat's bow is usually flat because the movement does not require too fast speed, having to navigate or fight against nature, but only needs good balance and moving at a safe speed. The decoration of the boat's bow, such as painting the boat's face and eyes, is also very different from boats in other areas where the sea has storms, thunderstorms, or natural disasters. This is also clearly reflected in the cultural life of worship, the religious beliefs of boat owners, and the people who use boats as equipment, houses, shelters, or influential members of merchants' lives. These unique elements reflect the vibrant social life of boats in the Mekong Delta.



Figure 97 Image of the thesis author discussing with Mr. Tu Leo in Ben Tre. Mr. Tu Leo is the person with the largest collection of boat models in Vietnam, recognized by Guinness.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Sep 10, 2023)

អង្គន បណ កិច្ច ខេវ



Figure 98 Image of the thesis author discussing with Mr. Tu Leo in Ben Tre. Mr. Tu Leo is the person with the largest collection of boat models in Vietnam, recognized by Guinness.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Sep 10, 2023)

According to statistics from the collector of the largest model boats in southern Vietnam (Mr. Tu Leo_Ben Tre), who has a certificate from the Guinness organization confirming the record for having the most extensive collection of model boats by wood in Vietnam, there are over 40 types of ships in southern Vietnam. These are popular types of boats that appear in the southern region of Vietnam, and collector Mr. Tu Leo, with his passion, life experience, and experience, as well as his age of ups and downs, has recorded them.

1. Phu Quoc tourist boat (Tàu du lịch Phú Quốc)
2. Ben Tre tourist boat (Tàu du lịch Bến Tre)
3. Ben Tre ferry (Phà Bến Tre)
4. Can Tho sampan (Ghe Tam Bán Cần Thơ)
5. Ba La boat (rowing) Xuồng 3 Lá (Chèo)
6. Ba La boat (Xuồng Tam Bán _Xuồng Ba Lá)
7. Southern sailing boat (Thuyền buồm Nam Bộ)
8. Tourist boat (Đò du lịch)
9. Passenger ship (SG-HN) (Tàu chở khách Sài Gòn – Hà Nội)
10. Cargo ship (Tàu buôn chở hàng)
12. Rach Mieu ferry (Phà Rạch Miễu)
13. Ngo Dinh Nhu boat (Ghe tải bà Ngô Đình Nhu)
14. Ms. Ngo Dinh Nhu boat with engine (Ghe tải Bà Ngô Đình Nhu loại có máy)
15. Passenger boat Ca Mau (Đò khách Cà Mau)

16. Passenger boat Thanh Van Thoi Thuan (Đò khách Thanh Vân Thới Thuận the name of the owner boat)

17. Passenger boat Quynh Lien, Phuoc (Đò khách Quỳnh Liên, Phước the name of the owner boat)

18. Flying boat BaTa Indo (Tàu bay Ba Ta có nguồn gốc, mẫu mã của Indo)

19. Do Ui boat Long An Đò úi (Đò úi long An)

20. Ben Tre sampan (Ghe tam bản Bến Tre)

21. Tam Ban (bed) Ghe tam bản (có gường)

22. Tien Giang Tourist boat

23. Ba la rowing boat – Ba La boat – (Xuồng bơi ba lá)

24. Rowing boat for tourists calendar Xuồng bơi đua khách đi du lịch

25. Ferry (Đò ngang)

26. Shrimp fishing boat (Xuồng câu tôm)

27. Cargo boat (Rach Gam a small river) Ghe tải (Rạch Gầm)

28. Saigon boat (Ghe tải Sài Gòn)

29. Chinese rowing boat (Xuồng chèo kiểu Trung Quốc)

30. Ba La Ca Mau boat (Xuồng ba lá Cà Mau)

31. Bac Lieu boat (Đò Bạc Liêu)

32. Vo Lai Kien Giang (Võ lái Kiên Giang)

33. An Giang crow's beak boat (Xuồng mỏ quạ An Giang)

34. Tre boat (Xuồng trẽ)

35. Big fishing boat (Ghe chài lớn)

36. An Giang fish boat (ghe chở cá an giang)

37. Tugboat (Tàu kéo)

38. Barge (Xà lan)

39. Express plane boat (Tàu bay tốc hành)

40. Thoi Thuan ferry (Đò chèt Thới Thuận)

41. Dong Thap ferry (Đò chèt Đồng Tháp)

Some other studies from author Nguyen Thanh Loi, in the book Southern Central Coast Boat and Southern Canoe Boat (Cultural and Information Publishing House 2014) (Nguyen Thanh Loi, 2014), "Ghe Bau" of South Central Vietnam and "Ghe Xuong" of Southern Vietnam listed the types of boats in the South as follows: South Boats are diverse and rich, with many different types and names. Based on production characteristics, usage functions, and operating methods, we can temporarily divide them in various kinds.

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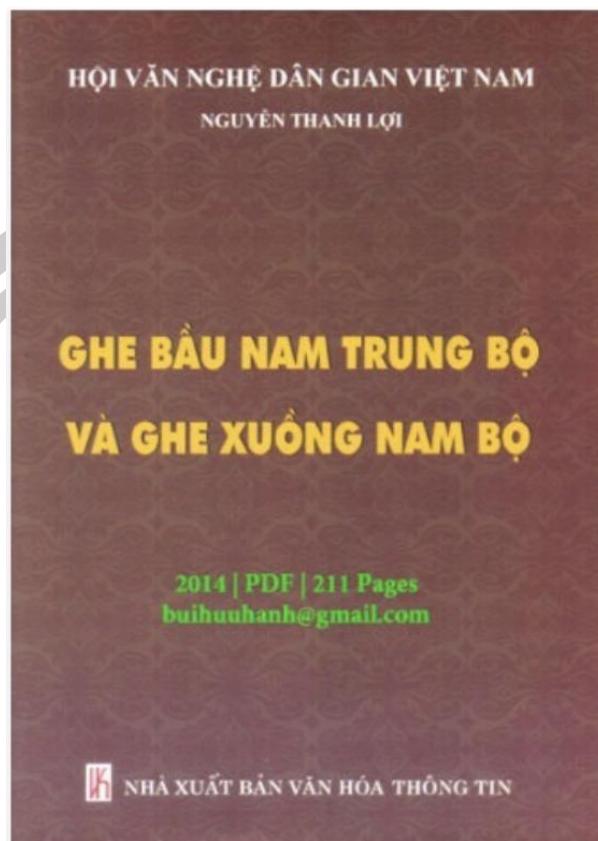


Figure 99 Central Vietnam Boats and Southern Boats - author Nguyen Thanh Loi
Source: <http://thuvienantho.vn/> (Accessed on Oct 10, 2023)

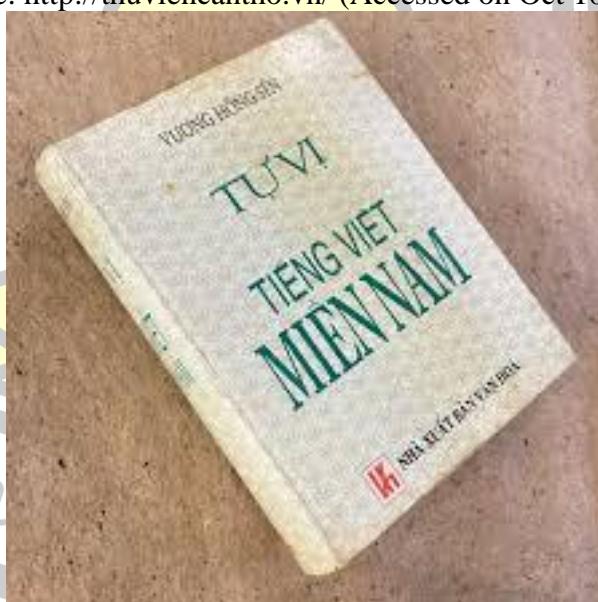


Figure 100 Southern Vietnamese dictionary by Vuong Hong Sen
Source: <http://thuvienantho.vn/> (Accessed on Oct 10, 2023)

Vuong Hong Sen (1902–1996), pen name Anh Vuong, Van Duong, Dat Co Trai, was a Vietnamese cultural figure, scholar, and antique collector. He was considered to have a profound understanding of the South and was highly respected among historians and archaeologists in Vietnam (Khanh Tran, 2018).

Boats are used as a metaphor for an ordered social group (David G. Marr et al., 1986) In the study "The Traditional Boats of Vietnam, an Overview" (Charlotte Pham et al., 2010) mentioned the material boat culture of Vietnam in the current context while highlighting the rich diversity of construction methods and types of boats still built and used. Each boat style also represents the position and role of the boat owner in society. There are some types of boats that only appear in certain periods or have specific functional characteristics in the use of people or certain social classes.

In addition, depending on their purpose, boats in the South have different names. For example, those used for fishing are called fishing boats; those used for fishing are called net boats or bottom boats; those used to take passengers on the river are called ferry boats (cross-river boats, vertical boats, rowing boats, pedal boats, motor boats). Those used for trading goods are called cargo boats. Therefore, when summarizing information from scholars, we can list some types of boats in the south of Viet Nam as follows:

1. "Xuồng Ba Lá" – Ba la boat: The sampan is, on average, 4m long, 1m wide, and can carry 4-6 people. The sampan is made of three long wooden planks joined together, the joints are plastered with plastic bottles, and the bow and the rudder are both pointed. Use a pole and oars to move around. Can Tho only have 5-leaf sampans?

2. "Xuồng Tam Bản" - Tam Ban boat: The sampan is similar to a fishing boat but more significant, with four oars used for light transport. There are long, slender types with a beautiful tube roof. The number of planks is three and can be 5, 7, or 9. Small and medium-sized landowners often use it to move around on rivers and canals. In Vinh Long, sampans are also used for shrimp fishing, fishing for shrimp and fish, or as shrimp and fish raking boats. The sampan comes from the Chinese word "xam pan," which the French transcribed as "sampan."

The sampans, rowing boats, and rowing boats in Can Tho all have two, three, or four oars, not one oar and one bow like in other regions.

3. "Xuồng vỏ gòn"- Small cotton boats (like cotton fruit shells) have a compact design and a simple structure (beams, curves, and planks). They are mainly used for traveling, transporting, exchanging, and trading.

4. "Xuồng độc mộc" The Khmer people make a single-wood boat (boat hull) by splitting the trunk of a palm tree lengthwise, hollowing out the inside, or buying a single-wood boat from Sao or Sen wood in Cambodia and Laos.

5. "Xuồng câu tôm" is a Shrimp fishing boat similar to the Khmer single-wood boat used for fishing and netting on shallow rivers and small canals.

6. "Xuồng boi (2 mái chèo)" A rowing boat (2 oars) is more significant than a sampan.

7. "Xuồng máy" A motorboat with an engine and propellers, like a shrimp-tailed motorboat, is a very "mobile" means of transport. It is popular in this river area,

especially among merchants. Boats used to transport goods are usually large, have a heavy load capacity, and can travel long distances.

8. Ghe Bau is the most significant type of boat, with a pointed bow and rudder, a bulging belly, a relatively large load capacity, sails (from 1 to 3 sails), surfs well and goes fast, has many oars for long-term river and sea travel. It is often used for sea travel. The large type of Ghe Bau is usually called Ghe Truong Da. The Bau (Prau) originates from the Malay language, which the Vietnamese adopted from the Cham people during their Southward expansion. Before 1945, every year, large traders from the Central region transported fish, sardine fish sauce, mainly anchovy fish sauce from the Phan Thiet region to sell in the South, then bought rice and paddy to transport out using this type of boat.

9. Ghe Cua: small, pointed bow, jumps waves well, sails steadily; can enter and exit river mouths quickly or carry goods along the coast.

10. "Ghe lồng" Cage boat (or cage boat): a large boat with a long bow and a canopy to protect against rain and sun. The boat's interior is divided into small compartments to hold different types of goods. This type of boat is used to transport goods along the coast.

11. "Ghe hàng bo" A cargo boat is a small cage boat traveling short distances inland

12. "Ghe giàn" Gantry boat: relatively large, with high wings on both sides to carry a lot of goods

13. "Ghe be" Roofless boat or a small canopy about 1/4 of the boat's length, with two additional ships on the sides to increase the carrying capacity.

14. The "Ghe chài" fishing boat is large and can carry the most. It has a very sturdy canopy, is made of many pieces of wood joined together, and has two floors. The ship is divided into two parts: the front part holds goods, and the back part is a resting place for boaters. A separate canopy behind the cockpit is used for bathing and cooking. The boat has a carrying capacity of 150-200 tons; the Nam Vang fishing boat can carry up to 300 tons. Fishing boats usually have dozens of rowers rowing in a "neo" style, unlike the normal. Later, people used tugboats to pull fishing boats. Boats are used for people who go on long-distance trading trips and live on the river—often used to transport rice and charcoal. "Chài" comes from the word "Pok chai" of the Teochew people. Pok: many, chai: load; fishing boats have a large carrying capacity.

15. "Ghe Chai" The fishing boat is fully called a fishing boat, originating from the Khmer language "tuk pokchay," tuk: boat (Khmer); pokchay: to carry a lot

16. Ghe ca vom: small, long, with a small roof but different from the lion and the NGO.

17. A fishing boat, the doi, transports fish from the West to Saigon. In particular, the water level in the ship is always balanced with the water level of the river outside to keep the fish alive, and the boat is always stable. "Anh di the ca mui son, let me weave cushions until my ten fingers are worn out."

18. "Ghe Be" A raft boat is large and deep, like a barge. It has a roof and a hefty load capacity. The rower can walk on the roof. Raft boats are used to transport goods on the river. They are large boats that were quickly sold to Cambodia.

19. Net boat: This type of boat is similar to a dugout canoe, with a long, slim body and a pointed nose. The Khmer people use it.

20. Shrimp raking boat: The bow is jagged and relatively flat, with a rudder on the side, and is small in shape. This type of boat is often used to rake shrimp at night.

21. Mo Vat boat: the bow is raised high like a tailor's line.

22. Cui boat: short, the bow and rudder are relatively flat and less sharp than other boats. They are used to carry firewood and roofing leaves.

23. Ngo boat (tuk ngua): a colorful type of boat of the Khmer people, often used in swimming races during festivals. The ship is made of sao tree, 10m or more long. The boat has no roof; the bow is carved with images of dragons, snakes, phoenixes, unicorns or elephants, lions, and sea eagles. Each ship can carry 20 to 40 rowers, arranged in pairs, one person steering and one holding the bow.

24. "Ghe Diêu" Dieu Boat: carved rudder, roof beams often painted with gold, smooth wooden floor inside, cooking area, fully equipped for opium smoking for the rich.

25. Ghe Hầu: more luxurious than Ghe Diêu, reserved for the chief of the village, the district chief, and the district chief. At night, the boat was lit not to light the way but to signal that it was a mandarin's boat. An excerpt from Huynh Minh shows us the image of the old Mandarin boat: "Different from ordinary boats, the Ghe Hầu was built more beautifully and luxuriously: painted with red lacquer and gilded, with a dragon head and phoenix tail, two oars in front of the bow, a splendid boat roof, the inside was beautifully decorated like a living room in the house, with red-banded cotton mats, colorful fabric pillows, formal clothes, pipes, low writing tables, etc. At first, only officials could use this type of boat, but later, the rich and well-off also competed to buy Ghe Hầu, like exchanging a toad Citroen for a Dodge or Mercedes to look impressive"

26. Ghe Sai: also called Ghe Khoái, small, with light oars, used for mandarin work.

27. "Ghe Quyền": has a roof from end to end and is used to transport soldiers.

28. "Ghe Lệ" or the o transport soldiers or military equipment. Those for commanders are often carved very elaborately all over the body. This type is usually painted red, called the son or the vem.

29. Ghe trét (flat): This boat has no roof and a flat bottom. Its two ends are flat and used to transport buffaloes and cows.

30. Ghe voi: small boat tied behind large ships to transport goods to shore.

31. Vo lai: flat bow, about 9m long, low wall, narrow width.

32. Tac rang: usually longer than vo lai, pointed bow, very fast (Speedo made by Kien Giang Composite can run up to 60km/h). The particular boat appeared in late 1959 when the whole hamlet, village, market, and canal were named Tac Rang (now Vinh Vien hamlet, Vinh Hiep ward, Rach Gia town, Kien Giang province).

In addition, in each locality, there are also types of boats suitable for river conditions and production and travel needs in the region. Some famous types of boats are:

33. The Phu Quoc fishing boat (Kien Giang) has a sail with five pairs of oars for catching aquatic products.

34. Phu Quoc estuary boat for transporting aquatic products and fish sauce.

35. Can Tho boat: large, long, convenient for going on rivers.

36. Ba Ria estuary boat for transporting aquatic products

37. Phuoc Hai trawl boat (Long Dat, Ba Ria-Vung Tau) used for catching aquatic products.

38. Cua Dai boat: used for fishing at sea, transporting goods to sea, or on large rivers. This type of boat has its characteristics, is quite famous, and was built by the artisans of Binh Dai (Ben Tre). In the past, this area had trade relations with My Tho, Saigon, Go Cong, Vung Tau, Ba Ria, and Phan Thiet. "Different from the Can Duoc boat with a short nose and wide hull, the Vam Lang boat (Go Cong) with a sharp but high nose and flat hull, Hon boat (Phu Quoc) of the West with a vertical nose, wide hull, long body, Binh Dai boat - often called by the river people as boat number 14 with black nose - moderately high, wide hull, sturdy body, suitable for sea or river transport, resistant to wave jumping, strong carrying capacity. Binh Dai boat has a beautiful and long rudder, two sails, a shaft; the sail is made of banh dan leaves (a type of palm leaves, people often call it a sail cushion) "[9] [5]

39. Can Duoc boat (Long An) is used for fishing (bottom fishing, fishing nets) and transporting goods on rivers. This type of boat is large, fast, strong, and has a beautiful shape, but it is only used for convenient round rivers and canals because the hull is round and poor at jumping waves. The bow and rudder are both pointed and high, the bow and rudder are curved, the rudder is large and high, and the rudder is horizontal above the boat's bow. Can Duoc boat has a bright red bow, a blue hull, two round eyes, round black, and big, often called "cat island eyes"

In the research of author Nguyen Thanh Loi, boats in the South are divided into many types. Based on production characteristics, usage functions, and operating methods, they can be temporarily divided into types such as Ghe (Big boats) -Xuong (small boats)

According to Huynh Tinh Cua's definition, a boat is a small boat, with many popular types such as the Ba La boat (with three wooden panels joined together to make a small boat), 5 La boat (with five wooden panels joined together to make a small boat), Tam Ban boat, Doc Moc boat (a boat carved from a wooden trunk), Cheo boat (a boat that must be rowed to move), May boat (a boat with a motor)

1. "Xuồng 3 lá"

The boat is 4m long, 1mm wide, and about 25cm high, carrying 4-6 people. The boat is made of 3 long planks (2 planks on the sides and one bottom plank) joined together with mother-of-pearl resin (a special glue for waterproof boats, often used to glue wooden joints and nailing); the bow and the back are both pointed. Use a beam or oar to move on rivers and small canals and water the garden. The three-leaf boat is named based on the boat's structure, which is made of three planks. It consists of two side planks and a bottom plank. To make the boat body sturdy, people use curved pieces (called boat shafts) divided at appropriate distances to create a frame simulating the ribs of a fish. This curved set contributes to the rigidity of the boat's body, resisting the pressure of water from the outside while holding the body tight, preventing the boat from deforming. In addition to the above details, the boat has a beam (beam), oar split, oar mast, oar rope, and a pair of oars. The sampan has an average length of 4m, width of 1m, height of about 25cm, and carrying capacity of 3-4 people, using beams or oars to travel on rivers and canals. Artisans consider the sampan a standard model, from which they develop into boats of different sizes: sampans of seven, eight, nine, ten, ten-foot, and ten-foot with net (also called ten-foot with net). The ten-foot sampan and the ten-foot with net are slightly different. The

ten-foot sampan is 7m or longer, 1.2m wide, has both front and rear oars, and this type of boat is rarely rowed when used by the motor. As for the ten-foot sampan, craftsmen only add wooden bars and planks to increase the height and load capacity. Both types of boats have the same load capacity of 1-2 tons, making transportation and travel on rivers safer. Under the curved bars, the craftsman created a way to carve a semicircular concave, which people also call "lò lù" or "lò công cầu," to communicate water between the boat compartments and, at the same time, help bail water quickly, without having to bail water from each compartment. The bow and the rudder of the sampan have the same shape; the only difference is the size of the planks.

2. "Xuồng 5 La"

5-6m long, 1.2m wide or more, slim shape. There are two types of bows: the pointed bow like a 3-leaf boat and the "shell" bow with two eyes on both sides; in the middle, there is a dragonfly-shaped button (Western playing card) or anchor, carrying capacity from 1-2 tons. This type is often seen in Can Tho.

3. "Xuồng Tam Bán"

The bow and rudder are slightly rounded; there are types with two oars and types with four oars; the number of beveled planks is not only three but can be 5, 7, or 9, with an attached engine, and there are many sizes. This type of boat often appears at market wharves and river junctions, especially in the Floating Market area. Landlords use it as a means of transportation on rivers and canals. Tam ban originates from Chinese (xam pan). The French read it as "sampan". Tam ban canoe, rowing boat: The rowing boat in Can Tho has two oars, three oars, and four oars. There is not one oar, rudder, or oar hat like in other regions.

4. "Xuồng vỏ gòn"

(like cotton fruit shell) small size, simple structure (beams, curves, and planks), compact design, mainly for travel, transportation, exchange, trade.

5. "Xuồng độc mộc" (ghe lườn)

The Khmer made it by splitting the palmyra palm tree trunk lengthwise, hollowing out the inside, or buying a dugout canoe from a sapote or Sen (Lauan, Meranti) tree trunk in Cambodia and Laos.

6. Shrimp fishing boats

Similar to Khmer dugout canoes were used to cast fishing lines and nets on shallow rivers and small canals.

7. The rowing boat (two oars) is larger than the sampan

8. Motorboats

Equipped with engines and propellers, like shrimp-tail motorboats, are very mobile and popular in this river area, especially among merchants.

About Boats (Ghe): Boats used to transport goods are usually large, heavy-duty, and can travel long distances.

9. Ghe Bau:

The Bau is the most significant type of boat among all kinds. Unlike Ghe Bau in the Central region, Ghe Bau in the Southwest has a round belly, bow, and stern upturned. Length from 5-22m, width 1.5-6m, height 2-4.5m. Load capacity 10-350 tons. It is made of Sao wood. The structure includes a bow, hull, engine, truss, and cabin. The Bau can have a roof or no roof. They are used to transport goods on rivers and canals. The boat is influenced by Ghe Bau Mien Trung (Ghe Bau in the Central region is also called Ghe Truong Da), which originated from Malaysia and was

adopted by the Vietnamese from the Cham people during the process of Southward expansion.

According to Junk Blue Book, a monograph by Marion C. Dalby, there is a type of boat coded with the symbol VTBC. VTBC is described as the type of boat with the strangest shape and structure in Southern Vietnam. The beak is long and not curved on the bow; the front sail is triangular. The bow is long; the boat has large oval eyes. These eyes are black and white on a smooth red or orange background. On both sides of the rudder, there are often drawings of the yin and yang (yin and yang) as seen in the fore compartment of other boats. The beak of the bow is also meticulously decorated, including the two yin and yang images.

The boat's operating limit is said to be the coastal area of Vung Tau, which is north, south, and to Rach Gia; this type of boat still appears..

Among Vietnamese boats, VTBC is the type of boat with the hull most similar to European and American sailboats. The general features of the boat are comparable to other kinds of boats.

In terms of shape, the VTBC boat has the highest similarity to the "Ghe Bau," which is said to be a type of boat with a name and origin from Malaysia, used a lot in the Central region of Vietnam and then used to migrate to the South of Vietnam.

10. The Ghe Cửa

Small in shape, with a pointed bow, this boat is good at jumping waves and stable sailing. It can enter and exit river mouths quickly and is used to transport goods along the sea.

11. Ghe Lồng (ghe bẳng lồng)

Ghe Long (cage-board boat): a large ship with a long bow and a canopy to protect against rain and sun. The boat's interior is divided into small compartments to hold different types of goods. This type of boat is used to transport goods along the coast.

12. Ghe Hàng Bồ:

Small boat, used for short trips on rivers and canals.

13. Ghe Giàn

A large boat with high wings on both sides to carry a lot of goods.

14. Ghe Be

It is a boat without a roof or a roof offset to the stern about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the ship's length.

15. Ghe Chài

The boat is large and can carry many goods; the roof is sturdy, made of many pieces, and has two floors. The ship is divided into two parts: the front part contains goods, and the back part is a resting place for boatmen. A separate roof behind the cockpit is used for bathing and cooking. The boat usually carries 150 tons - 200 tons. The ship has dozens of people rowing in reverse, using the "neo" style instead of the everyday rowing style. Later, people used tugboats to pull fishing boats. The boat is used for people who go on long-distance trade trips and live on the river. Goods are usually rice and charcoal.

16. "Ghe Cà Dom" Ca Dom boat

This is a small, long boat with a roof different from a keelboat and a long boat.

17. "Ghe Bè" – Be Boat:

This large, deep boat, like a barge, has a roof and a hefty load capacity. The rower can walk on the roof and transport goods on the river. Cambodia buys and sells large boats.

18. “Ghe Mỏ Vạch”- The Mo Vach boat

This type of boat has its bow raised high like a tailor's mark.

19. “Ghe Cui” – Cui boat

This short boat has a relatively flat bow and stern, less sharp than others. It is used to carry firewood and roofing leaves.

20. “The Ghe Cá - Ghe Roi”

This type of boat transports fish from the West to Saigon. Because it has to store live fish, the water level in the ship must always be equal to the water level of the river outside.

21. “The Ghe Cào”

This boat is used to catch fish, shrimp, clams, oysters... in rivers, canals, and along the shore. Each ship has two pieces of net 2-3m long, 1.5-2m wide, placed in a 2-3m high frame, depending on the shallow or deep water level. Dredge boats appeared around the late 70s of the 20th century.

22. “Ghe Cào Tôm”

The head and bow are flat, with a rudder on the side and a small shape. This boat is often used to rake shrimp and catch shrimp at night. In the past, rowing the boat took a lot of effort, but today, the raking ships are equipped with engines with a large capacity of up to 90CV.

23. Ghe Ngo (tuk agua) – The Ngo boat

The Khmer has a long shape like a shuttle; the head and tail are curved up, there is no roof, 25-27m long with 20-40 compartments, and it carries 50-60 rowers. The body is hollowed out and made of whole sao trees by Khmer artisans and monks. The boat body is painted black, and the beige is painted a white, yellow, and red line about 5cm high. Following the Nagar motif, the two sides are carved or painted with dragon and snake patterns. The front of the boat is painted with images of dragons, phoenixes, unicorns, sea eagles, peacocks, lions, tigers, and elephants... often used for racing during Ok Om Bok. The rowers line up in 2 rows on the boat, one person steering and one holding the bow. After the races, the ship is carefully stored in the pagoda.

24. “Ghe Dieu” – The Dieu boat

This is a type of boat with a carved bow; the roof beams are often painted red and gilded, the inside is lined with smooth planks, there is a place to cook, and it has all the amenities that rich people used to use as a place to smoke opium.

25. “Ghe Hầu” The Hau boat

More luxurious than the Ghe Dieu, it is reserved for officials, village, district, and district chiefs. At night, the boat is lit not to illuminate the way but to signal that it is an official's boat.

26. “Ghe Sai (Ghe Khoái)” – The Sai boat

It is a small boat, also known as The Khoai, small in shape, with light oars, used for official work

27. “Ghe Quyến” The Quyen Boat

A type of boat with a roof from end to end used to transport soldiers.

28. “Ghe Lê (Ghe Ô)” – The Le boat

This type of boat is used to transport soldiers or military equipment. Those used by commanders are often carved very elaborately all over their bodies. This type is usually painted red, called Ghe Son or Ghe Vem.

29. “Ghe Trẹt” – The Tret boat

This is a type of boat without a roof, flat bottom, and flat ends to transport buffalo and cows across the river.

30. “Ghe Voi” – the Voi boat

This type of boat is a small boat tied behind a significant ship to transport goods to shore.

31. “Võ Lai”

This type of watercraft has a flat bow, about 9m long, low walls, and a narrow beam. It is widely used in Ca Mau, Vietnam.

32. “Tắc Ráng”

This type of watercraft is longer than Vo Lai and has a pointed nose. It can run fast and reach a speed of 60km/h. It was invented and manufactured in Kien Giang.

33. “Ghe Câu Phú Quốc” (Kien Giang)

Phu Quoc Fishing Boat (Kien Giang) has sails and five pairs of oars for fishing.

34. “Ghe cùa Phú Quốc” (Kien Giang)

Phu Quoc port boat (Kien Giang) carrying seafood and fish sauce.

35. “Ghe Cửa Bà Rịa” Ba Ria boat: carrying seafood.

36. “Ghe lưới rùng Phước Hải” - Phuoc Hai trawler (Dat Do District, Ba Ria Vung Tau) used for catching seafood

37. “Ghe Cần Tho” Can tho boat

This type of boat has a large, long shape that is convenient for traveling on rivers without too many waves.

38. “Ghe Cửa Đại” – Cua Dai boat

This type of boat is used for fishing at sea or transporting goods to the ocean or large rivers. This type of boat has its characteristics and is built by artisans in Binh Dai-Ben Tre. This locality used to have relations with Go Cong, My Tho, Saigon, Ba Ria, Vung Tau, and Phan Thiet. A famous form of boat has been formed here, different from the Can Duoc boat with a short nose and wide hull, the Vam Lang boat (Go Cong) with a sharp nose and flat hull, the Hon boat (Phu Quoc) in the West with the vertical nose, wide hull, long body. Cua Dai boat is often called boat number 14 with a black nose, moderate height, wide hull, sturdy body, suitable for going to sea or transporting on rivers, can withstand jumping waves, and strong carrying capacity. It has a flat and long rudder, two sails, and a shaft; sails are made of banyan leaves (a type of palm leaf commonly known as sail cushion leaves): around 1920, to facilitate waterway control, the colonial government issued a regulation that each boat in each province in Cochinchina must have a separate number, the boat of My Tho province (at that time Binh Dai belonged to My Tho) had the number 14 and had the word My Tho written on the front of the boat.

39. “Ghe Cần Đuốc” (Long An) – Can Duoc boat

Can Duoc boat (Long An): used for fishing (bottom fishing, fishing nets) and transporting goods on rivers. The ship is large, beautiful, fast, and can carry a lot, but it is only convenient for use on rivers and canals because the hull is round, and the waves are not sound. The bow and rudder are both pointed and high, the bow and

rudder are curved, the rudder is large and high, and the rudder is horizontal past the bow. Can Duoc boat is painted bright red, the hull is blue, and the eyes are large and round.

In addition, depending on the purpose of use, boats in the South are referred to by many different names, which can be categorized according to function, characteristics, or locality.

3.2. Some of the most typical boats in the Mekong Delta region in Mekong Delta, Viet Nam

As mentioned in the above research, boats are classified or named in many ways.

They can be named according to their functions, such as long-distance ferries, fishing, passenger, and tourist boats.

According to the characteristics of shape and size, a small one is called a canoe, and a prominent one is called a boat, ship, ferry...

According to regions such as Can Duoc Long An boat, Boat No. 14, Phu Quoc tourist boat...

According to the history of use or locality of manufacture, such as Mrs. Ngo Dinh Nhu's boat, Tac Rang...

In this context, the author wants to mention the types of boats with many outstanding and typical factors that have an essential role and influence on the cultural life and regional characteristics of the residents of the Mekong Delta.

3.2.1. Passenger ship – Tau Khach

(Passenger ships travel along the length of rivers to dock at riverside wharves, taking passengers to many provinces and cities by waterway). Tàu chở khách, tàu khách (đò doc)

In the 1990s and before, with the development of the new society in Vietnam, the need for travel of the residents of the river, the ferry was the primary means of water transport of the residents here, similar to the high-quality buses and coaches like today, the ferry transported people and goods to all districts, provinces, and cities along the rivers. The ship was built of Hopea odorata (Go Sao) and could carry 20-30-200 passengers. Large ships had an additional cabin above reserved for the driver as a cockpit, which was easier to observe. Small ships had the driver's seat as the first seat from the bow. The boat had a raft bow (the bow was closed out to make it easier to load and unload goods).

In Can Tho, passenger trains have been in existence since around 1958. The routes often ran long distances, such as Vi Thanh - Bay Ngan to Can Tho. Then, the Vinh Thuan - Can Tho routes and further. Passenger trains to Can Tho were also at O Mon, Ba Mit, and Thoi Lai. At that time, Can Tho was the Tay Do - the capital of the Mekong Delta until today

Boats are the primary means of transport. They can travel anywhere rivers and canals pass through. Larger rivers use large ships, while smaller rivers and canals can use small boats. At its peak in 1979, Can Tho had more than 100 passenger boats. Passenger boat routes are widely expanded, such as:

Can Tho to Tra On, Cau Quang, Cau Ke, Tra Cu. Can Tho to Cai Sau, Bung Binh, Ben Ba, Cai Cui, Cai Dau, Mai Dam... All small canals have boats running from the source to the most miniature river channels, commonly called "ngon." People come to Can Tho to exchange goods, buy and sell agricultural products, and sell fruits

at higher prices. On average, from Cai Cui, it takes from 2 am to 6 am to get to Can Tho by small boat.

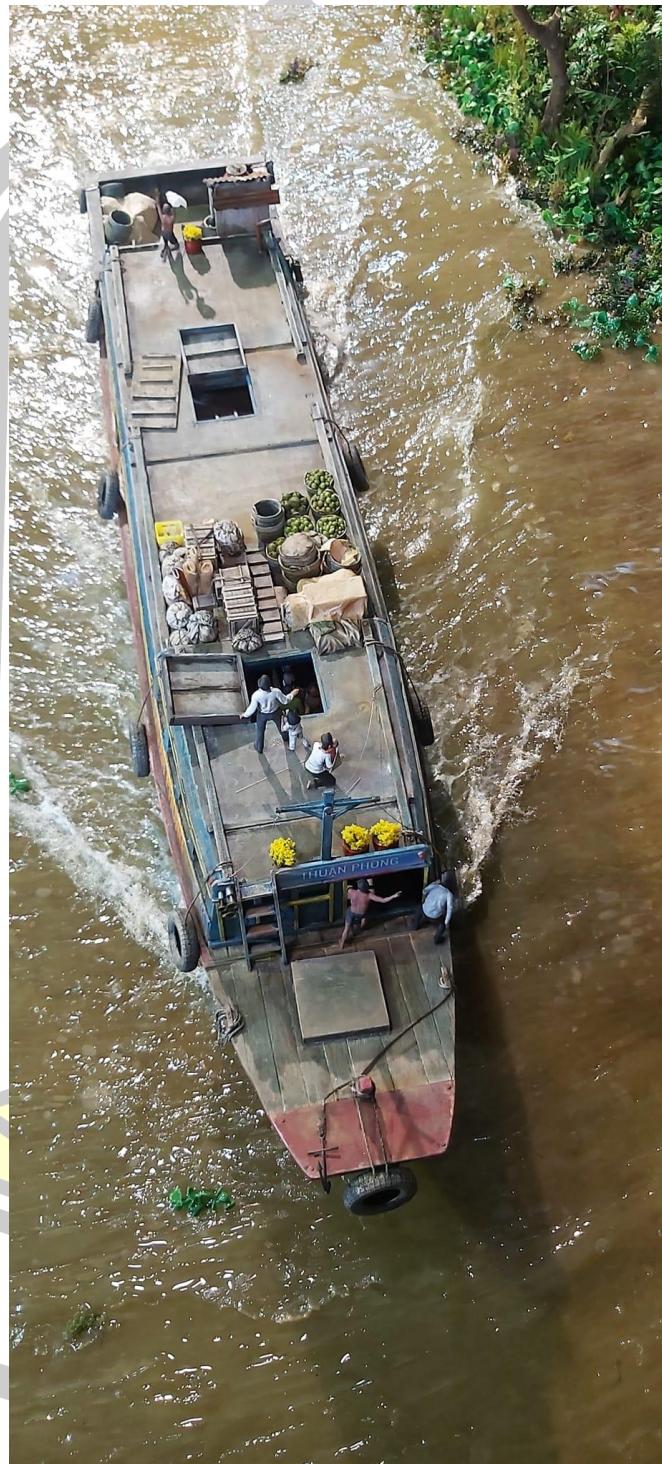


Figure 101 Passenger ship – Tau Khach
Source: Ngo Xuan Giang (Jan 30, 2024)



Figure 102 Passenger ship – Tau Khach

Source: *Ngo Xuan Giang* (Jan 30, 2024)



Đò dọc chạy tuyến Cà Mau- Đất Mũi đang dần tiến về chợ Đất Mũi. Ảnh: DUY KHÔI

Figure 103. Passenger ship – Tau Khach

Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> Accessed on Oct 10, 2023)



Figure 104. Passenger ship – Tau Khach

Source: *Ngo Xuan Giang* (Jan 30, 2024)



Figure 105. Passenger ship – Tau Khach - inside
 Source: Ngo Xuan Giang (Jan 30, 2024)

3.2.2. Ghe

Boats have many different types of bows. The bow of a boat is small and slender, and the Tam Bang boat in Cai Con has a small, slender bow. The Tam Bang Cai Rang - Phong Dien boat has an enormous bow, also known as Mui Trai Ban (Trai Ban Cape is a round boat bow shaped like a cork fruit, a tree that often grows along rivers.) Which is round and large. Soc Trang has Ca Vom boats, with planks cut into tiny bows and small bases to allow water to flow. Because the water in this area is vital. In Soc Trang, there is also the Ca Dom boat - Doc Moc boat, this type later, when wanting to improve to increase the load capacity, the berm is raised to make the vessel more prominent, increasing the balance because the bottom width of a dugout boat is usually tiny.

Some of the most typical types of boats that can be mentioned in the Mekong Delta are:

Ghe Can Duoc Long An: This type of boat first appeared around 1976-1980. It has a strong carrying capacity, and the stern and head are pointed, so it runs fast but cannot carry heavy loads.

Ghe Cui Can Duoc: The boat has a slightly rounded bow without a horizontal slat, formerly known as a pig's beak. This type of boat was influenced by the time the Nguyen Lord reclaimed the South, so the style of ships of the Royal Court influenced it. The type of boat or dragon boat for kings often has a pointed bow, raised high, and considered beautiful. It runs smoother because this type of boat spreads water and turns water well, similar to the Can Duoc boat.



Figure 106 Ghe Cui Can Duoc: The boat has a slightly rounded bow without a horizontal slat, formerly known as a pig's beak.

Source: <https://baolongan.vn/> (Accessed on Oct 10, 2023)

The Long Can Duoc: this is a famous area for building boats at that time, and if you come here to make a boat, you can be assured of the quality, with no mistakes. (Long Xuyen is also a famous area for building boats, Cai Xoai market)

The Luong An Giang: Usually used to transport potatoes and tubers. If carrying glass, there is a hatch cover; it is more airy if carrying fish.

When the US entered Vietnam in 1963-1964, the boats specialized in transporting goods for the US, such as rice.

Ghe Bau: The Ghe Bau is a round boat that cannot be used for business because it is not significant, has no load capacity, and does not have smooth buoyancy on the water like the Tam Ban boat. It is important to note that the Ghe Bau originated from Malaysia and is used in the Central region of Vietnam for migration or small cargo transportation. This differs from the boat commonly called the Ghe Bau in the West.

The Ghe Bau type is often mentioned in some information pages when mentioning types of boats in the West, Ghe Bau is often mentioned. However, information about Ghe Bau is a type of sailboat originating from Malaysia, read as Brau, and when read in Vietnamese, it becomes Ghe Bau. This type of boat mentioned is mainly used in the Central region, especially in the Quang Nam region. This boat is also called Truong Da boat, which the Vietnamese people adopted techniques from Malaysia and the Cham people to shape and use for fishing, even migrating to the Southern region such as Vung Tau. In the South, if it is a Bau boat, it is only used for the pleasure of the landlords. The boat does not bring economic benefits and cannot transport man

According to The Junk Blue Book of 1962 (Defense Technical Information Center, 1962) A Handbook of Junks of South Vietnam, Ghe Bau seem to be a type of boat appeared near the southern sea areas such as Vung Tau.

Some research by Professor Ngo Duc Thinh (1984) on Ghe Bau: In the documents of Professor Ngo Duc Thinh and Professor Chan Quoc Vuong, it is (mill-style rudder, tube rudder, yin-yang rudder...) all have a structure where the rudder pin goes directly into the rudder. The boat uses a quadrilateral or bat-wing sail. The boat's

eyes are carved long, the front is round, and the tail is long and pointed. It is thanks to this type of Bau boat that the people of Quang Nam can go far out to sea to fish, especially the organization of the Hoang Sa soldiers who can use boats to occupy and guard islands nearly 300 km from the mainland" stated that "Among the sea areas in our country, the sea in the Central region, especially the sea in Quang Nam, is where the fishing industry at sea, in brackish lagoons and on rivers is very developed. In particular, this is where the Bau boat was born, a unique product of the Vietnamese sea industry, recorded in the world nautical dictionary.

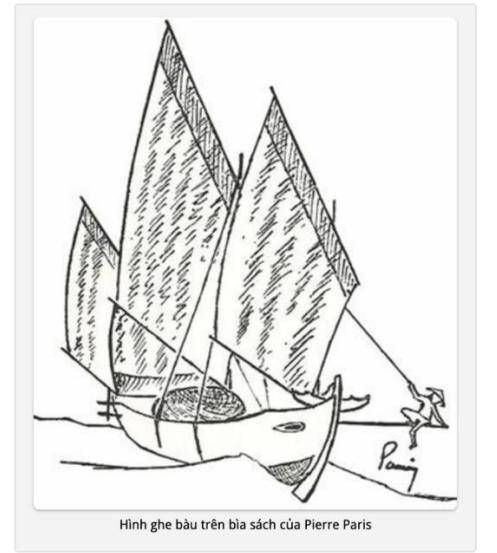


Figure 107 The boat image on the book cover of Pierre Paris
 Source: <https://biendong.net/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 108 The boat image on the Ghe Bau - Dr Nguyen Nha
 Source: <https://biendong.net/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 109. Bau Boat Model - famous product in Kim Bong carpentry village - Quang Nam

Source: <https://baoquangnam.vn/> (Accessed on Oct 10, 2023)

Can Tho Tam Ban Boat (some places call it Bau Boat, but technically, it is a Tam Bang Boat): This boat has a wide, flat surface, can carry a lot, and is heavy. The boat's bow and bottom are round, so they do not move quickly. They are also suitable for traveling calm rivers with few big waves and strong winds. "Me Trang, flat bow. Technically, the boat is built from the bottom plank in the middle, and then the following planks are installed. Depending on the size of the boat, more or less planks can be installed. The boat is used as a mobile home for merchants on the water. It has a place to live and transport goods to make a living.



Figure 110 Can Tho Tam Ban Boat

Source: <https://nhandan.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The Ba La (Dong Thap): This type was created by boat builders in Dong Thap. Typically, Ghe, Xuong Ba La is a small boat with a minimal capacity, only enough for about 3-5 people. However, the Ghe Ba La in Dong Thap can be made into a large boat to transport goods. Its capacity is up to more than 10 tons.

The Ba Ngo Dinh Nhu boat is a type of boat that appeared in the 1960s. We specialize in transporting wood and rice. The ship has a hefty load capacity of about 250 tons. Its back is 8 centimeters to 1 inch, and its height is 1 inch to 2 inches. The boat is longer than 20 meters and can carry round wood; each group has about 10-20 ships for one shipment.

The Duc boat (Ghe Đức - Cà Dom)



Figure 111. Ca dom boat

Source: <https://nhandan.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Depending on the function of transporting fish or agricultural products. It can even be used for traveling or relaxing. For those who have the means, the interior is elaborately decorated. The standard type still has the same pointed boat roof but does not have many patterns or colors. Users can adjust some of the boat's structures depending on the function. If used to transport live seafood, the ship will apply Ghe Duc (with a net connecting to the river water and a fish hold at the bottom, with a cool roof above). No roof is installed if used to transport agricultural products or construction materials, but the goods are directly loaded onto the boat for transport. If used for living, the space is also renovated to suit the function. That is why many new models are applying new decor options for boats to turn into equipment for tourism. If used to transport agricultural products, there is a specialized boat for transporting fish.

Ghe Duc: Unlike ordinary boats, Ghe Duc can let water in and out for fish to live like in a river, canal, or a raft, thanks to the two sides of the boat being perforated with 5 - 10 square holes (about 40cm wide/hole), an iron mesh blocks the outside. Thanks to that, water from inside the boat and outside the river communicates. The boat does not sink because the front and back of the boat are separated like a buoy to help the boat float. On average, a Ghe Duc boat carries 15 - 20 tons of pangasius. With Ghe Duc, pangasius fry transported long distances do not lack oxygen and do not lose their slime. As for commercial pangasius, transporting them by the Duc boat helps the fish stay fresh before reaching the seafood processing factory... The boat carrying fish must be built of wood to insulate and limit sound waves when the boat increases or decreases the engine's speed, not causing the fish to panic and die, and the water balance is also more stable, not shaking much. Sao wood can withstand water or dryness and is suitable and durable for boat building.

Duc boat because it only transports fish, so it can only be built with Sao wood boat. The cost is much higher than an iron boat. Iron boats have a high rate of fish dying and are also hot. Some boats can carry more than 30 tons of fish.

New market model An Giang: the bow of the boat does not have a sun decoration

Hoa Binh model: the boat's bow has a sun symbol decoration.



Figure 112 New market model An Giang: the bow of the boat does not have a sun decoration

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 113 Hoa Binh model: the boat's bow has a sun symbol decoration.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Ghe Cà Mau: cũng dùng chở hàng hóa đi Cà Mau – Sài Gòn và ngược lại.

3.2.3. Ferry

In the absence of a large, solid bridge connecting the two banks of the river for road vehicles to continue their journey, the ferry is the most optimal solution. Unlike passenger ships, which function as a ferry, the ferry is understood as a goose boat used to transport many passengers and vehicles across the river, including motorbikes, cars, or even trucks. Depending on the river's width, the ferry used has an appropriate size. Small river sections have small ferries; large rivers have large ferries. Ferries have different load capacities; relatively large rivers usually use ferries. Large ferries will have many floors and can accommodate many vehicles, people, and bulky goods. Ferries are often rectangular, have a large area, and are not too fast because they carry a lot of cargo; they must be balanced in the water, stable, and not shaken or affected by waves. In particular, both ends of the ferry have a docking function so that they do not have to turn around when going to the other side of the river.

Can Tho is also where the Cai River passes through. The main large river has many wide mouths, so the river divides some of the junctions between the two provinces. Can Tho Ferry also be an old ferry terminal? With the appearance of the

Can Tho Bridge, the longest cable-stayed bridge in Southeast Asia, the Can Tho ferry terminal has also stopped operating.

Since the early 20th century, when the road traffic system in the South was expanded, including the My Thuan ferry, the French have begun to build docks and Bungalows (a type of separate small house with simple structure and function and mobility) for some ships to enter and exit trade in the provinces south of the Hau River.

In 1915, the Governor General of Indochina issued a Decree to build a stone road from Saigon to Can Tho-Rach Gia. At the same time, during the period of about 1914 - 1918, the French also constructed the Can Tho ferry. Since the Can Tho ferry's construction and operation, the road from Can Tho to Soc Trang, Long Xuyen, Vinh Long was built and renovated. Can Tho ferry across the Hau River is 1,840m long, of which, on the Can Tho side, the road leading to the ferry is in Cai Khe ward; on the Vinh Long side (commonly called the North bank) is located in Cai Von town, Binh Minh district. According to many older adults, from 1946 to 1950, only six small, open-top ferries at Can Tho ferry, each of which could carry two buses. Each ferry usually had six service staff. Operating hours were only from 4 am to 10 pm every day. Over time, the Can Tho ferry terminal has invested in many modern means, including ferries with a capacity of 100 to 200 tons and operating 24/24 hours. However, that still needs to meet the demand for traffic development in recent years, especially on holidays and Tet, where the ferry is always stuck in traffic for many hours. Completing the Can Tho bridge also means that the ferries that have been ferrying people and vehicles across the river for nearly a century will end their historic mission.



Figure 114. Ferry

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 115. Ferry

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 116 Small Ferry

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

3.2.4. Xuong

Xuong Năm Quăng: Called Xuong Năm Quăng, it means to use it for 1 year and then throw it away. Quickly say it as Xuong 5 Quăng. (Nam: when pronounced in Vietnamese, it has a tone similar to the number 5. Quăng is a verb in the Southern dialect, meaning to throw away, to throw away). This Xuong usually has five leaves, meaning five planks joined together, and is made of low-quality wood such as durian wood. The reason is that Sao wood used to build this type of boat is rare and 3 times more expensive. (Each Xuong Nam Quăng boat is made of cheap wood, costing around 300k-500k/boat. Instead of spending more than 1-2 million/boat, it has saved a lot for the people). Every year during the flood season, people only use this type of boat for a short time and then throw it away. Therefore, saving costs when buying this boat to use only during the flood season is necessary.

3.2.5. Vo Lai

* **The Vo Lai:** is a type of boat, canoe, small boat, diamond-shaped, usually made of wood and equipped with an engine. Vo Lai is a long boat with a thin body and a shrimp tail engine at the back; the bow is slanted up. Vo Lai is made of wood or composite plastic. Southern people named it vo lai because they saw it had a long body like a loach. The shell distinguishes it from the inside, meaning the shrimp tail engine runs on gasoline. This engine helps vo lai run fast and was produced in

Germany or Japan. In the past, when the engine was not installed, the boat's movement depended on human strength, rowing, or paddling by hand. Therefore, people thought of adding an engine as well as improving the shape



Figure 117 The Tac Rang

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

* **The Tac Rang (Tắc Rang)** là phương tiện di chuyển chính và rất phổ biến ở các tỉnh miền Tây Nam Bộ, đặc biệt là vào mùa lũ. Tắc rang ban đầu là "vò lai" (thuyền). "Vò lai" (thuyền) là phương tiện di chuyển được nhiều người dân miền Tây sử dụng, giống như thuyền tam bản hay "bầu" (bầu).

Around the 1970s, from the original shape of the Vo Lai, Mr. Chin Sum built larger Tac Rang boats with a load capacity of 2 - 3 tons to carry goods. After that, the Tac Rang boat was upgraded to a more prominent appearance, with a canopy to protect against rain and sun and two wooden benches along the ship. It was also equipped with a high-capacity engine to carry passengers.

The Tac Rang boat was also improved: the bow was lower to make it easier for passengers to get on and off but still ensure good water turning and fast running; the stern was made round instead of angular to make it easier to turn and not capsize. The exciting thing about the "tac rang" is that the large-capacity engine is placed outside (even mounted on a graveyard car engine), and the mechanic invented a unique direct water cooling system: when the boat runs, the propeller rotates to blow water into a funnel attached to the back of the propeller. The water from this funnel automatically flows through the pipe to the engine cooler, then discharges into the river.

"The good thing about the "tac rang" is that the engine is mounted outside. If the propeller gets stuck with trash, people need to turn off the engine and turn the propeller up to remove the trash, without diving into the river like boats with engines inside."

Now, in the provinces of the Southwest, the "tac rang" - a miniature version of the "tac rang" with a shrimp tail engine behind it—is almost everywhere in the river area. Many people compare it to a motorbike on land. Later, the "tac rang" was no longer made of wood but molded from composite plastic, painted in eye-catching colors, and had a faster speed.

3.2.6. Ghe Hàng



Figure 118 Ghe Hang is like a mobile grocery store on the river. When people buy goods, the boat will anchor at the river wharf.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 119. Ghe Hang is like a mobile grocery store on the river. When people buy goods, the boat will anchor at the river wharf.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)





Figure 120 Ghe Hang is like a mobile grocery store on the river. When people buy goods, the boat will anchor at the river wharf.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Those who were born and raised in the middle of the river, especially the 8X generation and before, may still remember the image of a cargo boat passing through the rivers and canals and coming to each house in the neighborhood. The image of a cargo boat stopping at a particular dock is when children from several houses away rush to point and ask their mothers to buy candy and toys. Adults buy food, food, and all the necessary household items such as essential oils, kerosene, rice, salt, vegetables, etc. The cargo boat is like a small grocery store or mini supermarket moving on the river. The cargo boat has all the necessary goods for people to live. Because the countryside is often very far from the market, farmers in the garden who want to bring fruit to the city or the central trading areas must take a passenger ship (3.2.1) from dawn, sometimes starting at 2-3 am and arriving at 6-7 am. Therefore, farmers usually do not have long trips but only go when there is an opportunity or harvest season to buy and sell agricultural products. Thus, the boat appeared as a unique creative solution for the river residents when bringing the "mobile market" to each family deep in the "estuaries, estuaries, canals..." along the small river branches; wherever the river goes, the boat goes there. Therefore, the size of the boat is manageable enough to be convenient for moving in many different conditions of large and small canals. The boat usually has a bell or a hand-squeezed horn. Just by hearing the sound of the boat, everyone who needs something will call for the boat to stop at their home dock to buy and sell. The cargo boat is a nostalgic testament to the

childhood of many generations in the Mekong Delta; it has helped neighbors through many rainy and sunny seasons. One of the most attractive joys for children then was buying snacks on the cargo boat. Occasionally, the boat only went once, so when people met, they often asked about each other's health, like family members. Although life in the past was lacking, the love of neighbors for each other was sincere and straightforward. Nowadays, when road traffic has developed, and new planning or commercial services have accelerated urbanization with supermarkets and modern and attractive shopping centers... this has led to a massive decline in cargo boats in the countryside. This is a unique and memorable cultural feature of the river region with the valuable contribution of the Ghe Hang, which not only transports familiar goods from needles, threads, candies, and toys for children to enjoy, rice, salt, sugar, soy sauce for adults... but the small boat also carries joys and sorrows, memories, and neighborhood love, witnessing and experiencing the ups and downs of the spartan culture in the peaceful Western land - Can Tho.

3.2.7. Ghe Ngo



Figure 121 Ngo boat racing festival in Soc Trang

Source: <https://baosoctrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 122 Ngo boats have colorful and diverse colors and decorations.

Source: <https://baosoctrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 123. Ngo boats have colorful and diverse colors and decorations.

Source: <https://baosocstrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 124 Ngo boats have colorful and diverse colors and decorations.

Source: <https://baosocstrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The shape of the Ngo boat resembles a snake, with its body being long and slender on both sides and its head curved and slightly lower than the stern. Each ship is approximately 22-27 meters long and gradually narrows towards the stern and the bow.

The outside of the boat is painted in many colorful colors, and the sides are carved or painted with dragon and snake scales that follow the motif of the Nagar snake god. The boat's bow is painted with images of animals such as peacocks, dragons, snakes, tigers, etc., winding and rushing forward as if ready to surf the waves, symbolizing both the beauty and the strength of each boat.

Ngo boats are one of the cultural and sports symbols associated with Khmer pagodas, containing the aesthetic value of a unique work of art and historical value as evidence of a long-standing agricultural cultural tradition.

"Tuk Ngo" (Ngo boat) originally had the structure of a dugout canoe made of sao tree. In the past, people went into the forest to find sao wood, held a ceremony to worship the Forest Guardian God (Neak ta Prey phenom) to be safe and sound, and then cut down the tree. They had to use the strength of buffaloes or elephants to pull the tree down to the river, tie it into a raft, and then release it into the water. The sao tree brought back had to be sawed, chiseled, carved and hollowed into a dugout canoe. Later, the boat was improved with a curved head and tail; the Khmer called it Tuk Ngo (Tuk is a boat, Cong is corn - read as Ngo). In recent years, artisans have constantly improved boat-building techniques so Ngo boats can sail quickly. Ngo boats are built longer, from 30 - 31m, with a capacity of 55 - 60 people, instead of

only 22 - 27m. The Ngo boat has the shape of a Naga snake, with a slender body, gently sloping forward, a curved head, and a little lower than the stern, with many compartments; each compartment is covered with many 1.2m long crossbars, making a belt just enough for two people to sit and swim comfortably in parallel pairs, including 25 pairs. The Ngo boat has its beam, which is made in many sizes depending on the position of the swimmers. In particular, the Ngo boat has two pliers, 0.2m in diameter, usually made from cajuput tree trunks because this tree is flexible, helping the boat to bounce and move quickly, and at the same time helping to hold the boat firmly so it does not break in half. One plier runs the length of the boat, and one plier steers (from the middle of the boat to the back), called Don Sonh-Tuoch (fishing rod). The boat body is rubbed repeatedly until it is smooth and painted black. On the bevel is painted a white, red, or yellow line, depending on the preference of the abbot, about 5cm long. The sides are carved with dragon scales, snakes in Naga motifs, or stylized flowers and leaves. On both sides of the bow are painted images of animals, such as dragons, peacocks, lions, tigers, and elephants, symbolizing the boat's beauty and strength. Nowadays, the Sao tree trunks that two people can hug are almost gone, so modern Ngo boats are built with Sao tree planks. Perhaps because the structure of today's boats is thinner and lighter than traditional boats, they glide faster. Ngo boats are kept indoors to be built on the temple grounds. The roof and high beams are sturdy to protect against rain and sun and to prevent termites. The boat house is a sacred place; in the past, women were not allowed to go near.

Part 2: The network of boats represents the cultural identity of the Mekong

Delta Viet Nam

3.3. The network of boats represents the cultural identity of the Mekong Delta

Vn:

3.3.1. Role of boats in life

With flexible functions, boats become a means of transport for many residents here. Large rivers carry a lot of goods and have large boats; small rivers carry little goods and have small and medium boats. Boats for transporting goods differ from boats for taking passengers across the river; boats for fishing differ from boats for transporting fish, rice, wood, or construction materials. Depending on each function, boats are transformed to suit the application.

. Transport

Ferry, passenger ferry (Đò dọc đò ngan): Passenger ship, passenger ship (ferry)

Wherever rivers and canals go, boats can go there. Boats are used as the primary means of transport. Like today's high-quality buses and coaches, ferries transport people and goods to all districts, provinces, and cities along the rivers. In Can Tho, passenger ships have been in operation since around 1958. The routes, such as Vi Thanh - Bay Ngan to Can Tho, usually run long distances. Next are the Vinh Thuan - Can Tho routes. Can Tho go to Tra On, Cau Quang, Cau Ke, or Tra Cu? Can Tho go to Cai Sau, Bung Binh, Ben Ba, Cai Cui, Cai Dau, Mai Dam... People go to Can Tho to exchange goods, buy and sell agricultural products, and sell fruits at higher prices. On average, from Cai Cui, it takes from 2 am to 6 am to Can Tho if

traveling by small boat. At that time, Can Tho was Tay Do - the capital of the Mekong Delta until today.



Figure 125 "Do doc" ferry running along the Ca Mau route, also known as a passenger ship. Boats run along the length of the river called "Do Doc"

Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on Oct 10, 2023)



Figure 126. Boats carrying passengers across the river means running along the riverbank called "Do Ngan". Boats are used to transport passengers, small rivers use small boats.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 127 Boats are used to transport goods and passengers.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 128. Ferry - a type of water vehicle that transports goods and passengers

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

. Floating House



Figure 129. Boat as a means of living as a house

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 130 Boat used as a means of trading food, with full kitchen and typical dishes.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 129. Boats are used as a means of trading on the river, even for buying and selling food. Boats are like mobile restaurants (kitchens).

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

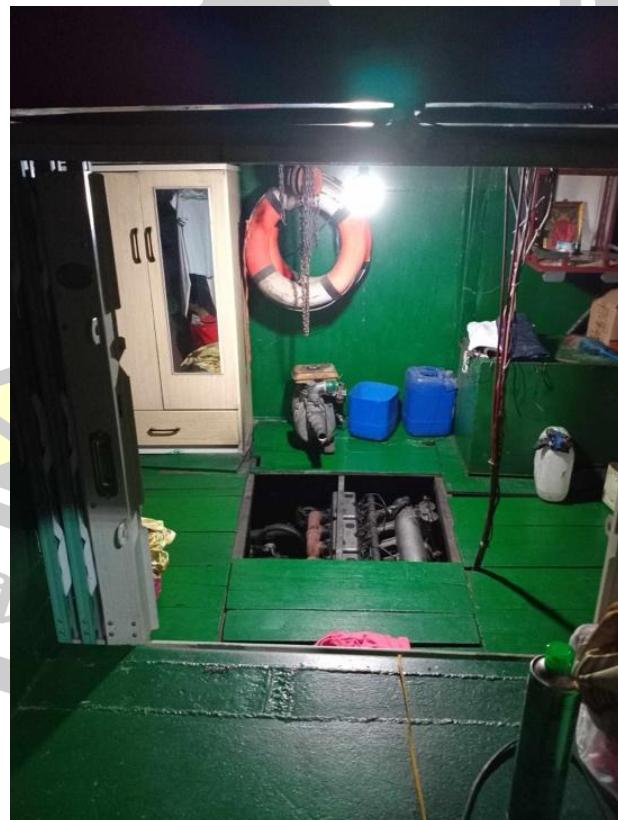


Figure 130. Inside the boat there is an engine room for large boats.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

. In travels serves



Figure 131 Image of activities at Cai Rang Floating Market
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

3.3.2. Role of boats in spiritual life

Faith and spiritual beliefs related to floating market culture. (Dede Iswandi et al., 2023) These factors interact and form religious beliefs or behaviors towards nature and the river environment through "legendary" and "mythical" characters. These characters are worshiped and have specific spiritual values (Charlotte Pham et al., 2010)

Taboos on the river

Fishermen and people working on the river believe in Ba-Cau very much; the altar under the boat always has a plate of fruit, three cups of water, and incense sticks. People on the ship never dare to offend, even say unlucky or nonsense things.

People who travel on the river or sea avoid using harsh, sour, strange words, and the phrases capsized, flip, fall, fall, turn, roll, fall, and tumble... Boat owners also believe in ancient customs such as avoiding the hour of Mao when the boat is finished, wanting to set off or start work because that is the hour of Ba Cau's birth. Boat owners and boat-building workshops are terrified of anyone touching the eyes of the boat, especially strangers. When selling a boat, the owner never sells the long pole and the water bailing trough. If he quits the job, he can give it to someone else.

On the way, people sitting on boats should avoid snakes and geese swimming in front of the ship and avoid carrying cats and turtles (even the captain and boat owner do not eat cats and snakes). On the contrary, meeting a dog swimming across the river is a lucky sign, and seeing many fireflies flying is a good sign. In addition, when sitting on a boat fishing and accidentally dropping a knife into the water, you must dive to find it because losing a knife at the bottom of the water is taboo. Some places still maintain the custom of dyeing nets, burning nets, cleaning boats, or praying to dispel lousy luck whenever they encounter misfortune or violate taboos.

The spiritual custom of worshiping Ba Cau is indispensable for those who use boats.

Along the length of Vietnam, the West has the most typical terrain. When there are many canals and streams and are pretty close to the sea, due to the unique geographical location, every house will have a boat to travel by. The ship helps them travel on the river, helps them store things, or even live on it. The boat is an indispensable object in the river delta of the West. Since ancient times, our country has always believed in spirituality, with the custom of worshipping ancestors. In addition, before lowering the boat into the water, the people of the West often perform a worship ceremony. The boat worship ceremony is a thank you, praying that the ship will bring peace and luck during use. The boat worship ceremony is a beautiful tradition preserved for generations. Depending on the conditions of each family, there will be different worship ceremonies. The most important thing is the heart of the worshiper. If your heart is sincere, it is still proven without needing a high-class feast. After the boat worshiping ceremony, they will be lowered into the water and tested.

In this spiritual culture, it is easy to see that most means of transportation are by boat. People in the West often draw a pair of eyes on the boat's bow. With the concept that these are divine eyes that suppress and ward off water monsters in rivers, canals, and streams. Because of the idea that "under the ground, there is a local god, under the river there is a river god." Therefore, people in the West often worship boats and canoes to pray for good luck.

They also pray that the water gods bless and protect the homeowner when they lower the boat into the water and leave the port safely, buy and sell well, and do business smoothly. In addition, the custom of worshiping boats and canoes also has another meaning: remembering the help of "Ba Cau," who helped and punished those who cheated on boats and canoes.

There are many theories about the image of "Ba Cau," but most boat owners often say it is an old woman with two sons who specializes in helping people on the river when they are in trouble. To show their gratitude, the ancient vendors held ceremonies to pray for Ba and her two sons to protect and help them. The image of "Ba Cau" is also used by boaters to remind, warn, and punish people for wrong actions, words, and bad morals. The ceremony to worship "Ba Cau" on the boat is usually held each month on the 16th and 29th of the lunar calendar. Regarding offerings, if land vehicles often offer chickens (symbolizing lucky jumping activities), then boat offerings must include ducks (symbolizing swimming and smooth movement on the river). The offering tray includes boiled duck with three bowls of porridge, a pot of tea, wine, and cakes, and some places also offer a pig's head, depending on the family's economy. The offering tray is placed in front of the boat. When the ceremony starts, the boat owner burns incense to pray for business, luck, health, etc.

The boat offering ritual requires meticulousness and experience in each stage. When preparing to build a new ship, the homeowner always provides the first wooden plank. This is called the "ghim lo" offering. People often include a red cloth on the offering tray. This is the color symbolizing luck. The "ghim lo" wooden plank must always be thicker than the following after completing the boat. The homeowner must collect the nails on the "ghim lo" plank. The boat builder will have to "xam" other corresponding wooden stakes. According to tradition, lousy luck will occur if those nails are lost.

After the boat worshiping ceremony, the boat owner invites neighboring boats to drink wine and play traditional music. Then they discuss business for the next trip. The boat worshiping ceremony in the Mekong Delta is considered a spiritual and cultural custom in the West. The custom is closely associated with the daily life of the people. This has become a long-standing traditional beauty of the local people.

Another popular boat worshiping ceremony is the "len be" ceremony, which means pulling the boat ashore for repair, renovation, etc. The form is similar to the monthly worshiping ceremony.

There are usually two forms of boat worshiping to start a business trip at the beginning of the year. One is if the boat owner has chosen a good day but for some other reason cannot start the journey; then they will place offerings on the shore then let the boat run back and forth to the place where the offering tray is placed three times, then start the trip on any day they want. The other is that if the trip is immediate, do not do the above actions but start immediately after the worshiping ceremony.

The spiritual custom of worshiping the water god every month. This is also clearly reflected in the cultural life of worship, the religious beliefs of boat owners, and the people who use boats as equipment, houses, shelters, or influential members of merchants' lives. These unique elements reflect the vibrant social life of boats in the Mekong Delta.



Figure 132 **The spiritual custom of worshiping the water god every month**
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

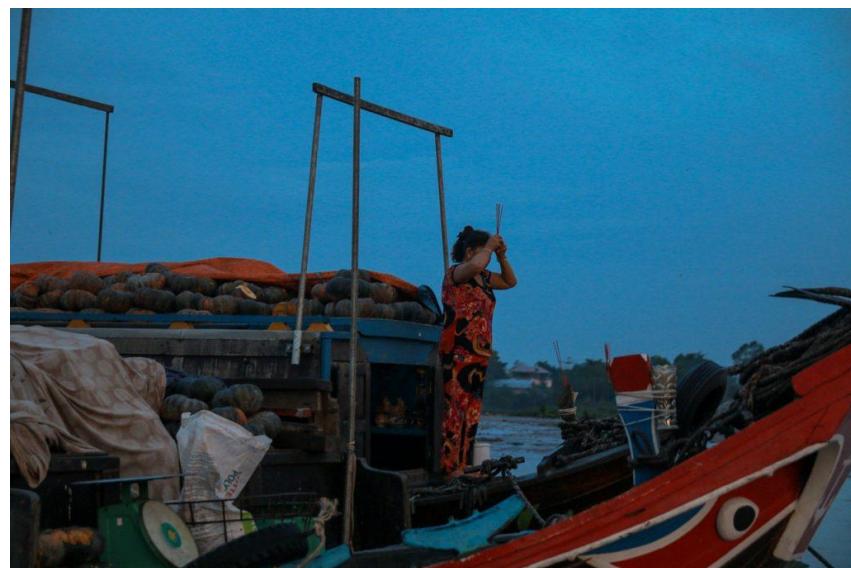


Figure 133 Spiritual custom of worship when launching a newly built boat
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 134 Spiritual custom of worship when launching a newly built boat
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Customs related to boats and the humans using boats

3.3.3. Cultura role

Festival of boats (VN + W)

Boats participate in many social activities such as:

Festivals: Ghe Ngo racing festival and Ghe Ngo racing festival in Soc Trang

With its typical value, the Khmer Ngo Boat Racing Festival was included in the List of National Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Minister of Culture, Sports, and Tourism in Decision No. 74/QD-BVHTTDL dated January 12, 2022.

With the concept that Gods help people and people can offend Gods, every year, Khmer people hold ceremonies to atone for their sins and thank the Gods. The Moon worshiping festival - Ooc om boc, releasing flower lanterns, releasing sky lanterns, and Ngo boat racing are the forms in which Khmer people want to express their gratitude to the Water God, the Earth God, and ask for the Gods' "forgiveness" for human actions that have damaged the surrounding environment. According to legend, the Ngo boat racing custom of the Khmer people in Soc Trang was first held at "Pem Kon Tho" (now Du Tho estuary in My Xuyen district, Soc Trang province). After 1975, Ngo boat racing was held on the Nhu Gia River, now held at Kinh Sang (also known as Xung Dinh River) in the center of Soc Trang province. Since 2013, when the Prime Minister allowed Soc Trang to organize the "First Ngo Boat Racing Festival of Khmer people in the Mekong Delta - Soc Trang province in 2013", which is held every 2 years, Ngo boat racing has been organized on a larger scale.

The Moon worshiping ceremony (Oóc om bôc) or "Đút cóm dep" ceremony (Bon sâm peah preah khe) is a traditional festival of the Khmer people. This ceremony takes place the night before the full moon of the "Ka-đâk" month (corresponding to the 15th day of the 10th lunar month), the last day of summer, and the time to harvest crops, of which sticky rice is the earliest. Offerings to the moon include flattened com, coconut, sugarcane, cassava, taro, etc.

The 15th of October is the traditional Ngo boat racing festival, with the participation of many racing teams from all provinces/cities in the Mekong Delta region. Ngo boat racing in the Ooc Om Boc festival is performed in two forms: the rituals at home or the pagoda and the Ngo boat racing festival in Kinh Sang.

The Khmer believe that the Ngo boat is a sacred object, and any work with the Ngo boat must be performed in a ceremony. To prepare for the race, a launching ceremony must be held to call on the Gods (Prey) to help the boat team win. Racers and supporters in the village attend the ceremony. Depending on the conditions of each pagoda, the launching ceremony is conducted in different ways but generally takes place in the following order: People in the village gather at the pagoda to prepare offerings. The offerings are placed on a large table before the Ngo boat's bow. The shaman performs the ceremony with pentatonic music to invite the God who protects the Ngo boat, the goddess Neng Khmau or Neng Teo. After the music ends, the monks stand on both sides of the boat's bow and recite prayers to pray for peace and luck, occasionally sprinkling water on the boat's bow to pray for luck and success... Next, the shaman kneels, offers offerings to launch the Ngo boat, and prays for strength and victory over all opponents. The shaman rubs coconut oil on the boat's bow and shares it with the racers to rub on their heads. The racers vow to unite and win. The drums and whistles sound, and the racers stand on both sides of the boat, lift

it, slowly go to the riverbank, and lower it into the water. After the ceremony, a red cloth symbolizing the goddess Neng Khmau is placed on the boat's bow during the race. The racers board the boat according to the arranged positions and simultaneously row their arms to the sound of the coach's whistle. The boat tears through the water and rushes forward amidst the cheers of the spectators.

Usually, the launching ceremony will occur about a week before the official race. During that time, the racing team regularly practices on the boat to ensure flexibility, evenness, and endurance, and they observe and adjust the two pliers on the ship to launch as quickly as possible. The teams often practice based on the tide because the low tide (low) cannot practice. The primary practice time is early morning and cool afternoon, so the racers do not lose strength. However, people also choose sunny afternoons to practice to improve their endurance when entering the official race because when racing, there are times when the race lasts from morning to afternoon, requiring the physical endurance of the racers. On the shore, people come to the riverbank to cheer on the racers of their villages and hamlets to practice in large numbers.

The boat racing team usually has 70 - 80 people, including official and reserve swimmers, who are strong young men selected by the community. On the Ngo boat, there are three drivers. The person sitting at the boat's bow must be a well-off person with prestige in the village and hamlet. When selected, the person sitting in the bow is responsible for directing the swimming technique of the whole team, directing the rituals related to the boat racing, directing the preparation of the offering ceremony, feeding the swimmers ("con dam"), training and taking care of other expenses for the race (today, the cost of the race is partly supported by the local government, partly by the temple's donations from the community, however, in some villages and hamlets, this practice is still maintained). The second person is responsible for general control by giving commands with a whistle or gong, especially urging the group of swimmers in the middle of the boat, called blog kay. The person sitting in the stern adjusts the swimmers' technique, known as the steering group commander (kayak). After the person sitting in the bow is the pair of "con dam" called "s'ma tum." This pair must have swift swimming technique, following the gong or whistle rhythm to set a standard for the swimmers sitting behind. Next is the "kon choro va," consisting of 6 people sitting and swimming. Then comes the "ko lich," 28 people kneeling to swim. When the boat is near the finish line, these 28 people stand up simultaneously, one leg as a pivot, the other pushing with the arm to make the boat rush to the finish line; then there are 8 "strong don" who do the swimming. Finally, there are three steers: the main steer stands at the back, and two assistant steers stand parallel in front of the main steer. Because the Ngo boat has a long, slender shape like a snake's body, with both ends curved up, when swimming, the boat looks like a snake crawling on the water, very lively. However, the boat can quickly lose balance and capsize if the swimming team's movements are not coordinated. Therefore, the swimmers must practice hard to become proficient and in the correct position. Before racing, the swimming teams have to practice swimming on land for months. Usually, the swimming practice location is in front of the temple yard.

In the Ooc Om Boc festival, in addition to the moon worshiping ritual and Ngo boat racing, the Khmer people also practice activities such as releasing wind lanterns, releasing water lanterns, conch flags, iron marbles, rom vong dance, rong

leo..., attracting a large number of Khmer people and both Kinh and Chinese people to participate. Ngo boat racing in the Ooc Om Boc festival is closely associated with the formation and development of the Khmer ethnic group, has an essential position in the community, and has a close relationship with agricultural beliefs expressed through offerings to the gods and practices of rituals. Ngo boat racing aims to meet the spiritual needs of each community member and preserve and pass them on to future generations. The organization of the Ngo boat racing festival reflects nature, the universe, people, and all things, as well as ethnic culture... Ngo boat racing festival aims to express gratitude and ask for "forgiveness" from the God of Earth and the God of Water for human activities that have affected the surrounding environment, pray for favorable weather, good crops, full granaries, and a prosperous life... Ngo boat racing reflects the wish for a peaceful life and prosperity through praying to the Moon God and organizing boat racing. In addition, other folk games also partly express the festival's connection with the natural and social environment of the Khmer people. Ngo boat racing festival in the Khmer Ooc Om Boc festival in Soc Trang contributes to educating people about collective spirit, discipline, will to rise to win, training physical strength, flexibility, ingenuity, and endurance of people. Ngo boat racing festival also demonstrates community spirit and solidarity, creating unparalleled strength and expressing national pride.



Figure 135 The boat racing team in the Ngo Racing festival
Source: <https://baosoctrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 136 The boat racing team in the Ngo Racing festival
 Source: <https://baosocstrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The Tam Ban Boat Race has long been a type of sport competition of the people in the province, organized on the occasion of traditional festivals and New Year of the nation. According to the magazine Xua va Nay, the Hue court also decreed the boat racing movement in Long Ho Dinh, and boat racing was organized very solemnly on the Co Chien River. The Western provinces, belonging to Long Ho Dinh, also brought all kinds of boats, Ghe o, Ghe le, and Xuong, to attend the festival; the boat race was fascinating and enthusiastic. People in red clothes and red shirts flocked to watch the bustling river banks; under the boats were rows of boats in order of number. The judges of the Ngo boat races were the Mandarins sitting on the platform built against the riverbank, choosing strong men, four people rowing a boat to control the racing boats, and eight people rowing the racing boats to the level of winning the prize. The judges will award the boats that come in first, second, and third place, as well as money, fabric, live pigs, etc. The Tam Ban boat race in Vinh Long Province 2012 aims to recreate the image of boat racing on the ancient Co Chien River. This activity also aims to preserve and promote the type of mass sport boat racing that bears the beautiful traditional cultural features of the traditions of generations of people in the Mekong Delta.



Figure 137 The Tam Ban Boat Race
 Source: <https://vinhlong.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Dec 1, 2024)



Figure 138 The Tam Ban Boat Race

Source: <https://vinhlong.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Dec 1, 2024)



Figure 139 The Tam Ban Boat Race

Source: <https://vinhlong.gov.vn/> (Accessed on Dec 1, 2024)

The origin of this festival comes from the story that there were often many epidemics here. The people here believed that it was caused by ghosts or the deceased, which was the main reason for establishing the festival "Tong On - Tong Gio." The festival "Tong On - Tong Gio" is only held in Can Tho, Vinh Long, and Long An. This festival is held to pray for peace and luck and prevent epidemics and disasters.



Figure 140 The festival "Tong On - Tong Gio
 Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)

Wedding procession by boat in the West

The boat is beautifully decorated; the whole groom's family brings gifts and then goes to the bride's house to receive the bride. This wedding procession was popular when cars were not popular, and roads and bridges were limited, so this was the chosen means of a wedding procession in the river delta region of the West. When picking up the bride, special attention is paid to the ebb or flow of the tide so that it arrives at the bride's house on time. Vietnamese culture can be divided into six central regions (Northwest, Viet Bac, Bac Bo, Trung Bo, Tay Nguyen, and Nam Bo), and each region is divided into small sub-regions with unique characteristics. To talk about the culture of each region, besides the attributes of costumes, cuisine, language, and personality, ... the wedding ceremony is an indispensable long-standing custom in the cultural life of all three regions. That is why the wedding ceremony of each region on the S-shaped strip of land has its unique identity that cannot be found anywhere else.

In particular, the Southwest region's riverine characteristics have created a unique wedding culture. According to ancient traditions, wedding ceremonies in the South, as well as the West, will include six ceremonies called luc le, including the Giap Loi ceremony, Le in-law ceremony, Le cau tan ceremony, Le betrothal ceremony, Le nuptial ceremony, and Le phat bai ceremony. Compared to other cultural regions, the traditional wedding customs in the Southwest region are one of the places with the main ceremonies. Nowadays, life is more modern; everything is simplified so that almost only three main ceremonies are kept: Le giap Loi, Le betrothal, and Le nuptial.

The Giap Loi ceremony is similar to the engagement ceremony of the Northern region; this is the first ceremony of the wedding customs of the West. At that time, the groom's family will go to the bride's house to talk directly with the in-laws. Usually, the story revolves around the age of the two children, discusses marriage, and sets the wedding date.

After the two families have agreed on a "good day, good month," the engagement ceremony will occur on a predetermined date. The engagement ceremony

is meaningful and indispensable in Western wedding customs. At the engagement ceremony, the bride's family will hang a sign for the engagement or graduation ceremonies. The ceremonies will take place in the following order: the groom's family will present the ceremony of opening the ceremony, presenting the peace ceremony to the ancestors, presenting the lamp-raising ceremony after the groom's family head pours wine, worshiping the ancestors, holding the betel tray ceremony, and presenting the farewell ceremony. Finally, the most solemn and bustling in the Western wedding customs is the wedding and the bride-welcoming ceremony. The wedding ceremony or wedding will take place at both the bride and groom's houses, and everything is prepared very carefully and in a very elaborate way. The bride's family will hang a sign for the wedding, while the groom's family will hang a sign for the wedding; the wedding tent will also be built grandly in front of the house, especially the wedding gate. The typical features of a traditional Western wedding are banana trees, coconut leaves, areca flowers, or bamboo trees to make gates and tents, which look very rustic and simple but extremely beautiful.

One of the unique and interesting points that will be remembered immediately when mentioning a Western wedding is the bride-processing ceremony. This is a ritual that is celebrated in almost every region of Vietnam. The bride-processing ceremony takes the bride from the bride's house to the groom's house. This ceremony is held solemnly, and the bride is often carried by flower car.

However, with the geographical characteristics of crisscrossing rivers, the people's lives are closely linked to the culture of waterways and floating markets, so the same is true in the wedding ceremony. In the past, because transportation was not yet developed, the bride-processing procession often traveled by waterway instead of road for convenience. Therefore, the Western region is mainly carried by boat, ferry, or canoe instead of by flower car.

The boats and ferries are decorated with flowers, balloons, and ribbons to create a beautiful flower boat that is no less beautiful than a wedding car. On the ship, the groom and bride are dressed in red, green, purple, and yellow; everyone is gorgeous not only because of their appearance but also because of the smiles on their lips. Besides the uniqueness of the flower boat, the atmosphere of the wedding procession here is also something that many people will remember forever. On the way to the wedding, the whole group will play music and sing, bustling the entire river area, and the atmosphere will be pleasant and vibrant.

On both sides of the river, people from the upper and lower villages gather to watch the wedding procession, bustling the whole river area. This is also a beautiful feature in the wedding customs of the Western region, like the old saying "Nhất gia hữu sự, bá gia u." In addition to relatives, some neighbors help prepare the wedding party, which is also a beautiful feature of the wedding customs of the Western region. A wedding occurs like a festival for the whole village; everyone naturally becomes busy running in and out, talking and laughing happily.

The image of a flower boat carrying the bride has become familiar to people in the Western region for a long time. That image is beautiful and romantic, like only weddings in the peaceful river area have. That is why the image of flower boats, particularly, and the wedding customs of the Southwest region, in general, have been infiltrated into unique artistic products such as music, movies, plays, etc. "Your boat goes on the moonlit river/When we get married, we will have a joyful festival/On the

long river, flower boats are spread/So many girls have beautiful smiles."... Every time we hear the familiar lyrics of the song "Flower Boat" echoing somewhere, our minds are reminded of the wedding scene of the Mekong Delta



Figure 141 "Flower Boat" - the wedding boat in Mekong Delta
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)



Figure 142 "Flower Boat" - the wedding boat in Mekong Delta
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)

Don Ca Tai Tu is a typical folk art form of the Southern region and was formed and developed in the late 19th century, reflecting the thoughts and feelings of the people of Southern Vietnam in the garden and river areas with a hard-working, liberal, open, and simple lifestyle. Don ca tai Tu has a large area of influence, with a scope of 21 southern provinces and cities. In 2014, it was recognized by UNESCO as a representative intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Southern people often organize Don ca tai tu for festivals, New Year, death anniversaries, weddings, birthdays, meetings, etc. It is an indispensable spiritual and cultural activity in today's life. Musical instruments used in Don ca tai Tu include zither, zither, co, ty ba, tam (or sen, doc huyen), flute, tieu, song loan... Later, there were also concave-key guitars, violins, and Hawaiian guitars (ha uy cam). The compositions of Don ca tai tu are created based on ceremonial music, royal court music, and folk music of the Central and Southern regions. These compositions are continuously adapted from 72 ancient songs and especially from 20 original songs (ancestral songs) for four melodies (winds), including 06 Bac songs (expressing joy and freedom), 07 Ha songs (used in ceremonies, solemn), 03 Nam songs (expressing leisure and serenity) and 04 Oan

songs (expressing sadness and separation). Tourists have moments of relaxation, letting their souls drift on the river and singing together, showing off their talents with the amateur artists here. Nowadays, Don ca tai tu is constantly improved in quality and is also interested in and exploited to serve tourism in the provinces in the West. Regarding Soc Trang province, Don ca tai tu is a unique cultural activity that tourism companies exploit. Tourists love and enjoy this type of performance because most are organized based on the charming scenery, are close to nature, and are organized in gardens or boats drifting smoothly along the river. All the singers, amateur artists, and local people here agree to actively participate in activities and preserve and wish to promote the artistic value of Don Ca Tai Tu sustainably and widely. If any tourists do not know how to sing, they can be guided to learn to sing a few melodies or a few vọng cõ verses, or if you have time to stay a few days, you can learn vọng cõ, then sing and play like the locals here.



Figure 143 Don Ca Tai Tu is a typical folk art form of the Southern region on the boat
 Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)

Around 1980, the roads were challenging to travel, mainly by rowing boats. There were few means of communication; the village only had a few TVs and cassettes, so the "hunger" for information and the "thirst" for entertainment were common. These occasions were for people to entertain themselves and also know current news. At that time, drama was not yet used to soften the dry propaganda; it was only lightened with songs. However, more than 1,000 people for a performance was normal... In those years, boats and canoes were the only means for mobile propaganda teams to serve. The model of propaganda on boats gradually took shape, with many methods of operation becoming familiar, and means of transportation were also improved. Cultural boats were the following means, officially recognized in 1987, and this was also the only model that became a typical model in this river area. Hau Giang's first cultural boat was the one in Phung Hiep district. Musician Pham Son Ha, Chairman of the Provincial Literature and Arts Association, recalled: "On a cultural boat, many services can be provided. This is considered a mobile cultural house; on the boat's roof, it is a stage for the mobile propaganda team to perform. Inside is an exhibition of books and photos and a place for art clubs to participate in activities. Each time the cultural boat sets out, it takes a whole month to return, considered a propaganda campaign...". In some places, like Vi Thanh, there are also medical staff on the cultural boat so that when the boat anchors, it can perform and examine people.



Figure 144 A cultural boat as a mobile stage to the river residents
 Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)

3.3.4. Social role

The Mekong Delta is a land of rivers, canals, and streams, so since ancient times, people have relied on the high and low tides to make a living. Sometimes, they transport fruit, sell food and drinks, transport cotton back and forth, and even carry passengers. Over time, they were called merchants. Using boats as their home and sometimes as a means of livelihood, for them, the trips up and down the river are always beautiful memories, with the salty taste of sweat and tears mixed with laughter.

All of this has created a unique culture of the river region.

. Boat owner:



Figure 145 The researcher interviewed the boat owner while the boat was being repaired.
 Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2023)



Figure 146 Merchants, people who own and use boats every day at Cai Rang floating market

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)



Figure 147 Boats always accompany the journey of the floating market. Merchants buy and sell, anchoring busily on boats at Cai Rang floating market.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2023)

People who use boats, live on boats, use boats as homes, and depend on floating markets to make a living—drifting on the river all year round, in round boats. Southern people call them “merchants”.

Although their material life is lacking, their love is always complete, like the high tide at sunset in the delta... They treat and defend each other when, unfortunately, a “merchant boat” has an accident. They are ready to help buy anything from the district or provincial market that the gardeners cannot go to, then take the fruit and deduct the money. The boat trips up and down the Mekong River carrying goods all over the place have, over many generations, formed a community-based “river cultural economy,” helping to develop cultural and economic exchanges. The boat trading profession developed very early in many Mekong Delta localities. This business helps people with boats and their families carry a small amount of capital, going back and forth to buy agricultural products in the countryside to attend the market. After many years of living a hard life of “rice from the market and water from the river” with friends, many small boat owners have bought large boats, creating a prosperous life. But only by drifting on the ship can one truly understand the many sorrows of the merchant life. For merchants, a boat is a means of earning a living and a roof, a place to return to for the whole family. Losing it or having to leave it, they feel like they have lost everything. Human life is extended with the trips up and down the boat; love stories are often separated but also romantic and have beautiful endings. For the boys and girls who choose to live on the river, making a boat their home, their love stories are as drifting as the river. Fate brings them together, and then they become a couple, entwined at the places where the rivers converge. The merchants often confide in their love stories: Their parents in the past also “followed the flow” to

come together, and now their lives are the same. During a trip to the floating market, this person's boat happened to anchor near the other person's boat, and they often chatted and talked about business and visits. Feelings also arose, leading them to be together, build a family, and continue their life on the boat. Living, trading, giving birth... Children also grow up on boats, following their parents' footsteps or studying, and can go to school on land, but living is still on boats. Most children in small boats with limited conditions may have to drop out of school or do manual work, buying and selling, or fishing on the river. The life of a merchant, if not busy days anchored at anchor, is also a journey to find and buy goods everywhere. Some merchants make a living, develop their careers, gradually change from small to large boats, and then purchase land to build houses. To create a better future life for future generations, boats are still a valuable assistant for them to do business, transport, earn a living, and develop their careers.

Through many ups and downs, the merchants still accompany the lives of the people in the Southwest region. After their trips back and forth, they bring delicious garden fruits and rural specialties to all parts of the country, and when they return, they will be filled with laughter and joy.

Boats seem to have souls personified through their eyes, shape, and spiritual rituals. They become integral members who witness the ups and downs, accompany people near and far, shelter them from hardships, and protect and embrace people's lives as they grow and mature, continuing the cycle of human life development from the material to the spiritual.

. Boatbuilder:

The Mekong Delta has a dense system of rivers and canals. Since the time of land reclamation, the means of transportation for the residents of the southwestern region have consisted mainly of boats and sampans. Therefore, boat building is one of the earliest occupations here and has developed strongly to serve the travel needs of the residents of the river region. For a long time, the boat has been a means of transportation and a valuable asset, and when roads were not yet developed, the boat was the "legs" of many families in the southern countryside. Boats and sampans are used as a means of transportation from house to house, from hamlet to hamlet, from region to region, to visit, attend parties, transport, buy and sell goods, catch fish and shrimp, etc.

The boat-building profession appeared very early here. According to some research documents, the boat-building profession here was developed in the Central and Southeast regions. Skilled workers moved south to establish "boot camps" to make a living. There are many types of boats here. Those used to travel in rivers and canals included sampans, fishing boats, bau boats, hull boats, ca vom boats, floating boats, and mowed boats. To large types such as cargo ships, passenger ships, fishing boats... Over time, they created many kinds of boats suitable for traveling on rivers and canals in the southwestern region of Vietnam.

Each artisan has their secret regarding the technique of building boats and boats. However, basically, after choosing the wood and planks, the craftsman saws, splits, and chisels, shapes each part, and assembles them according to each stage: hang them, pin them, build the mat, build the beam, make the eel, put the rim, hatch the boat, create the curved frame, hang the bolt, hatch the mouth, build the bow basin,

build the rudder basin, make the bow, make the rudder, split the oars, and assemble the engine...



Figure 148. Research students interview shipbuilders and repairmen.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2023)

The means of transport associated with our ancestors were mainly boats and sampans. Boats were used for transportation, fishing, hunting wild animals, picking coriander and water lilies, harvesting wild rice, clearing land to establish hamlets, building villages, etc. Initially, the construction of boats and sampans was mainly self-sufficient; each family built and purchased their boats and sampans to make a living. Later, the population grew increasingly, forming villages; the demand for boats and sampans to serve the residents grew, so the craft of building boats and sampans was born. Traditionally, the craft was passed down in the "father-to-son" style, one generation after another "holding hands and showing them how to do it" and passing on all the secrets, so maintaining and ensuring the uniqueness is reliable. The craft of building boats and sampans brings the artisans a stable source of income. Each artisan will have a position and role in the boat-building process, from which the income level also varies depending on the skill or position. Skilled artisans can build two small boats daily, and it takes two days to build three medium-sized boats. The wages for each boat are about 100,000 VND, and children aged 14-15 who have just started learning the craft build one boat a day (the farm owner pays 70,000-80,000 VND/day). Men must practice and learn to become professional woodcutters, proficient in selecting wood, inking, bending, sawing, sawing, planing, etc. Women take care of cooking, caulking bottles, and filling jars; children pull out nails, collect shavings, sawdust, firewood, bark (star fruit, coconut shell), and sell them to customers to make incense (sawdust), kindle fire (sawdust, wood shavings), and fuel (firewood, bark).

Continuing the tradition of boat building also creates a connection between generations in the family. This ensures the unique cultural features of the boat builder's family. This complex job requires meticulousness, diligence, and good thinking. Large boat-building workshops will raise children to ensure family traditions, and the next generation will develop, improve, and live well with the story of following their ancestors. Boats bring jobs and also participate in careers or

generational connections. In addition to building new ones, boat workshops repair old damaged ships. Due to the increasingly scarce amount of wood, wooden ships that have been used for many years must be repaired. The stages are similar to new construction but with improvements in some processes, such as installing additional aluminum metal plates to limit scratches on the boat body, applying special glue to patch nail holes or repair the inner frame of the boat, painting a new protective layer, re-decorating and redrawing patterns for the boat's bow and eyes.

The process of repairing or building a new boat usually lasts from 1 month to many months, so if the boat owners are merchants, if they bring their boats to the workshop for renovation, they can still live on the ship or find a place to live next to the boat workshop. Other activities also take place naturally and usually, like the friendliness that Southern people always maintain, from which the relationship between people is also connected through the story of the boat, creating a lasting vitality about the position of vessels in the social life of Southern people in Vietnam.

Nowadays, the craft of building boats is primarily supported by modern machinery and technical means, and traditional wood materials are gradually being replaced by composite materials, with many new designs that are lighter in water, higher in speed, and more durable in use. Therefore, the craft of building boats, a tradition for many generations, is gradually fading and needs to be preserved and developed.



Figure 149 PhD student Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen is interviewing the owner of a boat building factory.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2023)



Figure 150. Signboard of a famous old boat building workshop in the South



Figure 151 PhD student Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen is surveying some boat building workshops in Hau Giang and Dong Thap areas.
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2023)



Figure 152 PhD student Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen is surveying some boat building workshops in Hau Giang and Dong Thap areas.
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2023)



Figure 153 PhD student Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen is surveying some boat building workshops in Hau Giang and Dong Thap areas.
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2023)

. Boat users (tourists, tourism servers..)

When the floating market has become a characteristic of river culture and become a national intangible cultural heritage of Vietnam, in addition to preserving the beauty and national identity, the floating market and boats are also factors that play an essential role in the chain of operations and development of the Mekong Delta region. Coming here, experiencing and directly using the services contributed by boats brings the most genuine feelings of emotions and perspectives. Boats have many shapes, sizes, and functions, giving visitors multi-dimensional feelings about river culture.

From high-end luxury services such as using yachts, floating restaurants, or tourist ships to shrimp-tailed motorboats and ordinary sampans, all bring visitors the most beautiful and authentic memories when coming here. Tourism service companies and units with high-end resort services also invest in boat models that are gradually improved according to the needs and purposes of use. There are yachts serving river sightseeing and luxury resort yachts renovated from ordinary boats but will adjust the aesthetics or materials. Boats play a unique role in the business development of their owners.



Figure 154 Tourists visit the floating market by small boats such as motorboats and small motorized sampans.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 155 Tourists visit the floating market and can interact and enjoy the products on the traders' boats

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 156 Boats are indispensable means of transport for tour guides in Cai Rang floating market. Using boats is essential for them and tourists.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

When visiting each region, the unique thing that tourists are curious about is enjoying the quintessence, national culture, and activities that are imbued with their identity. Therefore, enjoying cultural activities on the cruise through each region is exceptional. At the same time, being introduced to recreational activities infused with the national identity of the locality. River cruises always create a new, interesting, comfortable feeling without being constrained by space on the river, which is the difference that tourists seek compared to other types of tourism. To enjoy the specialties or admire the unique natural scenery of boats in the floating market, visitors can use many services, such as small passenger boats or large cruise ships. Small or large boats can all enter the floating market, blending into the bustling atmosphere of the merchant boats to fully and truly feel the friendliness of the river residents here. The flexible food boats move to many locations, usually anchoring in clusters so that visitors can quickly move from the passenger boat to the boat with specialties to enjoy; besides, they can also sit on the boat used for moving and enjoy delicious dishes, drinks or fruits, unique agricultural products. This brings very special memories and undoubtedly will recall and promote beautiful memories of the culture and people here. Besides, boats are always a key factor in promoting social activities and community cohesion and spreading the spirit and good image of the Mekong Delta residents. Traveling by boat offers the opportunity to approach the local culture more deeply. River tourism will bring you to people and nature with different cultures and cuisines. You will stop at various locations, freely exploring extraordinary things rare in other lands. The unique feature of river cruises is that they help you reach places that no other means of transport can do. River cruises always create a new, interesting, comfortable feeling without being constrained by space on the river, which is the difference that tourists seek compared to other types of tourism.

Traveling by boat with peaceful scenery can eliminate all fatigue, anxiety, and noise. With a "cruise" on the river, you can eliminate all fatigue, noise, heat, and anxiety to enjoy the most peaceful cruises. Currently, travel agencies and luxury resorts also have services that bring the most memorable experiences to tourists. Both are environmentally friendly and bring regional values and high-class luxury experiences. River cruises will bring tourists a sense of relaxation and enjoyment because of the most scientifically designed organization and itinerary.

CHAPTER IV

The social life of boats and the special cultural riverscape in "cai rang floating market" at can tho in the mekong delta

Introduction:

In this research, through the objective, to study the Social Life of Boats and the Special Cultural Riverscape in 'Cai Rang Floating Market' at Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, to clarify the material life elements of river culture boats to create identity. Cai Rang floating market in Can Tho is one of Vietnam's most unique and largest floating markets in Asia. This place is also profoundly interested in the tourism industry and is considered one of the most typical floating markets in the region. The river culture of the Cai Rang floating market was recognized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam as an intangible cultural heritage in 2016.

Part 1: Cai Rang floating market is an intangible cultural heritage associated with life on boats. People's lives on the floating market are mainly centered around buying and selling and exchanging goods, agricultural products typical of this region, or other goods. This exchange is connected through a rich and diverse system of boats. Therefore, their culture is closely associated with boats; they are called traders. This process has created a cultural heritage about the way of behaving with nature and the lives of the residents here.

Part 2: Floats are connected to a tight network through the Cai Rang floating market, creating a vibrant cultural background like a colorful picture. Some typical boats can show many cultural, social, and spiritual aspects of people connected by boats. In addition, cultural exchange and development are also created by the "transportation" of boats when moving from one region to another.

Part 3: The primary function of the floating market in today's context is to flexibly adapt to real and natural conditions, primarily to serve the tourism industry or structural transformation. This has caused some boats to change their tasks or shapes. The change and development of the shapes and functions of ships and vessels to adapt to the new social life is a matter of concern.

Part 1: Cai Rang floating market is an intangible cultural heritage with boat life.

Cai Rang Floating Market is about 5km from the center of Can Tho city. Visitors can travel by boat from Ninh Kieu Wharf in about 30 minutes or drive for about 20 minutes. The market is in a prime area at the confluence of three rivers (Hau River and Cai Rang River branches). It is a shallow water area, creating favorable conditions for boats to anchor. For many years, this market has been a place for local people to trade fruits and rice and attracts domestic and foreign tourists. The cultural feature of the floating market is the culture of the trading and trading community. In 2016, Cai Rang Floating Market's river culture was recognized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The British travel magazine Rough Guide also voted the Cai Rang floating market as one of the 10 most impressive markets in the world because of its "brilliant tropical colors." Trading activities on the Cai Rang floating market gradually became

more vibrant after the Doi Moi period 1986. This development primarily came from the need to exchange surplus agricultural products for agricultural activities. Cai Rang floating market was initially formed at the intersection of four rivers, with favorable natural factors such as not being too deep, not too wide, and not having too strong water currents suitable for exchange. The market is currently located on Can Tho River, on the strategic waterway of Hau River - Xa No canal (rice road of the West Hau River region), so it is very convenient for trading with neighboring provinces and the Mekong Delta region. In 2009 and 2010, the Cai Rang floating market was one of the busiest floating markets in the area. Each boat is a stall, a house, or a family at the floating market. There are wholesale boats and retail boats. The boats selling goods are usually anchored in one place to leave space in the middle for other ships to pass by and for visitors to shop.

Each boat in the market has a pole hung on it to let customers know what they are selling. The cheerful poles with colorful vegetables and fruits hanging from them make the market even fresher. The agricultural products for sale are diverse, sometimes just potatoes, cassava, lemons, chili peppers, etc., food, drinks, and essential daily necessities such as groceries, needles, thread, and even gasoline. Traveling and trading by water has helped people easily integrate into the community, creating a lively and vibrant living space on the wharf and the boat.

Many such boats form a unique "society" but do not exist on paper, have no household registration, or have specific administrative boundaries. This is also a unique feature that contributes to the liberal and open character of the people in the river region of the Mekong Delta.

4.1. Geographical location, topographical river, and landscape

- Geographical – topographical location (Cai Rang floating market)

As mentioned in the previous contents, the river terrain in the Cai Rang floating market area can be seen through the detailed map with the intersection of large rivers and many tiny branches. Most residents on both sides of the river used to live based on the "flow" of the rivers, whether large or small. The river carries shrimp, fish, and alluvium, irrigates the fields, and provides water for all residents, crops, and livestock. For aquaculture, a large amount of fish is raised directly on the river in the form of floating rafts. Because of the above factors, using boats for activities or as a means of transportation is inevitable.

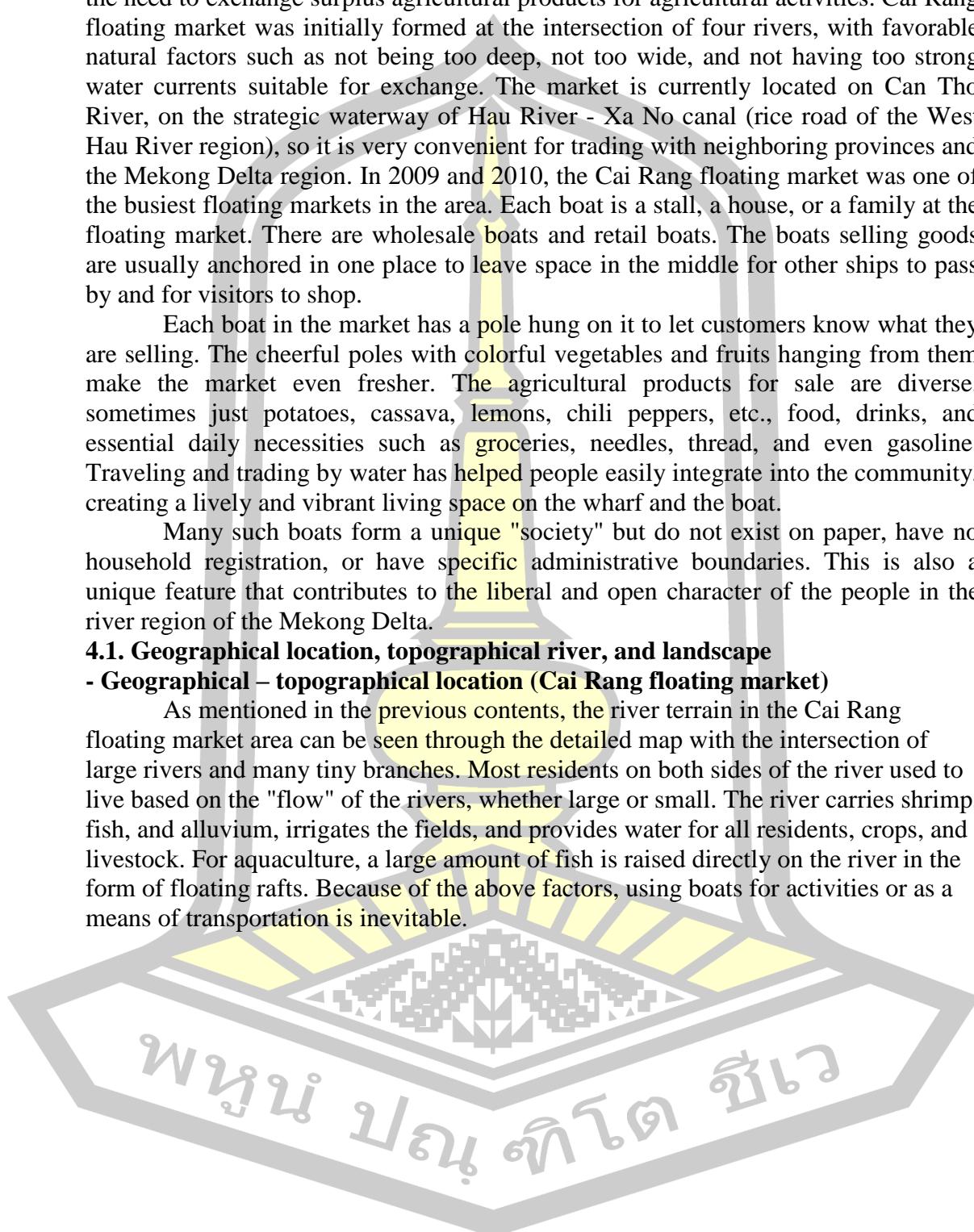




Figure 157. The Mekong Delta is formed by a winding river that resembles a dragon.
Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 158 Cai Rang floating market follows the winding terrain of the river.
Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

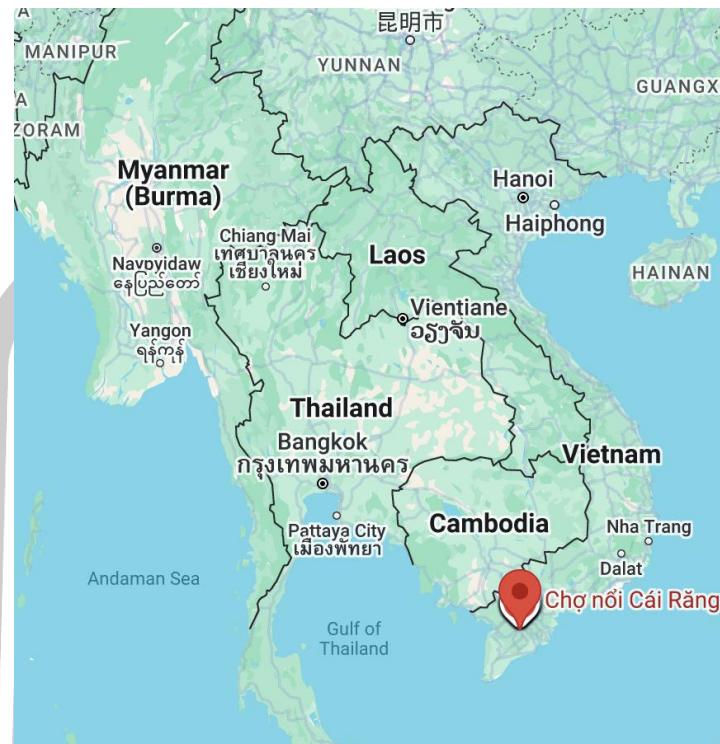


Figure 159 Geographical location of Cai Rang floating market in the region
 Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

- River and landscape

Cai Rang floating market is located downstream of the Can Tho River. This place is considered a very favorable location because it is located on the waterway of Hau River - Xa No canal. This has created favorable conditions for trading and commerce on the Cai Rang floating market, connecting Can Tho with neighboring localities and the whole Mekong Delta region.

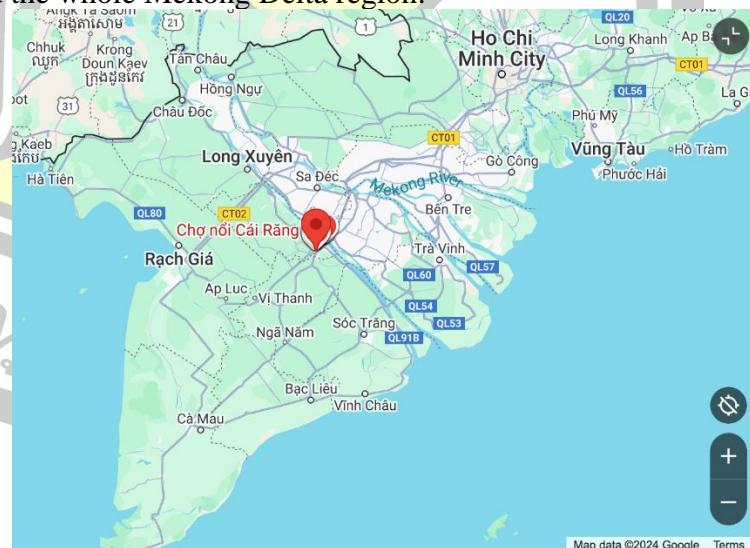


Figure 160 Geographical location of Cai Rang floating market with many different large and small river branches
 Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

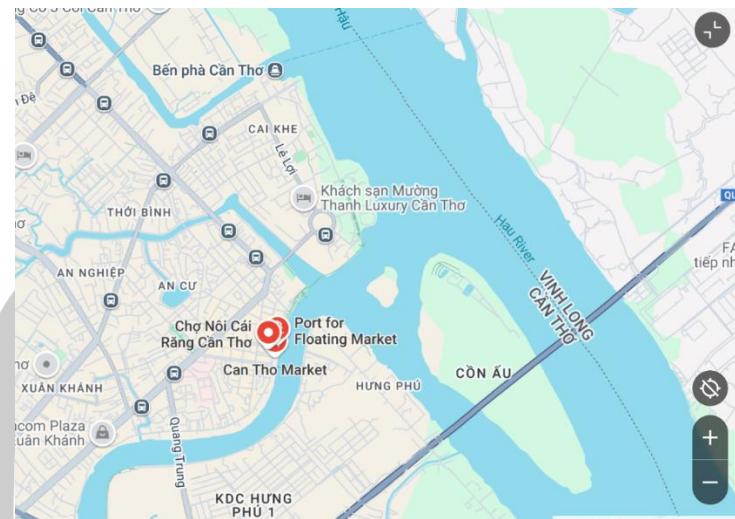


Figure 161 The geographical location of Cai Rang floating market intersects an important river branch area.

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

Hundreds of boats visit the Cai Rang floating market daily to buy and sell wholesale agricultural products from Can Tho and neighboring provinces, such as Hau Giang, Soc Trang, Bac Lieu, Vinh Long, Ca Mau, etc. Many small boats also buy and sell retail fruits, ornamental flowers, handicrafts, and local cuisine. Hundreds of boats carry tourists during rush hour, creating a bustling atmosphere throughout the river area.

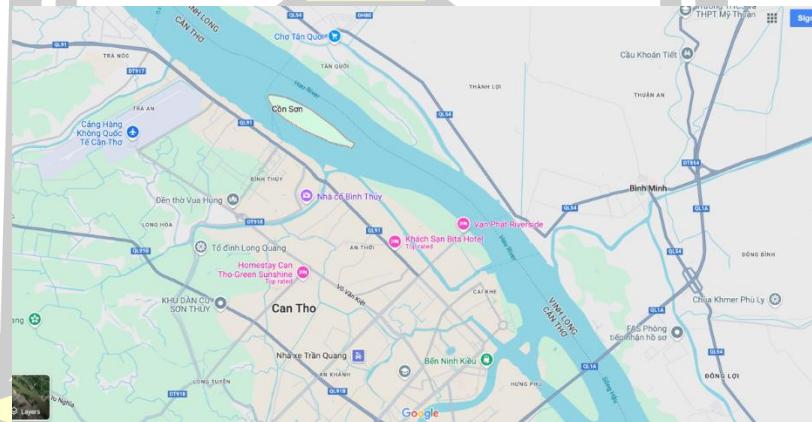


Figure 162. Geographical location of Cai Rang floating market and Con Son and Con Au islands

Source: <https://maps.google.com> (Accessed on May 15, 2024)

Through the map of these river branches, many areas of land rise above the water surface, called "Con," equivalent to an island but small and filled with alluvium, surrounded by river water. Therefore, the land on these islands is very fertile and suitable for farming and raising livestock. During harvest seasons, boats bring products such as fruits, shrimp, and fish to the Cai Rang floating market for trading and exchange. In Can Tho, Con Son and Con Au are prominent, with Con Son currently preserving the unique Indigenous culture of the people of the South. People here use boats to travel or cross to other places. Activities such as watering gardens or taking care of fish cages on floating rafts are also indispensable for the presence of

vessels. Children growing up in river areas must know how to swim and use boats like driving on land.



Figure 163 Most river dwellers know how to swim and use boats as their main means of transportation.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 164 Cai Rang floating market is bustling with many boats and trading activities.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Part 2: Boats connect with each other through Cai Rang floating market.

4.2. River landscape and river culture: physical space impacts and influences human behavior and culture

Floating market



Figure 165 Panorama of Cai Rang Floating Market

Source: <https://thanhnien.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Not only does the Cai Rang floating market attract tourists with engaging experiences, but it also makes many people curious about its unique name. It is known that the origin of the name Cai Rang still has no exact answer. Local people explain this name through 2 hypotheses:

According to legend, the name Cai Rang comes from a story in the early days of land reclamation. Legend has it that an enormous crocodile drifted here, its teeth stuck in the mouth of this land, so it was called Cai Rang.

Another explanation in the Southern Voice Dictionary by author Vuong Hong Sen is that Cai Rang comes from the Khmer word "Karan," meaning "caring" (kitchen god). Khmer people in Xa Ton (Tri Ton) make many Karan to sell everywhere. When trading, people shout, "Ca rang, ca rang." Over time, people mispronounced it as Cai Rang.

In the past, the Cai Rang floating market was open from midnight to morning. It opens much later today: from early morning to noon, from 5:00 to 11:00.



Figure 166. Cai Rang floating market in the morning mist
 Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The best time to visit the floating market is from 6:00 to 9:00 when the sky is still chilly and the morning mist hangs on the water. At this time, visitors can see the most bustling scene of the market, with boats full of goods and the echoing cries of vendors.

You can visit the Cai Rang floating market at any time of the year. However, according to many people's experiences, it is best to see about two weeks before Tet. During this time, the market is decorated with countless colorful Tet flowers.



Figure 167 The best time to visit Cai Rang floating market is in spring or near Tet to see boats with many colorful flowers.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Cai Rang floating market attracts tourists through its unique trading method, which bears the cultural imprint of the Mekong Delta. Because trading on the river has ample space, mixed with the sound of waves and loud engines, selling items cannot be done by shouting like on land. Instead, the owners will hang a pole - the locals often call it a "beo" pole to advertise and attract buyers.



Figure 168 The Beo Tree is one of the unique advertising methods of the floating market. The Beo Tree is hung with agricultural products that the boat buys and sells.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

When mentioning the Cai Rang floating market, it is impossible not to mention the typical image of the Beo tree - a unique symbol of the floating market culture of the Mekong Delta. The Beo tree is not only a means of advertising goods but also an indispensable part of the vibrant living landscape of the floating market. With its natural beauty and creativity in decoration, the Beo tree of Cai Rang floating market has become an unmissable destination when tourists visit Can Tho, bringing a unique and unforgettable experience in the journey to explore this land of rivers.



Figure 169 The Beo tree is made mainly of bamboo trunks or anything that can hang agricultural products.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The way the items are hung also has meaning, creating a unique Cai Rang floating market culture, which many tourists enjoy. It is known that the boat owners display their products according to the "4 hanging" method.



Figure 170 Whatever agricultural product is sold, hang it on the Beo tree.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Hang what you sell: This is the most straightforward and intuitive way for buyers to recognize the products the boat is selling quickly. For example, if they want to sell watermelon, the boat owner will hang it on the "beo" pole.

Hanging but not selling: People living on boats often hang clothes on bamboo poles instead of drying clothes on a line. This is how they distinguish them from other items for sale.



Figure 171 Clothes are hung to dry on boats, not like agricultural products on poles for sale.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Not hanging but selling: Some items, such as vermicelli, rice noodles, coffee, and meat sandwiches... are sold on small boats between large ships. Due to limited space, they do not hang their products on bamboo poles but serve them directly to customers going to the market.



Figure 172 At the floating market, hot food cannot be hung up for sale like agricultural products are hung on Beo trees.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Hanging one thing but selling another: This case is unique; when you see a boat hanging a roofing sheet, they are selling their boat. The ship is likened to their house on the river.



Figure 173 At the floating market, if the boat owner wants to sell his boat, he will hang leaves to make a house.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The exchange of goods between boats is very natural, and the Cai Rang floating market is bustling. In the past, when the forms of buying and selling on land were not yet developed due to the roads and supermarkets, the Cai Rang floating market lasted more than 10 km with various goods and was the busiest from before sunrise. Boats from all neighboring provinces came to exchange goods from different regions with specialties such as fruits, ceramic bricks, rice, etc. Everywhere, there was the sound of bargaining, buying and selling, transporting goods bustlingly to catch the tide to return to the city or province. Large boats would buy from many small boats, buying an entire boatload of fruit in large quantities, not by the kilogram, which is called wholesale, not retail. When they had reached an agreement on "agreeing to buy and sell," they began to transfer goods to the large Bau boats. The boats were anchored close together in clusters, transferring agricultural products by skillfully

tossing and turning. Occasionally, large boats will be anchored with small boats tied together, creating beautiful clusters of boats. People can move back and forth quickly while still respecting the privacy of the boats next to each other. This shows the sincere and natural solidarity of the river residents, creating a unique beauty with quintessential values created by the boats.



Figure 174 Boats anchored in clusters at Cai Rang floating market

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 175 Unique way of transporting goods using the throwing and catching skills of floating market residents

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Part 3: The change and development of shapes and functions of boats and boats adapt to new social life.

4.3. The change and development of shape and functions of boats adapt to new social life

- Nowadays (change decoration)

Interview + Introduction Some cases



Figure 176 Boats are decorated in Pink, Blue, Purple at Cai Rang floating market

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

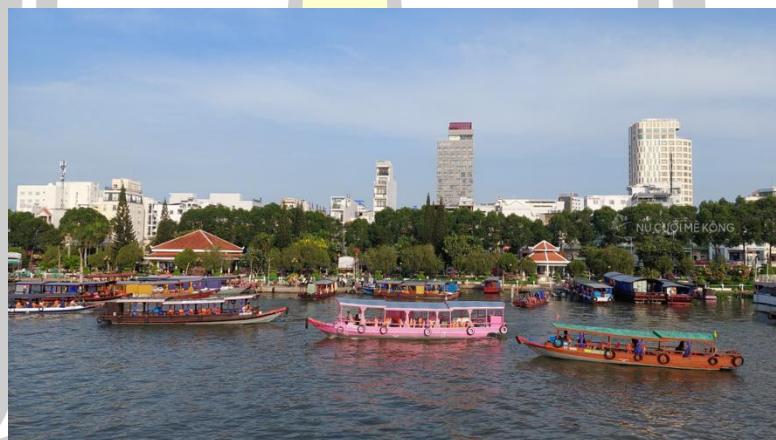


Figure 177. Conversion of function and decoration of color change in boats

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

ພ້ອນ ປນ ຄີໂຕ ຂ່າວ



Figure 178. Boats are decorated in Pink, Blue, Purple at Cai Rang floating market
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 179. Boats are decorated in Pink, Blue, Purple at Cai Rang floating market
Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)
- In the word (compare some unique boats)



Damnoen Saduak Floating Market



Figure 180 Damnoen Saduak Floating Market

Source: <https://milesosmiles.co/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)

Located 50 miles from Bangkok in Ratchaburi province, Damnoen Saduak Floating Market is a feast for the senses, from the sizzle of noodles frying and the aroma of ginger and garlic in the air to the chatter and clatter of commerce conducted the old-fashioned way.

History of Damnoen Saduak Floating Market



Figure 181 Damnoen Saduak Floating Market

Source: <https://milesosmiles.co/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)



Figure 182. Damnoen Saduak Floating Market

Source: <https://milesossmiles.co/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)

Between 1866 and 1868, by the order of King Rama IV, the Damnoen Saduak Canal was built to support transportation and trade. The canal was 32 kilometers long, had more than 200 branches and was connecting the Mae Klong and Tha Chin rivers. It took more than 2 years to dig the canal, and finally it was completed under the successor government of King Rama V.

Damnoen Saduak Floating Market became popular in 1971-1973 when the river was filled with farmers on boats selling their agricultural products. The main floating market was called Lad Plee and that is how trade is carried out in this area to this day. When the development of the road network replaced the need for waterway transport, Damnoen Saduak Floating Market has become a semi-land market.

It's known as the original floating market, and its history can be traced back to King Rama IV's reign in the 1860s. During that period, the king was on a mission to stimulate the local economy through trade and designed the Damnoen Saduak Canal to link the Mae Klong River with Tha Chin River. Along the branches of the Damnoen Saduak Canal and flanked by traditional villages, the Damnoen Saduak Floating Market became a bustling hub where farmers and vendors could showcase their products to the masses. To this day, local vendors row their boats from nearby villages and sell everything from hand-carved bamboo tableware, tapestries and clothing to khanom buang (crispy pancakes). Visitors to Damnoen Saduak Floating Market in Thailand can visit the market by boat, admire the bustling trading scene, and buy fresh fruits, tropical fruits, handicrafts, and local specialties. The Market is not only an ideal shopping place but also imbued with traditional culture, helping visitors understand more about the daily life of Thai people.

Lok Baintan (Banjnar - Indonesia) is a small settlement on the banks of the Martapura River. The Lok Baintan Floating Market is the first floating market in South Kalimantan.

This market has been around for centuries and is considered one of Southeast Asia's most authentic floating markets. Boats from the smaller tributaries also start to gather on the Martapura River from sunrise. From Lok Baintan onwards, the boats gather to form a floating market about 2-3 km long. It is a very colorful sight. Brightly painted canoes, motorized wooden boats, locally known as klotok, brightly dressed vendors, and fruits and vegetables add an even more colorful array of colors.



Figure 183. Colorful boats at Lok Baintan floating market (Banjarnar - Indonesia)

Source: <https://www.roamindonesia.com/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)

Vendors row around selling everything from farming and fishing products, fresh fruits, food, and traditional dishes like bingka and amparan tatak, gangan keladi, gangan humbut, and handicrafts like Purun hats and baskets. Purun hats and baskets are handicrafts made from palm and Purun trees. Bananas, dragon fruits, lychees, mangosteens, water spinach, fish, and even chickens change hands and boats after much bargaining. About 95% of women frequent the Lok Baintan floating market. Men are farmers, while women control the business. Vendors come with boats loaded with various fruits and vegetables, while buyers come in empty canoes.



Figure 184 Mostly women buy and sell goods at Lok Baintan floating market (Banjarnar - Indonesia)

Source: <https://www.roamindonesia.com/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)



Figure 185 Colorful boats at Lok Baintan floating market (Banjarnar - Indonesia)

Source: <https://www.roamindonesia.com/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)

CHAPTER V

The “Ghe bau” in the dimension of unit analysis

Introduction:

In this part, the author focuses on in-depth research on the Ghe Bau - Tam Bang Ghe unit. This type of boat has many functions and is quite typical of the diverse boat system of the southwestern region of Vietnam. This type of boat has many values from aesthetics to materials and functions. Each region and period will have a different design. Thus, to achieve the goal of Bau Ghe - Tam Bang Ghe as the unit of analysis, the author interviewed and surveyed many places to collect data and give Details of the elements that bind boat life together. How has it changed from the past to the present.

Part 1: Research the characteristic structure of "Ghe Bau" and its correlation to the social life of river residents. Over time, the name of this type of boat according to regional dialects has shown flexibility in adaptation. However, during the research process, the author of the thesis has found many documents that have not clarified the type of boat and sometimes there has been confusion between "Ghe Bau of the Central Coast of Vietnam and Ghe Bau - Ghe Tam Bang of the Southern Vietnam. This is a factor that needs to be clarified, especially so that the information for the next generation does not confuse knowledge.

Part 2: Through many roles, functions, designs, flexibility, and characteristics in all aspects of life, such as housing, transportation, living, property, participating in cultural and spiritual activities, and creating typical living habits, Ghe Bau is associated with almost all the lives of people living on boats. Show that Ghe bau - Ghe Tam Bang is an essential and typical role related to the lives of river residents.



Figure 186 Bau boat at Cai Rang market

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Part 1: Characteristic structure of The "Ghe Bau" and correlation in the social life of river residents.

5.1. Characteristic structure of “Ghe Bau” and correlations in the social life of the river residents

- Historical

In the documents of Professor Ngo Duc Thinh (1984) and Professor Chan Quoc Vuong, it is (mill-style rudders, tube rudders, and yin-yang rudders...) all have a structure where the rudder pin goes directly into the rudder. The boat uses a quadrilateral or bat-wing sail. The boat's eyes are carved long, the front is round, and the tail is long and pointed. It is thanks to this type of Bau boat that the people of Quang Nam can go far out to sea to fish, especially the organization of the Hoang Sa soldiers who can use boats to occupy and guard islands nearly 300 km from the mainland" stated that "Among the sea areas in our country, the sea in the Central region, especially the sea in Quang Nam, is where the fishing industry at sea, in brackish lagoons and on rivers is very developed. In particular, this is where the Bau boat was born, a unique product of the Vietnamese sea industry, recorded in the world nautical dictionary. This type of boat has a pointed bow and rudder, a round belly, and a deep waterline so the ship can go far to sea. The rudder



Figure 187 Hoang Sa Bau boat image - Dr. Nguyen Nha
Source: <https://tuoitre.vn/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)



Figure 188 Ghe Bau in the central region is described as a medium-sized boat with a sail.

Source: *Bui Quang Trach (1962), Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*

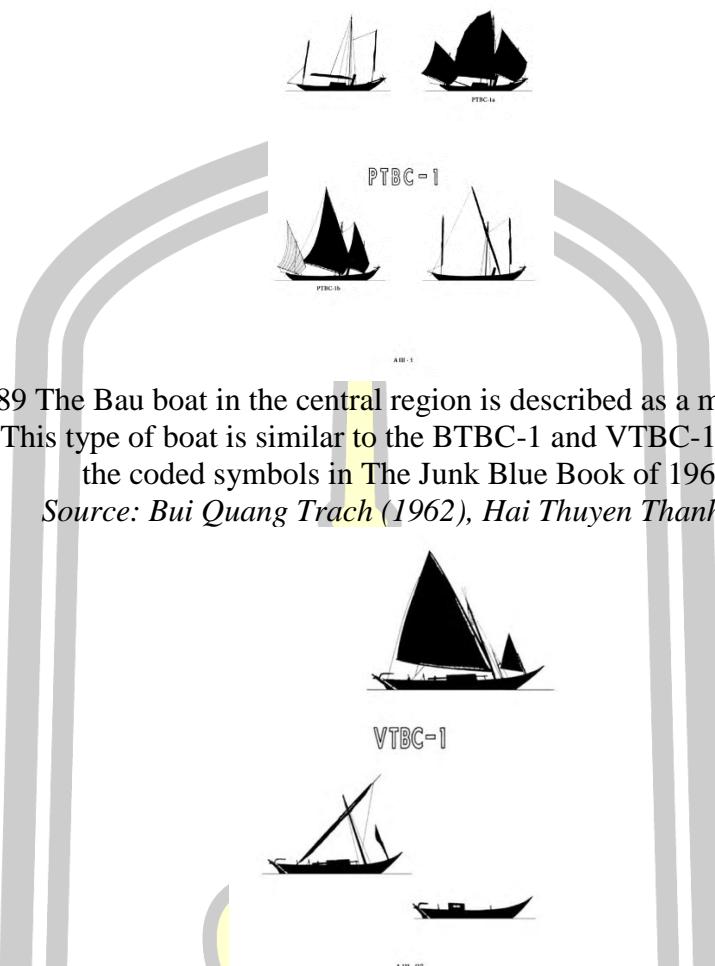


Figure 189 The Bau boat in the central region is described as a medium-sized boat with sails. This type of boat is similar to the BTBC-1 and VTBC-1 boats according to the coded symbols in The Junk Blue Book of 1962.

Source: *Bui Quang Trach (1962), Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*

Figure 190 The Bau boat in the central region is described as a medium-sized boat with sails. This type of boat is similar to the BTBC-1 and VTBC-1 boats according to the coded symbols in The Junk Blue Book of 1962.

Source: *Bui Quang Trach (1962), Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*

The Junk Blue Book of 1962¹ is a detailed catalog of the indigenous boats of what was then South Vietnam during a period when most such vessels were still powered by sail. The '62 Junk Blue Book was a manual put together by the US Dept. of Defense early in our involvement in the war in Viet Nam. It was used as a guide to identify coastwise marine traffic involved in smuggling supplies and personnel south into the Republic of Viet Nam from then North Viet Nam. Although its production was driven by perceived military necessity it is a unique chronicle of the indigenous fishing and cargo craft of the mid and southern Vietnamese coasts.

1 The Junk Blue Book is a detailed catalog of the indigenous boats of what was then South Vietnam during a period when most such vessels were still powered by sail. The '62 Junk Blue Book was a manual put together by the US Dept. of Defense early in our involvement in the war in Viet Nam. It was used as a guide to identify coastwise marine traffic involved in smuggling supplies and personnel south into the Republic of Viet Nam from then North Viet Nam.

The man who was in charge of the project in Viet Nam was a Marine Lt. Col Marion C. Dalby, who I found was an ardent sailing yachtsman, so probably was chosen for those interests. Numerous readings of the book showed me that he was especially sensitive to this aspect of Viet Nam and apparently his team picked up that spirit.



Figure 191 The Junk Blue Book of 1962 is a detailed catalog of the indigenous boats of what was then South Vietnam

Source: Bui Quang Trach (1962), Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu



Figure 192 The man who was in charge of The Junk Blue Book - Marine Lt. Col Marion C. Dalby

Source: <https://indigenousboats.blogspot.com/> (Accessed on May 11, 2024)

In addition, boats such as PTBC-1 and the group of ships in Phan Thiet, Vung Tau, have a similar appearance to the Ghe Bau mentioned and understood as the Ghe Bau group in the Central region, the type with sails and pointed bows. However, these boats are completely different from the Ghe Bau in the Southwest region, which many other documents have mistakenly mentioned. It is necessary to distinguish clearly.

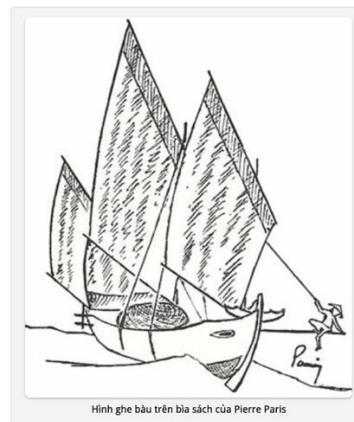
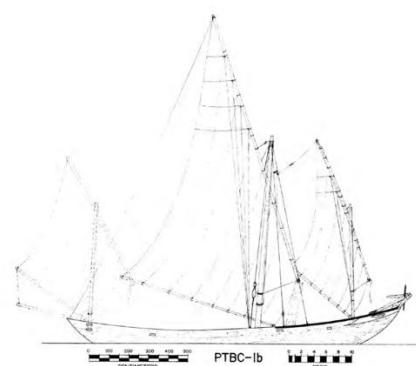


Figure 193 The boat image on the book cover of Pierre Paris
Source: <https://tuoitre.vn/> (Accessed on Dec 11, 2024)



CHIỀU DÀI	524-1676 CM.	LENGTH	50.0 - 55.0 FT.
CHIỀU NGANG	335 - 381 CM	BEAM	11.0 - 12.5 FT.
TẦM NƯỚC		DRAFT	
KHÔNG CÓ HÀNG	64.8 CM.	EMPTY	1.8 FT.
CÓ HÀNG	78.2 CM.	LOADED	2.6 FT.
MAN TÀU		FREEBOARD	
KHÔNG CÓ HÀNG	78.2 CM.	EMPTY	2.6 FT.
CÓ HÀNG	64.8 CM.	LOADED	1.8 FT.
CHIỀU CAO CỦA CỘT BUỒM	1036 CM.	MAST HEIGHT	34.0 FT.
ĐOÀN VIÊN	8-10	CREW	8-10

A III - 13

Figure 194 Drawing of the structure of the Ghe Bau in PTBC – Phan Thiet region in the book The Junk Blue Book

Source: Bui Quang Trach (1962), *Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*

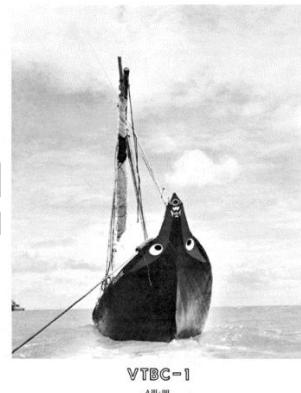


Figure 195. Drawing of the structure of the Ghe Bau in VTBC – Vung Tau in the book The Junk Blue Book

Source: Bui Quang Trach (1962), *Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*

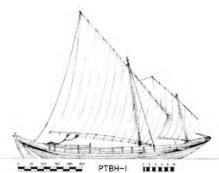


CHIỀU DÀI	1219-1524 CM	LENGTH	40.0-50.0 FT
CHIỀU NGANG	304 CM	BEAM	10.0 FT
TÂM MỐC		DEPTH	
KHỔNG CỔ HÀNG	457 CM	EMPTY	2.1 FT
CỔ HÀNG	643-914 CM	LOADED	21-30 FT
MÃN HẦU		FREIGHT	
KHỔNG CỔ HÀNG	281-352 CM	EMPTY	3.9-5.5 FT
CỔ HÀNG	670-848 CM	LOADED	22-30 FT
CHIỀU CAO CỦA CỘT MAST	852 CM	MAST HEIGHT	28.0 FT
DOÀN VIÊN	5-7 CM	CHIN	5-7

A III-99

Figure 196 Drawing of the structure of the Ghe Bau in VTBC – Vung Tau region in the book The Junk Blue Book

Source: Bui Quang Trach (1962), *Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*



CHIỀU DÀI	1890 CM	LENGTH	62.4 FT
CHIỀU NGANG	446 CM	BEAM	14.7 FT
TÂM MỐC		DEPTH	
KHỔNG CỔ HÀNG	782 CM	EMPTY	28 FT
CỔ HÀNG	1160 CM	LOADED	38 FT
MÃN HẦU		FREIGHT	
KHỔNG CỔ HÀNG	1038 CM	EMPTY	54 FT
CỔ HÀNG	870 CM	LOADED	32 FT
CHIỀU CAO CỦA CỘT MAST	975.4 CM	MAST HEIGHT	32.0 FT
DOÀN VIÊN	7 CM	CHIN	7

A III-99

Figure 197. Drawing of the structure of the Ghe Bau in PTBH region in the book The Junk Blue Book

Source: Bui Quang Trach (1962), *Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu*



PTBC - 1b

A III - 12

Figure 198 The type of the Bau boat in central Vietnam in the Junk Blue Book has a similar structure to the mentioned Bau of central Vietnam (it has a sail - the eyes are of the seagoing type) - this type is different from the Bau boat in southern Vietnam

Source: Bui Quang Trach (1962), Hai Thuyen Thanh Thu

The type of the Bau boat in central Vietnam in the Junk Blue Book has a similar structure to the mentioned Bau of central Vietnam (it has a sail - the eyes are of the seagoing type) - this type is different from the Bau boat in southern Vietnam (has no sail - the eyes of the area of the river type).

Some typical traditional boats, such as Ghe Bau, are popular and have many different types of loads. However, constructing the new Ghe Bau is rare; finding detailed and specific technical drawings of Ghe Bau at present is almost unclear regarding parameter data and drawings. To clarify the particular research values, the author of the thesis has researched and collected data to record and simulate the technical drawings of Ghe Bau with the support of parameters from large and reputable boat-building workshops in the areas of Can Tho, Hau Giang, Dong Thap, and Vinh Long provinces. Some common types of loads of Ghe Bau are as follows:

អំពី ការ បង្កើត ប្រចាំខែ

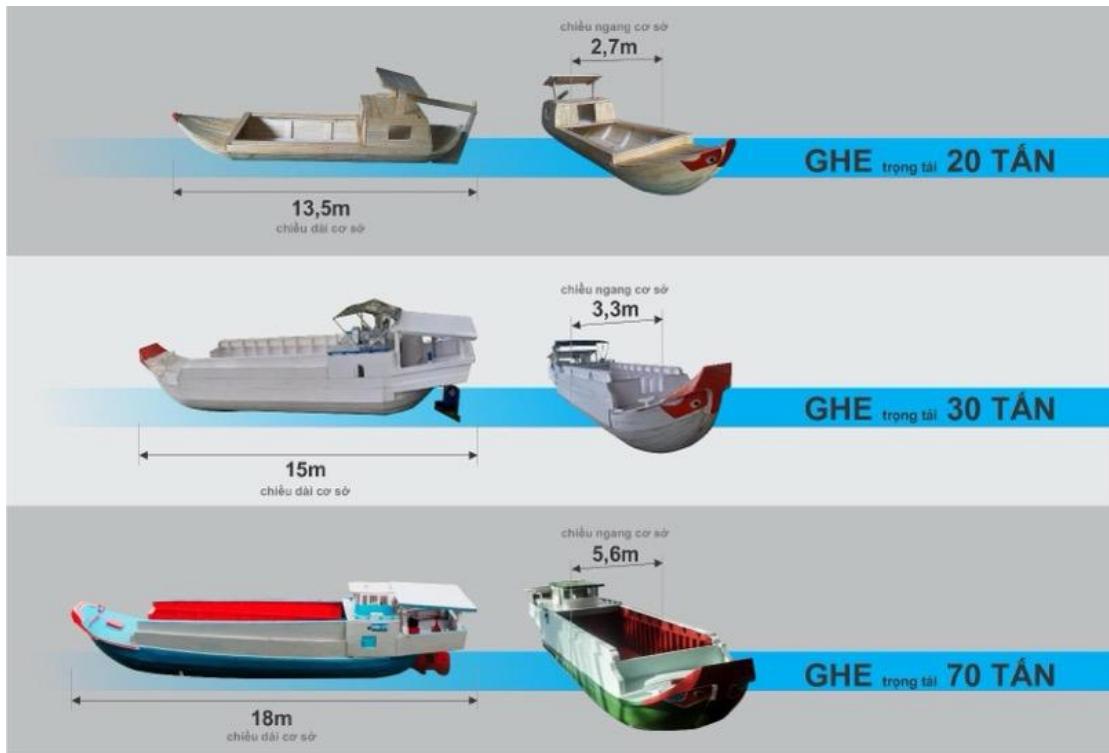


Figure 199 Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. Drawing made by the author of the thesis

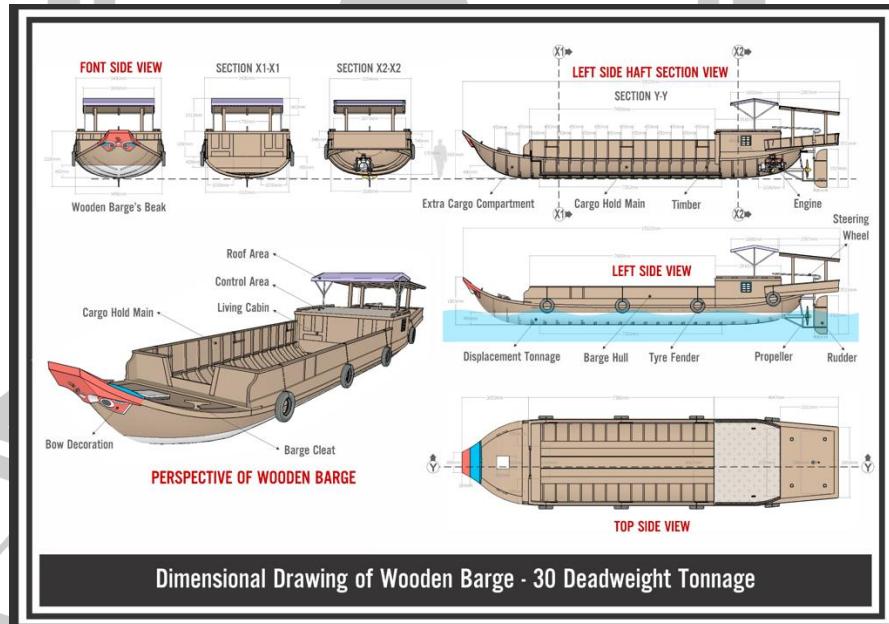


Figure 200 Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. (Technical drawing) by author



Figure 201 Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. (3D drawing) - by author



Figure 202 Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. (3D drawing) - by author

អង្គនំ បណ្តិត ខេវ



Figure 203 Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. (3D drawing) - by author

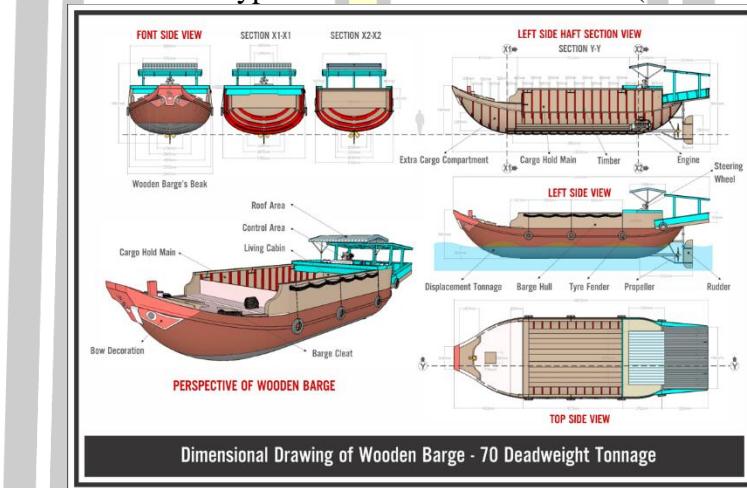


Figure 204. Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. (Technical drawing) by author



Figure 205 Some common types of loads of The Ghe Bau. (3D drawing) - by author

Some old and new means of water transport have changed their materials and functions, and some boats have improved their shapes to suit new functions.

Composite material is optimal for small boats such as Xuong Ba La, Vo Lai, Ghe di cau, and canoes because they can be easily shaped and molded. Composite plastic is also known as FRP plastic - fiberglass reinforced plastic. Previously, most boats and canoes were made of wood. Over time, people have upgraded these means of transport to composite plastic boats. The product has many outstanding advantages, such as lightweight, high durability, easy construction, good corrosion resistance, and... You can learn more about composite boats in the content below. The most

outstanding advantage of composite plastic is that it can change the geometric structure, distribution, and constituent materials to produce new materials with the desired durability. In addition, this type of plastic is lightweight and has a high heat resistance of up to 3,000 degrees Celsius.

Composite plastic has several other advantages, such as good cold resistance, heat resistance, fire resistance, and durability in harsh weather conditions. Although this material is lightweight, it has much better durability and rigidity, impact resistance, tensile strength, and bending strength than traditional materials such as ceramics, wood, and glass. Composite plastic is also resistant to chemicals and UV rays and has high corrosion resistance. Therefore, we do not need to apply anti-corrosion paint. Also, composite plastic's maintenance and repair costs are lower than other materials, such as wood and metal.

At the same time, this type of plastic is non-toxic when used with many beautiful and diverse colors. Composite plastic has a 2-3 times longer lifespan than metal and wood, helping to save on equipment investment costs for production. In addition, composite plastic is convenient and easy to process, shape, change, and repair. This is considered one of the materials with many outstanding features but affordable prices.. Highlights of composite plastic boats

Composite boats are light and durable, helping fishermen move quickly on the river. In addition, composite boats have excellent corrosion resistance. This is why people in the river area favor this means of transport.

Withstand water environment: Composite boats are resistant to corrosion and rust. They are also less affected by pollutants floating in the water.

Lightweight: lightweight is one of the outstanding advantages of composite boats. Composite plastic boats are 50% lighter than wooden boats, helping people feel more secure when moving on rivers, canals, ditches, etc.

High hardness: Composite material has high hardness, good impact resistance, and slight deformation. In particular, composite boats are less likely to crack, so fishermen do not need to worry about water leakage.

Anti-chemical and electrolytic corrosion: Wooden boats are often eroded by chemicals floating on the surface of rivers, lakes, etc. This is why wooden ships quickly deteriorate. However, the appearance of composite wooden boats has dispelled this worry for people living in the river area.

Easy to shape: Composite boats have a high-precision, smooth surface after shaping. In addition, the product is diverse in color, style, and design, helping fishermen easily choose according to their preferences.

High durability: According to assessments, composite boats can last up to 30 years if used and maintained correctly. This is a number that not all types of vessels can achieve.

Cheap warranty and maintenance: Another advantage of composite boats is reasonable warranty and maintenance costs. The reason is that the product is highly durable and resistant to physical impacts. With composite boats, people only need to pay for barnacle removal and anti-fouling paint (barnacles are super parasitic animals on boats, ships, etc.).

Safe to use: composite boats are lightweight, making them easy to repair and replace when damaged. In addition, composite materials are secure and do not harm

humans or the environment. In addition, fishermen should proactively equip themselves with additional safety equipment such as life buoys.

Based on shape and structure, boats are divided into five primary types: sampan, trimaran, cutter, motorboat, and hull boat. Specifically as follows:

Composite sampan (Xuong Ba La)

Sampan is made from 3 large planks, including two bevel planks and one bottom plank. To make the boat more sturdy, manufacturers often use "curved" bars to create a frame. The primary function of the frame is to hold the planks tightly, resist external pressure, and prevent the boat from deforming.

Usually, there are semicircular holes drilled under the curved bars, making the boat compartment more airy.

The boat's head and tail are pointed, making it more flexible than other boats and ships.

Composite sampan (Xuong Tam Bang)

Sibe wants to introduce you to the second composite plastic boat, the sampan. It has a simple design and is easy to use. This type of boat is called a sampan because it is made from three planks. In addition, the manufacturer designed additional horizontal plastic edges to make the ship more stable.

To move, fishermen use their strength to row and steer the boat. When steering, the body leans slightly forward. Proper steering is essential; if the ship is not steered correctly, it will spin and cannot move forward.

Many places have added an automatic machine system at the stern of the boat to save time and effort in rowing. Composite sampans are diverse in design, size, and style, helping buyers choose their favorite vehicle easily. The most common size is 4m2 x 90cm x 30cm (length x width x height).

Composite cutter boat (Xuong Cat lai)

Composite cutter boat is also one of the most popular boats today. The most memorable point to distinguish this type of boat is based on the tail's structure.

In contrast to conventional boats, this vehicle has a flat tail. Thanks to that, the ship maintains a good balance, ensuring safety for the user.

The stern of the composite boat is designed with a high, flat edge, which makes transporting goods more accessible and efficient.

Composite motorboat (Xuong May)

Composite motorboats are also one of the most popular means of transport today. They have the following characteristics: compact, lightweight, safe design,...

In addition, the product applies modern, advanced technology to meet all user expectations.

Composite boat (Vo Lai-Tac Rang)

After the flood season 1978, a means of transporting passengers on the canals gradually appeared in the Dong Thap Muoi region, with a funny name: Tac Rang.. The name "composite boat" was given to this type of boat because its body shape resembles a boat. "In terms of shape, the tac rang is identical to the composite boat that is present throughout the Mekong Delta today, but has a low bow, is made of good wood, and is very large. It is 10 - 15m long but has a thin body, is only 2m wide, has a roof to protect against rain and sun, and is painted in many colors.

The boat is long, thin, and has a tail motor at the back; the bow is slanted up. The boat is made of wood or composite plastic. Southern people named it the boat

because it has a long body like a boat. The shell distinguishes it from the inside, meaning the tail motor runs on gasoline. This engine helps the boat go fast, and it was produced in Germany or Japan.

People in the West consider a boat on the river a motorbike on land. The ship is a compact vehicle that helps people quickly move on the crisscrossing canals or into places with lots of reeds and grass. When the engine was not installed in the past, the boat's movement depended on human power, rowing, or paddling by hand. Later, a farmer in Kien Giang, Mr. Tieu Van Sum (also known as Mr. Nam Cai or Mr. Chin Sum), realized that the boat still had many shortcomings, so he tried to learn and research.

Seeing that the boat's hull was too broad, the bow was relatively low, so when running, the ship had to face water resistance, and the boat moved slowly. Realizing that, he improved it, making the hull smaller, the bow narrower and sloping up. He used a layer of paint on the bottom of the boat to reduce the friction between the hull and the water. As a result, his improved boat - boat - boat ran faster than other motorboats with the same capacity. Mr. Tieu Van Sum - a farmer in Kien Giang, took the trouble to study the motorboat with a shrimp tail that his people were using. He realized that the boat's hull was too broad, and the bow was low, so when running, it was resisted by the water quite a lot. He then improved the boat's hull to be smaller, the bow was narrower and higher and used paint under the hull to create a sliding surface on the water. The result was very positive: the improved boat ran faster than the motorboat with a shrimp tail of the same capacity and could pass over... the shore as fast as a jumping fish while the people in the boat were still safe and sound. He called his improved boat the Tac Rang boat. Tac Rang is a proper noun, referring to the tiny hamlet where he built this new boat..

Besides, this improved boat - boat - boat can go beyond shallow water, shallow water winding areas, and narrow areas very flexibly and quickly. He named his improved boat "**Tac Rang**". Around 1960, Mr. Chin Sum opened a boat-building workshop. He noticed that the popular sampan had a large body, flat bottom, low bow, and much friction with the water, so its speed was slow. Living in an area with a large Khmer population, Mr. Chin noticed that their sampan had a slightly curved hull, a high bow, and good water displacement, so its speed was breakneck. From then on, Mr. Chin improved the sampan, creating a boat with a narrow body, a high curved bow, a slightly curved hull, and an additional layer of anti-friction paint on the belly. The skinny ship, like a "fish," whether swam by hand or with a "shrimp tail motor," was faster than the traditional sampan.

Farmers liked the sampan's fast speed for a short time when the "shrimp tail motor" was attached to the stern; it could run on canals or fields during the flood season and turn flexibly. At first, Mr. Chin Sum named the skinny boat Vo Lai, but after people used it a lot, someone called it Tac Rang Hamlet.

Depending on the size, the tac can carry 30 - 40 passengers in the cabin and goods. If you count the passengers sitting on the roof, it can sometimes be close to a hundred people.". This type of boat has a compact design, helping users move quickly on canals and rivers. The boat, also known as the boat or the boat, is small, canoe, or diamond-shaped, usually made of wood and equipped with an engine. Boats are the primary means of transportation and are very popular in the Southwest provinces,

especially during the flood season. The original boat is the boat. The boat is a means of transportation used by many people in the West, just like the sampan or the gourd.

Composite ships are also known as “unsinkable ships.” Because this type of ship is designed to be divided into sealed compartments, it can still run if one or two are punctured. If the ship capsizes, the sealed compartment will float like a buoy for passengers or fishermen to hold on to.

Regarding the technology and techniques of manufacturing ships from composite materials, the ship's hull is cast in one piece, ensuring no gaps for water to penetrate inside, thereby preventing the boat from increasing its load and reducing the hull's life. In addition, because composite ships are made from synthetic materials, they consume less fuel than wooden ships. This composite ship can be used for 3-5 years before having to check and maintain its machinery once, while wooden boats must be maintained and repaired at least once a year. Composite boats and ships have different capacities to suit many industries, such as tourism, fishing, dredging, etc. Many ships have a capacity of up to 800CV, can hold 20,000 liters of fresh water and 30,000 liters of oil, and ensure continuous operation for 30 days with a crew of 20 people..

Note: When buying a composite plastic boat, you should pay attention to the following issues:

- Choose a reputable supplier.
- Choose the right size and style.
- Equip safety equipment.

- Role of the Ghe Bau in the floating market

Most boats in the floating market mainly transport passengers, goods, materials, living, or trading for a living. Small boats are usually used as ferry boats to transport passengers, especially tourists, and they are more prevalent in central locations such as the Cai Rang Can Tho floating market. Large boats, usually small passenger boats, are designed to transport short-term tourists for short visits to the floating market. Tourists who use long-term tourism or resort services will have their type of boat. As mentioned in the above research, boat models are used explicitly for tourism, resort forms, and culinary and cultural experiences. Some have also converted special types of boats, such as gourd boats, into passenger boats or resort boats of high-end resorts. Because of the above functions, Bau Boat - Tam Bang Boat accounts for over 50% when integrated into most floating markets and Cai Rang Can Tho Floating Market. This is affected by many reasons, and the reasons or conditions for using Bau Boat in this cultural space and social life are all suitable and feasible for this type of boat.

Among them, typical functions such as:

- Transporting goods and agricultural products must be mentioned: The Bau boat has a shape and structure suitable for the terrain and flow characteristics of freshwater rivers and the delta region: it is calm, without big waves and strong winds like the sea or strong water flows like many large rivers or complex terrain. The gentleness of the river has helped the structure and shape of the boat to be plump, so some people call it a Bau boat, while in fact, it is correct to name it a Tam Ban boat. The problem of flow characteristics and the calmness of the terrain or water surface are also shown through the boat's shape; in each region, the boat's shape will also be round or long. Besides, with the boat's shape, the necessary functions to survive with

the boat in the river area are integrated into a structure. Typically, a boat structure will usually have three main parts. The bow, the body, and the rear part are the rudder. Each position will have its function, which can be restructured according to the user's goals. If agricultural products are carried directly into the storage part in the middle of the boat's body, the "belly of the boat" will have more or less depending on the large or small load of the ship. In addition, with some goods, a separate hold can be made in the middle of the boat's body so that the way of transporting is also different. The last part of the boat is often used for living. Most activities like a "house" of the people living on the ship are this part. If there is a cabin, it is used as a cockpit for the pilot to observe easily.

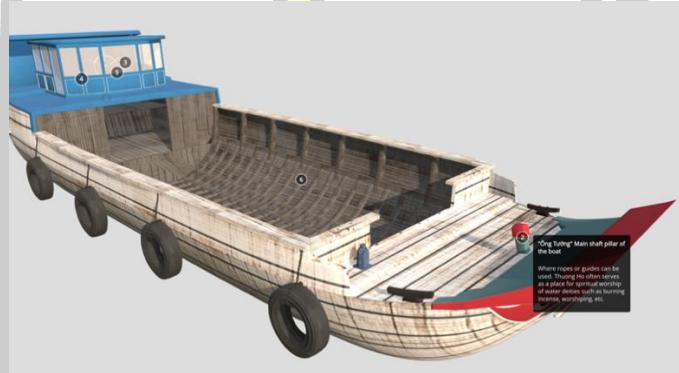


Figure 206 Illustration of the front part of the boat - the bow of the boat, with the detail of "Mr. Tuong" representing spirituality. Illustration made by the author

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

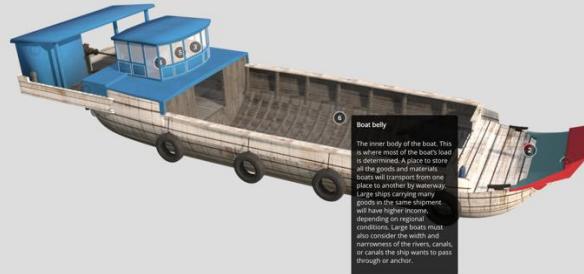


Figure 207. Illustration of the hull structure - the belly of the boat or cargo hold, the largest area in the boat.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

With this structure and function of transporting goods, most of the boats in the Cai Rang floating market are sampans. Agricultural products are loaded in the middle of the boat with various items such as pineapple, watermelon, mango, coconut, pumpkin, etc. Large and small boats can transfer goods back and forth by skillfully throwing the net by people who specialize in this job. In addition, the boats must also be anchored next to each other to form a tightly linked group so as not to drift and have a specific place for the most convenient trading. If carrying materials such as materials or rice husk ash, the boat is lifted with additional structural parts arising in the middle part of the boat, ensuring the largest and safest volume in a shipment.



Figure 208. Boats are moored in clusters to have a strong connection on the water surface and to facilitate the exchange of goods.



Figure 209 Skillful throwing technique of people to exchange goods, typical image in floating market



Figure 210 A wide variety of agricultural products and goods are loaded into the cargo holds of the Bau Boats.

Depending on the load, the boat can carry more or less goods and agricultural products. For boats specializing in transporting to different places, the shape of Bau-Ghe Tam Bang boats of each region also differs depending on the water strength or flow characteristics. Normally, there will be boats with a capacity ratio equivalent to the average length and width as follows: Boats of about 10-20 tons, with an average length ratio of 5.5m, the width is from 1.2-1.4m, 30 tons, or over 70 tons. The average

price of a boat ranges from 70 to 150 million VND, with large ships costing over 2 billion VND, depending on the economic conditions of each merchant family. These basic figures show that transporting goods by Ghe Bau—Ghe Tam Ban is vital in the Cai Rang floating market because of its popularity, convenience, functionality, and suitability to the economic conditions of each merchant family living on the boat.



Figure 211. Illustration of the rear hull structure of the boat, also known as the stern, the rudder compartment, the living and working area of the boat owner. It acts as a room, a small house.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

- Role of Ghe Bau in Human Life

The Ghe Bau - Ghe Tam Bang is a means of transport that meets the needs of living and survival on the river, and also meets the function of being a means of transport to transport goods for a living, for the development of the times such as serving tourism, it is flexible enough and fully meets both function and aesthetics. The Ghe Bau-Ghe Tam Bang is a means of transport that is entirely suitable and closely associated with the social life of the residents here, especially the nature of the residents in the river area, and creates a unique and rare culture.

In Life: When analyzing, look over the boat's basic structure to understand its function and how it formed the social life of residents of the Cai Rang floating market, particularly merchants of the river area.

Boat bow: Unlike the boats in the central region, the ships in the south are not affected by harsh weather. The bows of the boats usually don't need to be too sharp to increase the ability to turn waves or withstand high winds. The boat's bow is usually painted red and has a solid and wide width for transporting, loading, and unloading goods, bearing forces. Boats often travel on calm rivers, so they do not need a spear to break waves or squeeze through reed areas like boats in other areas.

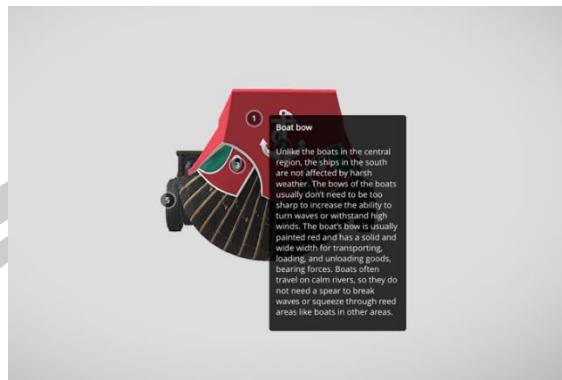


Figure 212 Boat bow

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

The symbol on the boat: The symbol on the boat's bow is the logo of the boat manufacturer. Places exist to determine the origin of vessels and boats, including which province or city this boat comes from.

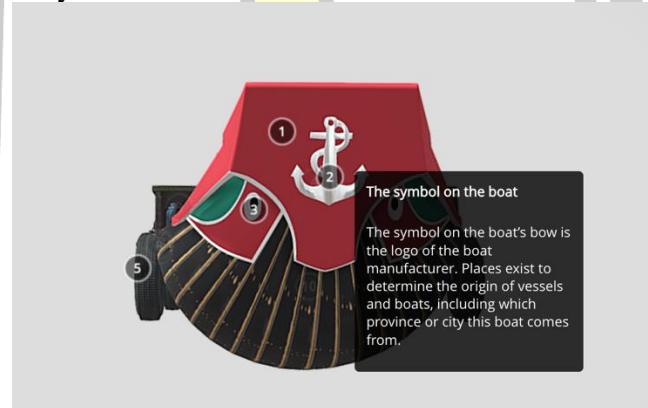


Figure 213 The symbol on the boat

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

Boat eyes: The boat's eyes often look peaceful, with a spiritual meaning: "All fortunes have souls." However, the eyes are not as fierce as boats in complex climates. There is no aim against storm surges or ferocious water nymphs. Boats are both a means of transportation and doing business and a tool closely associated with the customs, habits, and lifestyles of people living in river areas. People who travel by river or sea always consider boats sacred objects and care about decorating the eyes of the boats to make them lively as if transmitting their souls to the boats. However, each region has a different concept of the eyes of the boats. There is a legend that drawing them to look like the eyes of a dragon will ward off sea monsters. Another legend says that drawing them to look like the eyes of an eagle will make sea monsters not dare to come near. People who have lived on the river for many years only need to look at the shape and color of the eyes of the boats to know where the boats come from. For example, boats in the Mekong Delta often have round eyes, black pupils, and white labels, exuding a gentle demeanor.

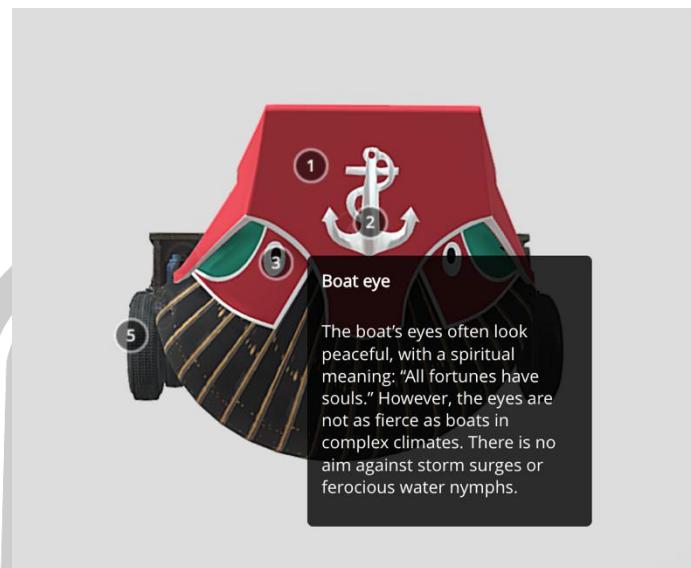


Figure 214 The Boat' eyes
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

Wooden poles tied the boat's mooring lines



Figure 215. The Wooden poles tied the boat's mooring lines
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

Mooring ropes: Mooring lines or similar functions are used. They are even used as a place of spiritual worship. Lake merchants living on boats can also add a small tube to put incense each day before departure or prepare an offering tray on lunar holidays for people who go boating or live on the river.

Anti-scratch cushion



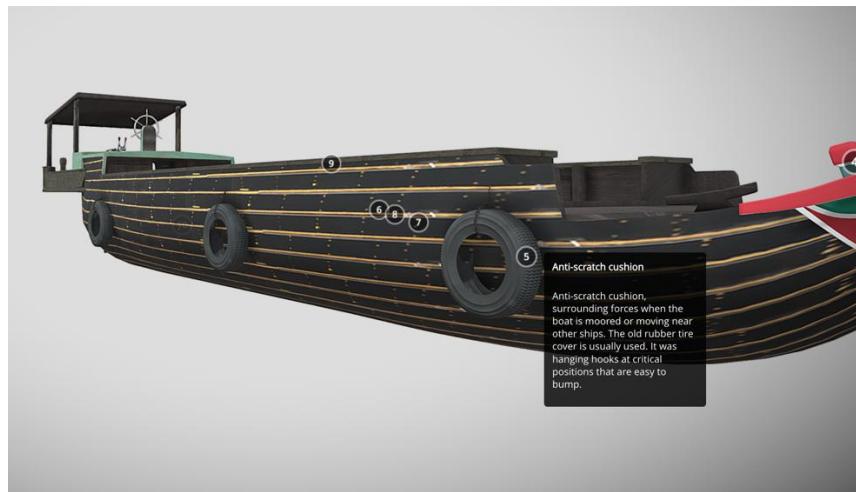


Figure 216 The Anti-scratch cushion

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

Anti-scratch cushion, surrounding forces when the boat is moored or moving near other ships. The old rubber tire cover is usually used. It was hanging hooks at critical positions that are easy to bump.

The body of the boat: The body of the boat is usually assembled from wooden boards, sometimes boards from Sao, Kien Kien, Cho, Lim, Gie.. or some other precious woods. It is then connected with nails and a separate fastening technique for boats. The joint is filled with special glue for wood and vessels. The worker also carefully covered both joints and places where iron nails were used.

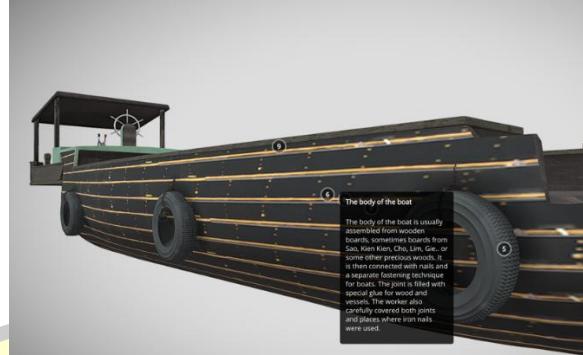


Figure 217 The body of the boat

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

Location with iron nails

អង្គន បន កិច ខេវ



Figure 218. Location with iron nails
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

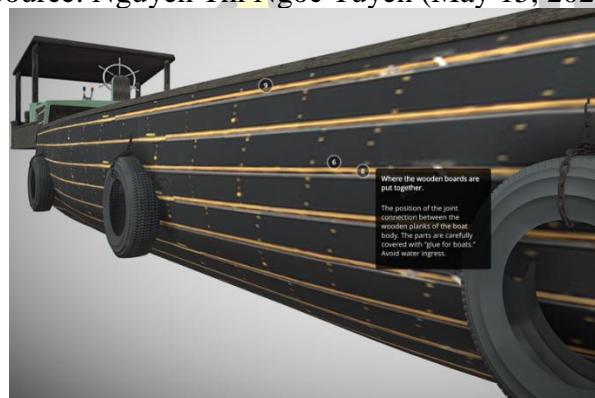


Figure 219 Location with iron nails
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

Using large iron nails, the position is carefully covered with special glue for boats and mixed from a powder and binder called “Trai.”

Where the wooden boards are put together: The position of the joint connection between the wooden planks of the boat body. The parts are carefully covered with “glue for boats.” Avoid water ingress.

The boat's hull, the ship's belly: The main cargo compartment is the main load when the boat transports goods, including rice food, agricultural products, construction materials, and even aquatic products.

Boat belly: The inner body of the boat. This is where most of the boat's load is determined. A place to store all the goods and materials boats will transport from one place to another by waterway. Large ships carrying many goods in the same shipment will have higher income, depending on regional conditions. Large boats must also consider the width and narrowness of the rivers, canals, or canals the ship wants to pass through or anchor.



Figure 220. The boat's hull, the ship's belly
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)



Figure 221. The boat's hull, the ship's belly
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

"Small room": The compartment for storing personal items and living and sleeping places of the boat owner. Like the main house when the merchants moved on the river, this was a place to rest that functioned as a small room or "small house." If merchants still didn't have a home on the mainland, this was their home. A haven through weather and living, mature.

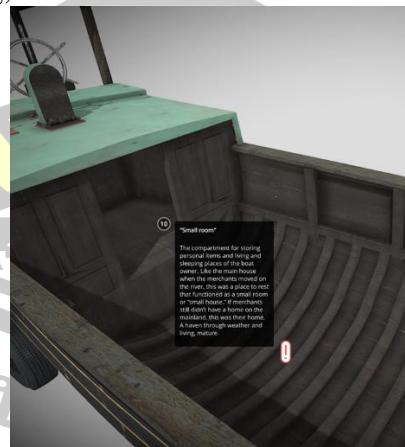


Figure 222 The boat's body, where the owner lives like a small room
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

The driver's cockpit: Boats with large loads can be upgraded, separating the living space and the space for public transport into separate areas. It can be designed into a small private room for safety and good visibility in all weather conditions. Ensure boat safety.

Engine gear lever: The engine gear lever functions like the gear lever of vehicles in general, with a gear lever that controls direction, forward or backward, and controls strong or weak thrust. The boat driver must be highly experienced in feeling the water force, thrust, or excess forces of speed and acceleration, which also differ from those on land.

Boat's steering wheel: Boat's steering wheel: The boat's steering wheel is usually circular and has a few bars protruding along the center of gravity of this circle to increase power and prevent slipping. The movement becomes more dangerous for some large boats, requiring good proficiency and experience in water propulsion or water resistance issues. Currents or shallow water can damage propellers and machinery or break the vessel. Therefore, the steering wheel needs to ensure conditions of increased friction, grip, and circular shape.



Figure 223 The driver's cockpit
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)



Figure 224. Engine gear lever
Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

អនុនា បន្ទាន់ ខ្មែរ



Figure 225 Boat's steering wheel

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

The boat's rudder: The boat's rudder: The rudder is usually made of metal for long-term use and to avoid damage by corrosive underwater animals such as barnacles or aquatic algae. The rudder is connected to the cockpit through a metal shaft called the steering wheel. Sometimes, small boats have rudimentary wooden Rudders and are directly related to the driver by a wooden stick or cable. The driver can adjust the boat's direction based on the thrust that changes the direction of the water using a mechanism similar to a propeller.

Boat propeller: A ship's propeller is usually made of metal such as cast iron, brass, or aluminum. Small boats often have small, lightweight aluminum propellers; large ships often have large brass alloy propellers. My (author's) family has a tradition of casting ship propellers for more than 30 years in Can Tho (belonging to the Mekong Delta region in Vietnam). I have also seen many designs of different types of ship propellers from all sizes. My brother is a great engineer and can fix problems with damaged propellers, bent when hit by rocks, or even having one of the propellers broken. Boats everywhere are very familiar with my family's shipbuilding or repair workshop. My brother (Mr. Hau, the engineer I just mentioned) is also currently the director of an iron shipyard.



Figure 226 The boat's rudder

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

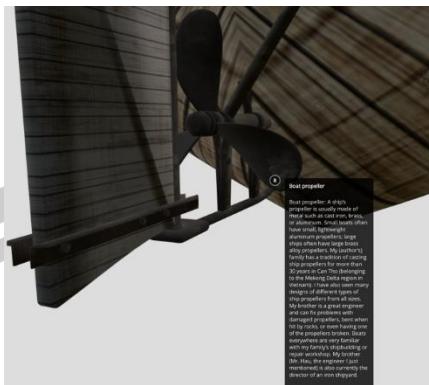


Figure 227. The boat's propeller

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (May 15, 2022)

With its technical structure and features that meet the needs of transportation and living on the river, such as a place to carry goods, a place to live, and a space for cooking, bathing, washing, and cleaning, Ghe Bau is the dominant means of water transport, with the most significant number of other types of water transport at the Cai Rang floating market.

. In social, cultural

The Bau boat, with all sizes and functions for a living, has become a member with a strong influence on the social life of the people on the river. The Bau boat is attached to the people in all specific activities, from meals on the river of each family and their activities such as business (as a means of transportation), family activities, and study; the Bau boat witnesses the growth of a baby born and raised with the family on the river (when playing the role of a house). The Bau boat also gives people lifestyles or spiritual views that follow the water, believe in the water god, or cherish the vessel not only as an asset but also as a sacred entity that carries within it a soul that needs to be cherished.

In addition, Ghe Bau also holds a critical position in accompanying and bringing regional specialties or cultural styles in provinces and cities to spread everywhere through waterways. The transportation of goods was initially just an exchange of buying and selling. Still, later, it contained a meaningful story of a person's life, family, or the cultural and social life of people and boats closely linked.

In the cultural space of the Cai Rang floating market, all kinds of boats have existed and are closely linked to create a unique identity, which is determined by many factors and aspects. Forming a chain of cultural links between floating markets and river culture in the Southern region is one condition that significantly affects this "ecosystem" of river culture.

Floating market - an overview of the formation and development process:

From the end of the 17th century, the land on both banks of the Tien River was basically cleared, many places became towns, district towns... the population concentrated to settle down and make a living more and more. In particular, the market network system was born, very prosperous.

Long Ho market, Hung Loi market (Dinh Tuong)... all markets were crowded with boats docking, buying and selling goods, food... That was the first mark of the floating market.

After occupying the South, the French carried out a large-scale exploitation on the west bank of the Hau River: "digging canals, establishing markets, opening

roads". Commercial activities once again had conditions to develop. The Xang Xa No canal connecting Can Tho - Rach Gia was completed (1901-1903), opening a period of acceleration in agriculture, industry and commerce. Rice, fruit and vegetable products from the Mekong Delta soon became ubiquitous goods, exported to foreign countries.

The Cai Rang market area (Can Tho) with its strength in the milling industry has become a bustling rice port, second only to Cho Lon.

Besides the rice port, Cai Rang market is prosperous both on the shore and on the river in a strategic position connecting Saigon - Can Tho to Ca Mau - Rach Gia. In the middle of the 20th century, Cai Rang had many floating houses on both sides of Cai Rang and Can Tho canals.

The raft owners were Chinese who opened grocery stores right there, and a river market next to it was also born, with hundreds of ships and boats going back and forth day and night to buy and sell, exchange goods: Vietnamese cargo boats selling fruits and vegetables; Chinese floating houses selling groceries, and Khmer merchant boats selling "ca rang - Ong Tao".

About 30 kilometers south of Cai Rang - Can Tho, the Nga Bay canal cluster (Phung Hiep) was completed in 1915, a year later Phung Hiep district moved from Rach Goi to here.

The road from Cai Rang was gradually built up to Nga Bay, making this place quickly become a prosperous market, spreading from the road down to seven rivers. Passenger boats, agricultural boats and merchants from all over gathered, bustling day and night. Nga Bay market naturally became Nga Bay floating market with a large scale.

The canal digging continued from Nga Bay - Quan Lo canal connecting Phung Hiep through Soc Trang, Rach Gia, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau... to a location in Long My district, where five canals were cut together, forming the Nga Nam center, only more than 30 kilometers from the Nga Bay center. As soon as this canal was dug, Nga Nam market was born, quickly becoming a metropolis.

It can be affirmed that: the birth of Cai Rang, Nga Bay, Nga Nam floating markets shows the perfection of the style of market groups on the river with a large scale; the number of boats coming to trade is many times higher than the previous markets.

Later, due to the need for trade, many medium-sized floating markets continued to emerge, such as: Vinh Thuan floating market (Kien Giang), Ngan Dua floating market (Bac Lieu), An Huu floating market (Cai Be, Tien Giang)...

Thus, the time of birth of the Mekong Delta floating market was around the beginning of the 19th century. This was the early period with markets along both banks of the Tien River.

The period of floating markets forming and completing was around the beginning of the 20th century, with markets on the west bank of the Hau River, mainly in the Can Tho area.

Characteristics of floating markets

The first characteristic is the use of a pole to advertise goods. The boat owner hangs a pole in front of the boat's bow, a type of "signal" information. It can be said that "Beo hang" is a unique marketing and advertising method formed quite early, only in floating markets.

The second characteristic is the word "trust" in buying and selling activities in floating markets. Even with dozens of tons of goods, the agreement to buy and sell is only verbal; no paperwork is needed, and both parties greatly respect the deal.

The third characteristic is that in floating markets, buying and selling are done in the style of "cash in hand, porridge in hand." There is no concept of "buying on credit, selling on credit," buying goods, exchanging them, and returning them because after buying and selling, everyone pulls up their poles and leaves the boat.

Communication culture is also a characteristic of floating markets. Most vendors are people from all over the country who come to "set up poles" to make a living. They have formed the custom of "buying with friends, selling with partners" for hundreds of years, from which long-term communication relationships have become cultural values. That is solidarity, mutual love, and mutual assistance.

Boats anchored for a long time, waiting to sell their goods, often consider each other neighbors. Even though they are strangers, they quickly become close. If there is anything they need, they call each other.

When a boat runs aground or has a broken engine, they are ready to jump into the river to help push it; when encountering big waves and strong winds, the boat sinks into the water and is about to be in danger; people from other ships jump over to bail out the water. If a vessel unfortunately has someone sick or suddenly dies, many different boats gather to take care of it.

The summary of the process of forming the key floating markets in the Southern region shows that means of transport, such as boats, play a key role. Boats now participate in the operation chain of the floating market; the number of boats also determines whether the market is bustling or deserted. The diversity of boats determines the richness of goods, forms, and social culture and cuisine related to rivers, in which boats are a prerequisite.

The role of floating markets

Floating markets' first and foremost role is trading, buying and selling, and exchanging goods. They play a vital role in "consuming agricultural products in the region, creating a significant number of jobs for people, and improving the lives of merchant residents.

Floating markets are a form of trading based on the crystallization of the river environment and the trading customs on the river of people over hundreds of years of history. Floating markets are a meeting place between agricultural products and handicraft and industrial products, a transit point for goods that helps connect urban areas with rural areas.

The emergence of floating markets also contributes to promoting the development of trade, services, and tourism in the region."

Next is the cultural role. Floating markets in the Mekong Delta demonstrate the function of buying and selling, exchanging common goods, and the typical trading method and unique market activities.

Here, people from different regions gather to exchange news and business experiences with each other.

They come here and grasp information from everywhere brought by trading boats from many places. When the market ends, they return with the sound and beautiful things from other places.

Thus, the river market also takes on another function, the function of "transmitting culture" to all regions in the region, from cities to remote villages, creating the vitality of the river civilization of the South.

Many young men and women have come here to find their life partners. With folk songs and lyrics, they have come together gently but no less steadfastly.

*"Chàng đi thiếp cũng theo cùng
Đói no thiếp chịu, lạnh lùng thiếp cam
Ví dầu tình có dở dang
Thì cho thiếp gọi đò ngang thiếp vè..."*
You go, I will follow you.
I endure hunger and fullness; I accept coldness.
Even if love is unfinished
Then let me call the ferry to go home...

The rivers of the South are immense, surrounded by gentle and straightforward Ao Ba Ba figures, rustic and sincere folk songs, and rural markets in the middle of peaceful rivers. These places quickly become gathering places for activities, entertainment, and tourism for tourists worldwide.

Tourism is also a prominent function of floating markets. Floating market tourism in the Mekong Delta emerged in the 1980s of the 20th century when domestic and foreign tourists needed to return to nature, experience the lives of merchant residents, and learn about the products of the newly discovered land.

In addition to contributing to the socio-economic development of the region in particular and the Vietnamese tourism industry in general through revenue generation and diversification of tourism products, the development of floating market tourism in the area is more or less community-oriented, and this is considered a positive activity.

A few local people benefit from tourism by providing transportation for tourists, driving boats, and working as tour guides.

The means of transporting visitors to floating markets are pretty diverse in type, and the quality of the vehicles is quite good (at Cai Rang floating market and Cai Be floating market). Access to floating markets is convenient because most have paved roads with relatively wide lanes.

Listing the roles of boats in the floating market and the floating market culture has clearly shown that boats or Ghe Bau, the three-wheeled boats, have been present in most of this system. While small ships like "xuong" with the primary size and function of transporting goods or few passengers over short distances on small rivers, boats like Ghe Bau - Ghe Tam Bang can carry all kinds of goods, people, animals... all kinds of needs of river residents, Ghe Bau can meet well. If the boat is small, it is suitable for small-sized families traveling short distances; if the ship is large, it is ideal for merchants with better conditions through large quantities and load shipments. Moving from one area to another also brings strong connections and cultural exchanges. Merchants can meet and get married when meeting each other in a completely new place, not necessarily their hometown; this also brings many unique values to the cultural identity of the river people of the South.

Some Ghe Bau from the provinces

"Ghe Bau" Bau Boat – "Ghe Tam Bang" Three-wheeled boat has many sizes, many forms and many advantages in applying and using diverse, multi-dimensional functions and suitable for many different cultural, social and river spaces. This affirms

the advantages and flexibility of this type of boat in the cultural life of people and boats in the Mekong Delta.

In addition to the direct use of Ghe Bau forms with different sizes or loads, the flexibility in shaping and designing the boats in each region is also balanced according to many factors. The most decisive influence on shaping the ship is the issue of water power, terrain, and sometimes the customs of each region. The change in external shape, although not too different, is the primary identifying point to distinguish the origin of the merchants. In general, technical and cultural issues are affected by geographical location, terrain conditions, and cultural influences. If the water flow is strong, the boat body will be shaped more elongated to strengthen the surfing ability. The boat's bow or stern is also balanced in jumping waves. While the river conditions are calm, with few big waves, the ship is often rounder in shape. If people want to add details to live or transport unique goods, they will also add details such as poles, roofs, floors... Suppose the boat is carrying rice husks, straw, and light; then, add a wide beam to take more rice husks in the entire belly of the ship and widen its height on both sides. If carrying dry agricultural products, the boat's hold can be kept without having to drill holes for water; if carrying fish, the middle compartment of the boat's belly is drilled to let water in and out, keeping the fish fresh when transporting long distances.

Ghe Bau Can Tho – Ghe Tam Ban Can Tho:

Regarding geographical conditions, river terrain, and the Can Tho area, Can Tho city is in the mid-lower region and the center of the Mekong Delta. It extends over 55km along the west bank of the Hau River and has a total natural area of 1,401.61 km². The North borders An Giang Province, the East borders Dong Thap and Vinh Long Provinces, the West borders Kien Giang Province, and the South borders Hau Giang Province.

The city's topography, terrain, and geology include natural dikes along the Hau River, semi-open floodplains, and delta plains.

Climate: Can Tho is located in the tropical monsoon climate zone, which means there are few storms, it is hot and humid all year round, and there is no cold season. The rainy season lasts from May to November, and the dry season lasts from December to April of the following year.

Rivers: Can Tho River originates from the western inland area of Hau River, is about 16 km long, 280-350 m wide, passes through O Mon district, Phong Dien district, Cai Rang district, Ninh Kieu district and flows into Hau River at Ninh Kieu wharf. Can Tho River has fresh water all year round, is used for irrigation in the dry season, is used for flood control in the flood season and is of great significance for transportation.

In addition, Can Tho city also has a dense canal system, with more than 158 large and small rivers and canals that are tributaries of two large rivers, Hau River and Can Tho River, passing through the city to form a waterway network. Other large rivers and canals are Binh Thuy, Tra Noc, O Mon, Thot Not, Tham Ron canal and many other large canals in suburban districts such as Thot Not, Vinh Thanh, Co Do and Phong Dien, providing fresh water throughout the two rainy and dry seasons, creating conditions for farmers to do irrigation and improve the soil.

The calmness of the flow in the plain terrain, without slopes or river basins with strong currents, makes most boats move relatively quickly and safely. Unlike

boats in the big sea or needing high wave jumping, the boat's bow is not too sharp, but the Can Tho area will build a slightly long bow shape. The boat body is often broader and more rounded but will go through heavier water. The width of the Can Tho boat is visible because the main problem will be moving slowly and carrying a lot of goods. When the boats are designed with a wide width, the belly of the boat is big. In Can Tho, the boat's hull is rounded, but the bow and the rudder are slightly different: the bow is marginally smaller than the rudder, and the rudder is the stern (the rearmost part, the kitchen area, the rudder) is somewhat rounded. Can Tho area has little water flow, so the standard ratio of the boat fluctuates as follows: length 5.5m, width will be from 1.2 m-1.4 m. Can Tho area builds three-board fishing boats with a load capacity of 20-30 tons, has painted eyes and decorated anchors at the boat's bow. For large cargo boats, the bow is not too sharp to facilitate anchoring, loading and unloading of goods, and movement of people.



Figure 228 The big boat on the viewer's left is Ghe Bau - Ghe Tam Ban Can Tho. Can Tho boats have a large body, the belly of the ship is big, but the boat's bow is slim, and the body behind the rudder is also relatively slim, mainly moving on calm water, the current is not too strong.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Ghe Can Duoc – Long An

Long An province borders Ho Chi Minh City to the West and Southwest and is the gateway connecting the Southeast and Mekong Delta regions. Although classified in the Mekong Delta, Long An is a transitional land between the Southeast and the Southwest, so the terrain gradually decreases from the northeast to the southwest. The north and northeast of the province have some low hills; the middle is the plain, and the southwest is the Dong Thap Muoi depression, including a 46,300-ha alum-flooded cajuput forest.

Long An's terrain is divided by a dense system of rivers and canals with a total length of up to 8,912 km, the Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay rivers combine to form the Vam Co River, Duong Van Duong Canal,... the largest of which is the Vam Co Dong River flowing through Long An.

Along the border line in Long An, there are currently 5 border gates, including:

My Qui Tay - Duc Hue border gate

Binh Hiep (Pray-Vo) - Moc Hoa border gate
 Vam Don - Vinh Hung border gate
 Kenh 28 - Vinh Hung border gate
 My Quy Tay (Xom-Rong).

Long An province also has a dense waterway traffic system with traffic routes such as Dong Vam Co River, Tay Vam Co River, and Rach Cat River (Can Giuoc River). Important waterway routes such as Ho Chi Minh City - Kien Luong, Ho Chi Minh City - Ca Mau, Ho Chi Minh City - Tay Ninh all pass through Long An via Nuoc Man Canal, Rach Cat River, Dong Vam Co River. Water transport vehicles over 100 tons can follow canals such as Phuoc Xuyen, Duong Van Duong, Tra Cu, Kinh Xang, Ben Luc River, Rach Cat River, and Thu Thua Canal... from the West to Ho Chi Minh City.

Can Duoc is a district in the lower region of Long An province, with many rivers and canals, including the Vam Co, Vam Co Dong, and Rach Cat rivers leading to the Soai Rap estuary, and National Highway 50 leading to Go Cong.

The hydrological regime in Can Duoc is strongly affected by the semi-diurnal tide regime of the East Sea. In the dry season, the tide brings salt water from the Soai Rap estuary along the Vam Co River and Rach Cat River into the inland fields. Moreover, the terrain is low from North to South, averaging 0.6 - 0.8m above sea level and, in some places, only about 0.3 - 0.5m, so salt water quickly penetrates deep into the inland fields.

As the natural conditions and history show, the Can Duoc - Long An area has a long history. The majority of merchants originated from Can Duoc. Can Duoc Long An area be the place of migration and the starting point of the Nguyen Dynasty's land reclamation to the South. The starting points of trade development are primarily from here. The origin of merchants is from Can Duoc, so this place has a long-standing tradition of boat building, quality, and more experience than the Mekong Delta region. Along with merchants from other regions, the boats appeared similar to Can Tho boats but were influenced by the Nguyen Dynasty, built higher in the water, and the bow curved very high. Can Duoc boats often have a shape similar to dragon boats, especially the bow is usually designed to be pulled up high, identical to the shape of a dragon boat, but the bow is not shaped like a dragon's head but kept in the style of the bow of ships in the southern delta. The boat's bow, therefore, has a shape somewhat similar to a pig's nose, so in some places, it is also called a pig's nose or Can Duoc Cui Boat. With geographical and river conditions, Can Duoc boats are shaped similarly to Can Tho boats. Before 1975, Can Duoc boats often carried "Khap da bo" - large ceramic water containers in Lai Thieu for sale. This boat also transported other agricultural products, such as sugarcane and rice. Still, it mainly transported ceramics and anchored at large markets and rivers because this type of boat was usually large. It had a round shape, similar to Can Tho boats, but was higher in water. For example, Can Tho boats had a water depth of 2m, so Can Duoc boats had a water depth of 2.5m.



Figure 219. Can Duoc boats and large Bau boats often transport "khap da bo" or large goods to provinces and cities.

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

The Ghe Chai: A large type of boat with a sharp, large bow, equivalent to the bow of a ship. This type of boat has eyes and a red painted anchor, It was built in Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City); in the West, it is less or has not been built yet. The Chai has a hefty load capacity, from 100 - 250 tons or more. During the time of Mrs. Ngo Dinh Nhu (Mrs. Tran Le Xuan - wife of Mr. Ngo Dinh Nhu, government advisor in the South of Vietnam before the liberation in 1975 - First Lady of the Republic of Vietnam - She was also the one who initiated the boat-neck, deep-cut ao dai (many people called she as "Tran Le Xuan ao dai," creating a new fashion movement of wearing open-neck ao dai at that time) to the West to transport rice, wood... This is a memorable anecdote that when mentioning the types of sampans - large Ghe Bau, we will mention the boats called "Ghe Madame Nhu."² The giant boat trips at that time to transport goods, rice, and wood on a large scale under the instructions of Madame Nhu created a spectacular historical flow with the participation of Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Ban of Madame Nhu) in both historical and cultural assimilation and outstanding vision for the residents of the Southwest region at that time.



² Mrs. Tran Le Xuan - wife of Mr. Ngo Dinh Nhu, government advisor in the South of Vietnam before the liberation in 1975 - First Lady of the Republic of Vietnam - She was also the one who initiated the boat-neck, deep-cut ao dai (many people called she as "Tran Le Xuan ao dai," creating a new fashion movement of wearing open-neck ao dai at that time)



Figure 220. Large Chai boat about 120 tons

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2024)

Ghe Long Xuyen – An Giang

Long Xuyen depends on An Giang is one of the two upstream provinces of the Mekong River (Vietnam part) following two parallel branches of the Tien and Hau rivers from north to south over 99km; the average annual flow of this river system is 13,500 m³/s, the flood season flow is 24,000 m³/s and the dry season flow is 5,020 m³. The extensive river system flows through many natural canals and canals, forming a dense network of traffic and irrigation with 280 routes with a total density of 1.72 km/km², the highest level compared to the provinces of the Mekong Delta.



Figure 221. Bau Can Tho boat (Tam Ban boat) and Ca Dom Long Xuyen boat

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

Main rivers in An Giang:

Tien River and Hau River are two major tributaries of the lower Mekong River before flowing into the East Sea.

- The Tien River flows northwest-southeast. The section flowing through An Giang is 82 km long, and the widest part of the riverbed is over 2000 m above the Vam Nao River.

- Hau River flows parallel to the Tien River. The section flowing through An Giang is 101 km long, and the widest part of the riverbed is from 800-2000 m. Hau

River is an important waterway, providing water and alluvium for the Long Xuyen Quadrangle.

The average annual flow of the two rivers is 14 thousand m³/s, of which the flood season is 24 thousand m³/s and the dry season is 5 thousand m³/s.

- Vam Nao River is located in An Giang province, flowing in the northeast-southwest direction, 7 km long, connecting with the Tien River and Hau River, with an average river width of 700 m

- Binh Di River, 10 km long, flows from Khanh Binh (An Phu) to Vinh Hoi Dong commune (An Phu) and then converges with Ta Keo River (Cambodia) and Chau Doc River.

These rivers all flow through areas with scenic spots, historical relics, and craft villages... creating conditions for the formation of river tourism.

The hydrological regime of An Giang depends closely on the water regime of the Mekong River. Every year, about 70% of the natural area is flooded with a standard water level of 1-2.5 m, flooding from 2.5 to 4 months. This affects socio-economic development.

Floods in the Mekong Delta, in general, and An Giang, in particular, follow the two main rivers, the Tien and the Hau Rivers. In the early months (June and July), water from the two main rivers flows into the fields through the canals and floods from low to high. When the water level exceeds +3 m, the amount of water overflowing across the Cambodian border into Dong Thap Muoi and Tu Giac Long Xuyen is the main factor causing flooding and forming the "flood season" in the Mekong Delta in general and in An Giang in particular. Every year, about 70% of the area is flooded. During the flood season, alluvium deposits yearly; the weather and climate are terrific and very suitable for developing agricultural production and tourism and river tourism.

Through the characteristics of the river, it can be seen that this area has a reasonably strong water flow basin. Besides, the river terrain is also more complicated, and there is also a flood season, so the Long Xuyen and Sa Dec boats are built with a slightly longer and slimmer shape than the Can Tho boats. The boat's shape has a pointed bow or "steering" part (the rear part), not as round as the Can Tho boats. The ratio of the Long Xuyen boat is 5.5m long and is about 1.1m wide; if the load is to carry 25-30 bushels of rice, the boat will be about 6m long. In Long Xuyen, the hull is not round; the top is slightly pointed. This shape helps the boat to surf the waves better and move flexibly in strong water flow conditions. Besides, the boats are also influenced by the cultural aspect, which is the area of the Khmer people and the custom of making dugout canoes. Dugout canoes were not joined in the past, so they wasted a lot of wood. From a large tree trunk to carve the boat's body, instead of splitting the wood into planks to make beams, it will waste wood, and the boat's hull is too tiny to glide on the water. The boat's shape and decoration also carry the Khmer people's color when creating the "Ghe Ca Dom shape." If the Ca Dom boat is used to transport fish, it will be called The Duc, and the boat's hold is made with holes and nets to transport live fish to the provinces for business and sale.



Figure 229. When Ca Dom boats want to transport fresh fish, they create a water vent under the boat's hold to become Duc boats. Otherwise, they still create the shape of Ca Dom boats to transport goods normally..

Source: <https://baosocstrang.org.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



Figure 230 When Ca Dom boats want to transport fresh fish, they create a water vent under the boat's hold to become Duc boats. Otherwise, they still create the shape of Ca Dom boats to transport goods normally..

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2022)

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Part 2: The Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Bang): An Important and typical role asocial with the lives of river residents

5.2. The Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Bang): An Important and typical role asocial with the lives of river residents

The Bau boat is present in most of the activities of daily life, living, and social culture of the river residents, whether it is trading activities or other activities, from participating in waterway traffic as a means of transporting goods to transporting products, agricultural products and even bringing the cultural specialties of each region to spread everywhere. The Bau is the primary means and condition for developing craft villages or boat-building workshops, creating job opportunities for boat builders. This also helps maintain the unique cultural elements of each region, especially the soft river water of the southwest of Vietnam.

5.2.1. Ghe Bau is a material resource for livelihood:

From the perspective of livelihood culture, Ghe Bau is the material resource of the riverine residents of the Mekong Delta. Previously, among the types of boats of the Western people, Ghe Bau was mainly a transport boat, a riverside trading boat with many large sizes.

River people used Ghe Bau to transport goods in large quantities for exchange and trade mainly on the river route, especially in the riverside areas where concentrated floating markets were formed. Since its appearance (around the middle of the 16th century), Ghe Bau has become one of the most important means of transporting goods in the southwestern region. "During the Nguyen Dynasty, trade between domestic and foreign regions was mainly by boat, and the trade route on the North-South sea route developed strongly, contributing to the formation of many market wharves, trading centers, and market streets along the river

A profession called boat trading and boat building was formed. It can be said that Ghe Bau brought convenience to trade, helping residents of the West and floating market traders to take advantage of the coastal terrain to trade, develop the maritime economy, and reach out from many angles, both serving life and serving tourism and creating a beautiful image in the hearts of people as well as international friends. Many people have become rich and famous thanks to doing business on this typical Ghe Bau. Commercial exchange activities on the river routes between localities also began to develop, marking a strong step forward for the maritime economy in our country. The business of the boatmen gradually expanded, they traded throughout the ports. Many large-sized boatmen appeared to meet the need for transportation in large quantities: in addition to the function of transporting goods, the boatmen were also used for fishing. Fishing boatmen were usually smaller boats, convenient for quick movement.

5.2.2. The merchants living on the boats also formed a community in which they always considered the Ghe Bau people as friends

In addition to considering the Ghe Bau as an essential material resource for their livelihood, the merchants in the Mekong Delta as well as in Cai Rang floating market - Can Tho also considered the boat as their home, the people traveling together

as friends - Ghe Bau friends. In the culture of behaving with fellow Ghe Bau friends traveling on a long voyage, those people must protect, love, unite, join forces, and help each other overcome all dangers. Some boats are only used to transport goods of immense factories that can hire workers to transport goods on their boats. Because they lived together on a Ghe Bau for a relatively long time, the people traveling on Ghe Bau cannot have an independent way of life for themselves but must integrate into the community. All must unite according to the assignment of the boat owner or co-pilot, captain, cannot act arbitrarily, cannot help but think of other brothers traveling on the same boat. "This solidarity is shown right in the way of calling: "gourd boat friends," "go to trade with friends, go to sell with partners," and gourd boats are the same, must be in the same group of friends, the same group. Thanks to this culture of behavior among gourd boat friends, they have overcome many waves, dangers, and storms. In general, gourd boats have become one of the important material resources, a physical heritage closely associated with the residents of the river area in their lives of making a living, developing the economy, and improving the material and spiritual life of local people. Therefore, it has a critical position for the Gourd boat traders. Besides, the number of Gourd boats with families living on gourd boats accounts for the majority, so it is obvious that they consider the boat as their home. They have been attached to their family's boat from birth until they grow up, drifting on the river and making a living by fishing, trading, and transporting. They attach great importance to building a boat, especially the boat owner. During the construction process, the boat owners carefully take care of and treat the boat builders generously. In addition to wages, they are given "betel and wine" by the boat owners daily to build the best boat possible for the owner and not use any professional spells that negatively affect the boat.

5.2.3. The social life of Ghe Bau is also expressed in the cultural aspect through livelihood activities related to Ghe Bau:

The Bau building profession: along with the development of floating markets and the life of making a living in harmony with the nature of rivers, the boat building profession also develops in places with dense populations. In the West, most provinces and cities have places with concentrated boat camps. Large, long-standing boat farms include places like Can Duoc - Long An³, this is the origin of the first unique Ghe Bau boats to the South of Vietnam to the scale of large-scale cargo boat trips, bringing new life and new breath to the South of Vietnam and bringing trade connections for typical goods to all regions. Besides, provinces such as Dong Thap, Vinh Long, Can Tho, and Hau Giang ... almost all provinces have boat-building workshops. These workshops have often existed for a very long time, nearly 100 years, passed down from father to son. The profession of building and repairing wooden boats is very elaborate. It requires a lot of experience, not just regular trading like daily essential goods, but requires the craftsman to have the skills, knowledge, carefulness, and ingenuity of the artisan, an understanding of technical standards to ensure the safety of wooden boats, a sense of wood, river characteristics, water power flow and even have professional ethics to not "hide the spell" but wish the boat owner

³ Boats in Can Duoc are famous for their curved bows, which can withstand strong winds and waves, and their large, round, lively eyes (also known as "cat island eyes") to distinguish them from the pointed-tailed eyes of boats from other regions.

a smooth and prosperous business. However, most of the repairs have recently been done to wooden boats because of the competition with composite boats and iron boats and the increasingly scarce source of specialized wood suitable for boat building.



Figure 231. The big boat on the viewer's left is Ghe Bau - Ghe Tam Ban Can Tho. Can Tho boats have a large body, the belly of the ship is big, but the boat's bow is slim, and the body behind the rudder is also relatively slim, mainly moving on calm water, the current is not too strong.

Source: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tuyen (Aug 10, 2022)



Figure 232 Boat repair workers at Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong's workshop - boat building workshop on the Vam Co Dong River - Tan Chanh (Can Duoc)

Source: <https://baolongan.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

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Figure 233 Boats of various sizes are being built at the boatyar
 Source: <https://baolongan.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)

5.2.4. Experience of making a living with Ghe Bau

The Bau people have their lives tied to rivers, the sea, and the boats loaded with goods; every day and every hour, they have to face many dangers such as storms, landslides, floods, etc., so they have to accumulate experience, learn from previous generations to have "smooth sailing" journeys. That is also the livelihood experience of the Ghe Bau people. The livelihood experiences of the co-drivers are beneficial at the time to help the Ghe Bau avoid danger on long journeys that can sometimes last for several months. The Bau for trading are large boats carrying many local products and goods and high economic value, so the boat owners need the valuable experiences of the co-drivers without modern means of support. In addition to the folk songs that pass on the trading experiences of the Ghe Bau people, the folk knowledge related to Ghe Bau and the Ghe Bau trade is also noted. These are "experiences in building boats, weather, waterways, boat control techniques... Thanks to these experiences, in the past, there were very few cases of storms and accidents that caused boats to sink and people to die. This is truly valuable indigenous knowledge that still promotes its inherent value today.

5.2.5. The social life of Ghe Bau is also expressed in the livelihood rituals related to Ghe Bau.

For people whose lives are related to rivers, especially those who make boats in the river area, a boat is a means of transportation and practice and has special religious meanings. They believe that the boat is closely linked to the life of the boat owner, affecting the luck, success, or failure of the trading trip, significantly affecting the livelihood and even the health and life of the boat owner. Therefore, building a boat is as important as building a house, a significant event in a person's life, so the boat owner must be meticulous, strictly following the related rituals and customs: "The time of building must be compatible with the boat owner's age. If that year is incompatible, you must wait for the following years. If you cannot delay because you urgently need a boat for trading but your age is conflicting, you must ask your father, brother, or a relative with a suitable age to build it instead. After the year is good, you must choose a good day to start construction. The day to start building a boat must avoid unlucky days, days of killing the owner, three days of mother, water, etc. From the time of choosing a good day to start construction until selecting a good day to set sail, the sampan of the Quang people, in particular, must have six main ceremonies:

the wood punishment ceremony, the armor pin ceremony, the opening ceremony, the launching ceremony, the boat-warming ceremony and the ceremony of sending wood chips.

The wood punishment ceremony is the opening ceremony for the boat-building process. Offerings are displayed on the altar table, where the boat is prepared to be built, including boiled rooster, sticky rice, sweet soup, bananas, incense, flowers, votive paper money, wine, tea, rice, salt, agarwood, etc. In addition, the wood used to build the boat and ensure quality must also meet the requirements of beliefs and spirituality. The wood must be free of blemishes, such as forest vines that leave marks, clean, not contaminated, etc., especially the logs are chosen to make the dragon bone and two lo.

Giap pin ceremony: the offerings are the same as the wood punishment ceremony (or with some adjustments depending on the boat owner). After the offering, the master craftsman begins the Giap pin ceremony by taking the pegs on the altar and hammering them into the pre-drilled holes, connecting the hook with the dragon bone and the lo. After building, the master craftsman takes the wine offered on the altar and pours it into the place where the pegs are attached to bless them. Then, together with the boat owner, the final ceremony is performed.

The ceremony of opening the eyes: after the boat is completed, the rudder is prepared, the canopy is assembled, and before the launching ceremony, people perform the ceremony of opening the eyes. This is a short ritual associated with the custom of drawing eyes on the boat's bow to sanctify the boat, meaning making the boat a living creature, communicating with people in moving towards the sound, smooth, and avoiding the bad.

The launching ceremony: after the opening of the eyes ceremony is the launching ceremony for the boat. When worshiping, the boat owner sees a shaman choose a good day and a time when the water is high. The boat owner prays to the river gods, the underlings, and the spirits (ghosts) to help the boat be safe and travel smoothly. After the boat is in the water, the long mast is erected, the rudder is installed, and the sails are made of cushions. The launching is a crucial stage, marking the moment the boat is immersed in the river environment.

Boat launching ceremony: the final ceremony in the boat-building process, after which the boat will be put into operation. People arrange the altars on the boat's bow, including three high-to-low levels. The highest altar is placed in front of the boat to worship the water gods, the guardian gods such as Mrs. Dai Can, and Mrs. Thuy Long; on the left and right sides are arranged two altars to worship the river gods, the waterways. The middle level is the altar to worship the lower water gods such as Nam Hai Ngoc Lan ton than (whale god), Dong Nam sat hai Lang Lai nhi dai tuong quan (otter), ... with the meaning of suppressing and removing harmful objects from the boat. The ceremony of sending wood chips is an essential and mandatory ritual before putting the boat into operation. It is also performed during the boat launching ceremony. People believe that the types of wood used to build boats all have spirituality and souls. When they are still in the forest, on the mountain, trees have many supernatural forces relying on them. To prevent these forces from disturbing the boat during its operation, people must perform a ritual to drive them away. "The ritual is associated with the desire to remove harmful forces from the boat, to remove its

inherent passivity and materiality to turn it into a spiritual, living, and useful object for people."

In addition, after sending the wood chips, the shaman also performs a salary distribution ceremony, with the ritual of distributing rice and salt to the wandering souls to provide food for them so that they do not disturb the boat owner and the living. After distributing the salary, the ceremony ends, and the worship ends. After that, the boat owner can choose a good day to set sail to start trading; the first trading trip is called the "cutting the thread" trip.

While living with Ghe Bau, there are still many accompanying rituals to pray for luck, peace, favorable business, and good buying and selling. Vietnamese boat owners also have great faith in Bodhisattva Quan The Am (although not worshiped in the mausoleum) because this Bodhisattva saves the suffering and the victims on rivers and seas. Any profession has its taboos. Not only boat owners but also boatmen must follow some taboos related to the process of practicing the profession, such as avoiding unusual phenomena, not scolding strange phenomena when traveling on the river, and even: "The eyes of the boat must be kept clean, not allowing dirty things to stick to it. When eating fish, do not turn the fish over when eating one side. When cooking burnt rice, throw it away and not eat it to avoid bad luck. Also, abstain from eating dogs, ducks, buffalo, and silver carp.

5.2.6. The marketplace is formed according to the rhythm of boat movement, following the water cycle:

Wherever the boats go, they bring growth and development, creating places where people gather and revitalizing the surrounding and neighboring areas. Cities in the west are usually 60 km distance from each other. Chau Doc is 60km from Long Xuyen, Can Tho is 60km from Long Xuyen, Can Tho is 60km from Soc Trang, Soc Trang is nearly 60km from Bac Lieu, and Bac Lieu is also about 60km from Ca Mau.

The cities in the Mekong Delta mostly have one thing in common: they are usually 60km apart. According to research, in the past, Vietnamese people from all over the place went to the Mekong Delta by boat. They followed the tide. The tide changes its flow four times a day, each time for six hours, in which the water rises for six hours and falls for six hours. The average speed of the Mekong River is about 10km/h; multiplied by six hours, it is about 60km.

The boat and boat can travel 60km; the water changes its flow, people stop and form floating markets, and they wait for the tide to continue. The remaining traces today are floating markets, where goods were exchanged, and then they settled on land, forming administrative units later.

Almost no delta in the world forms administrative boundaries according to the tides like the Mekong Delta. That is a very special feature

Ghe Bau in the South in general and Ghe Bau in Cai Rang Floating Market in particular are not only a means of transporting goods by water but also a material resource, a tangible heritage serving the livelihood of merchants in the floating market, greatly influencing the livelihood culture of residents of this cultural area for more than 100 years. In addition, the culture expressed through livelihood activities and livelihood rituals related to Ghe Bau of river residents in Cai Rang Floating Market contributes to demonstrating the importance of Ghe Bau to the livelihood of people here for many centuries. Although Ghe Bau is not too numerous now, appearing sporadically with the role of trading as before, Ghe Bau is still resolutely

rising with many new improved forms to serve the life of people in the river area in each period, still used for fishing or transporting goods for trade between regions, but also changing with new interfaces or forms to serve tourists. This shows that the gourd boat has been, is and will be associated with the cultural characteristics of the sub-region and the livelihood culture of the people of Can Tho in particular and the Mekong Delta - Vietnam in general.

5.2.7. When Ghe Bau participates in tourism:

The most attractive forms of tourism in the Mekong Delta are always associated with rivers and boats as a means of transportation. These include floating market tourism, river tourism, wetlands, mangrove forests, riverbanks, exploring islands, sandbars, river mouths, Can Tho and My Thuan bridges, and rice fields with storks flying straight. Boats and sampans serving the floating market are very diverse: tourist boats can carry up to 100 people for daytime tours, yachts can carry 200 people for nighttime tours, small boats with shrimp tail engines, or rowing boats and sampans and shells (fried clams) often serve individual groups of less than 10 people. The second type is floating season tourism, from the 7th to the 8th lunar month. The floating season in the Mekong Delta has become a unique cultural feature not every place has. During this season, boats and sampans become their homes, living adrift on the river; wherever the water rises, they rise. Because of these characteristics, the floating season in the Mekong Delta is attractive for tourists, and boats and sampans are the primary means of tourism. Exploring the flood season, tourists enjoy living adrift in the vast flooded area, with nowhere to see the shore, sitting on boats, and enjoying rustic dishes, specialties of the flood season. The third type is exploring the Mekong Delta. Tourists sit on Bau boats, three-leaf boats, or fried tac to get into the orchards; the fruit trees are heavy with drooping branches; you can reach out and pick the fruit,... During the harvest season, many boats and canoes from all over the place come to buy all kinds of fruits; all boats are full and look very attractive. Combined with experiential tours and homestay tourism, tourists will live with local people, participate in the daily activities of gardeners, row boats, fried tac to harvest fruit, go gardening, go fishing,... to understand the life of the garden, a life in harmony with nature, entire of affection.

The Ghe Bau comes in many sizes, shapes, and colors to serve tourism, from picking up and dropping off passengers at short to long distances, plus resort "yachts" of all sizes, small and large, or yachts serving floating restaurant services at night or during Can Tho's lantern festival.

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Figure 234 The Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Bang): An Important and typical role asocial with the lives of river residents

Source: <https://www.cantho.gov.vn/> (Accessed on May 10, 2024)



CHAPTER VI

Summary, Discussion, and Suggestions

This study is basic research utilizing qualitative methods. It aims to achieve four main objectives: (1) To study physical space and cultural riverscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. (2) To study the boats in dimensions of the socio-cultural identity of the Mekong Delta people. (3) To study the Social Life of Boats and the Special Cultural Riverscape in 'Cai Rang Floating Market' at Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. (4) To study "Ghe Bau": analysis of research units. They were selected using the purposive sampling method. The instruments used were basic surveys, observations, interviews, focus-group discussions, and documentary searches. Research Summary, Discussion, and Suggestion as follows:

Research Summary

1. Vietnam's history and natural conditions, in general, and the Mekong Delta in particular, have created a long-standing and unique river culture. This culture is a prerequisite for boats to be used as a necessity in social life.

(1) Historical conditions:

In general, boats have been used in Vietnam since very early times. The history of manufacturing and using boats in Vietnam appeared very early. Waterway vehicle patterns appeared on Dong Son bronze drums from the 7th century BC. In the history of the most resounding victories in Vietnam, the battle of Ngo Quyen against the Southern Han army on the Bach Dang River is the most prominent in terms of the Vietnamese people's understanding of rivers and the use of boats. From 1545 to 1787, many documents were written about the improved shape of ships. Boats appeared in all aspects of social and military life, serving the Vietnamese people's lives and means of fighting. During the periods of resistance against invaders, such as the Bach Dang battle and Ngo Quyen against the Southern Han army in 938 BC

The history of the Yuan Dynasty's reclamation of the South for more than 300 years (1802) with the use of ships in the army and daily life has developed brilliantly. Many ships have been exported to neighboring countries, demonstrating the quality and position of Vietnamese ships worldwide. During the French colonial period (1858-1945), the Japanese colonial period (1940-1945), and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam period (1945-1976)..., the navy and ships were indispensable convenient means in a series of Vietnamese tactics, including guerrilla warfare or the method of taking advantage of flooded forest terrain and rivers. With these tactics, ships were fully utilized in migration, movement, communication, hiding, and even meetings.

Geographical conditions - natural conditions:

(2) Vietnam is located in the Southeast Asia region:

Coasts and rivers facilitate economic, cultural, and social trade between countries. Vietnam is located on the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia. The area has a terrain with many coastlines. It is connected to large river systems such as many coastlines, including the Mekong River system that flows from the high Himalayas in China and helps form the political border of Laos and Thailand through Cambodia to Vietnam, which creates a giant delta near Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). The Red River flows from China through Hanoi to the Red River Delta on the Gulf of Tonkin. It has

a land border of 4,550 km, bordering China in the North, Laos and Cambodia in the West, and the East Sea (East Sea) of the Pacific Ocean in the East. This is a condition for developing a network of waterways and boats very early. The geographical location has a rich system of coastlines and rivers, creating favorable conditions for trade with countries in the Southeast Asian region and the world through waterways. Waterway trade is essential and practical for boats to develop in diverse forms, rich in types, and flexible usage..

(3) Long coastline: favorable conditions for trade and daily life by waterway, favorable conditions for developing boats of various shapes and sizes, suitable for fishing conditions.

(4) River and canal network

The 230-km-long Mekong River system covers the whole Mekong Delta, especially the surrounding area. The Mekong River flows into Vietnam and is divided into two main rivers: the Tien River (Mekong) and the Hau River (Bassac). The Mekong River system has many branches, with 286 branches in Vietnam alone, from level 1 to level 6.

The central river system in the Mekong Delta includes:

Vam Co River

Cai Lon - Cai Be River System (Cai Lon - Cai Be)

Giang Thanh River

In addition, there are many other rivers and canals, such as Hong Ngu Canal, Can Lo Canal, Ruong Canal..., Ca Nai Canal, Mang Thit River, Can Chong Canal, O Mon River, Can Tho River

The dense canal system is also a condition for boats to develop on the waterway transport network.

From the beginning of the 17th century, the Vietnamese began digging canals under the Nguyen Lords. After its establishment (1802), the Nguyen Dynasty made great efforts and devoted many resources to forming an extensive canal system.

In addition, in the Gia Dinh/Saigon area, the Nguyen Dynasty also dug many canals to facilitate the circulation of rice and products from the West to Gia Dinh. The largest is the Ruot Ngu Canal, connecting the Tau Hu Canal with the Rach Cat River; you can turn left to Can Duoc, Can Giuoc. In the South, there are three most extensive canals with the most extended history from the Nguyen Dynasty: Vinh Te Canal, Thoai Ha Canal, also known as the Rach Gia-Long Xuyen Canal, Bao Dinh Canal connecting the Vung Gu Canal and My Tho River.

Since the French period, the development of the Mekong Delta region has been based on the strength of the waterway trade and the use of boats. The Xang Xa No canal is a typical system with 14 small canals attached. Through boat transportation, the Xa No Canal has become a bustling "rice road" in the southwestern region of Vietnam.

Ivers promote waterborne trade, using boats in many activities of life, economy, and social culture. Dense rivers and alluvial deposits also create conditions for agriculture, with many crops suitable for the conditions in the cultivation process, requiring waterways such as boats to serve irrigation care. Boats participate in the cultivation and development of the region's specific economy. The Mekong Delta is one of the seven key economic regions of the country, contributing over 50% of rice output, 65% of aquaculture output, and 70% of fruit output of the whole country. The

Tien River is also a condition for developing agriculture and agricultural products with typical characteristics of rivers and irrigation. The Mekong Delta is considered the largest rice granary in Vietnam as well as having a lot of alluvial soil, cultivating agricultural products is lush; this natural condition not only completes the work of using boats to participate in the game of transporting agrarian products everywhere but also participates in the process of caring for and irrigating fruit gardens and immense rice fields.

It can be seen that the natural conditions and the long history of using boats have created a river culture, specifically a floating market culture with the inevitable presence of boats. Boats participate in this process with many roles, such as water transport and transporting people and goods; boats are also a means of fishing, aquaculture, and especially human housing, which people respect and are always present in festival activities or extraordinary beliefs. With diverse functions from life and society to spirituality, boats in the Mekong Delta have become typical cultural symbols of river residents with many unique and varied forms, sizes, and types (Vo Van Son, 2016). The dense concentration and diversity of boats have formed many bustling floating markets along the Mekong River. All these factors have created a closely linked system of river culture, floating markets, and boats, promoting the strong development in all aspects of the Southern region of Vietnam.

In rivers and large water surface areas, moderate flow conditions are also for developing fishing and aquaculture. Forms of aquaculture on waterways include fish cages, vegetables, and plants that need a lot of water. Transporting fresh fish requires boats from the stage of care to transporting fresh fish everywhere by water. Most notably, Bau boats, Tam Bang boats, and Duc boats specialize in fresh seafood from large fish farms or large-scale fish cages to all provinces and cities, serving as the source of fresh raw materials for export with very high economic value.

With a relatively stable river network and flow characteristics, along with the need for daily life, the Floating Market's emergence is a typical cultural feature of the river. Floating markets on the river surface, so using boats is inevitable. In addition, to adapt flexibly to the floating market, the form of ships is more abundant and diverse when taking on many functions as a means of transportation and water traffic, both as a house and a tool to support the care of livestock and aquaculture. Boats become members of merchant families and are homes, a prerequisite to protect, care for, or bring finances to each merchant family. Floating markets and floating market culture have also brought characteristics to develop tourism services with boats on the river, such as boats for river experience, boats serving cuisine, floating restaurants, or floating hotels on the river; high-class resorts also have their innovations for traditional boat models to become more luxurious and convenient.

2. Floating markets with diverse forms and functions of boats have formed a river culture called "Cai Rang Floating Market Culture" - recognized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam as a tangible cultural heritage in 2016.

(1) Floating market: a floating market is where many boats and ships gather; the market can be held according to the tide or fixed. Floating markets are often concentrated at the intersection of river branches and according to the water flow cycle. Therefore, in the southern region of Vietnam, floating markets appear often and are usually about 60km apart. Regarding waterways, rivers in the south region are

frequently calm, not flowing too strongly like the sea, so the intersections of river branches are also considered similar to main roads on land. This is where boats and ships from all directions gather, and markets are held for trade because of the convenience of goods and products being transported and exchanged by boat.

(2) Due to their diverse functions and forms and their necessity in the social life of the residents, boats not only transport water but also products, from typical agricultural products of each region to fresh seafood..

3. The long-standing appearance and tradition of living on the river merchants has created the habit of living on boats, which is closely associated with river culture. This has created a rich social life of boats. Boats are also used as floating houses on the river..

(1) Boats in social life have many roles: they are both a means of transport and a home, a homeland.

Boats are the main means of transportation for merchants and always appear in households living here. They are both a means of transportation used to care for and irrigate fruit orchards. Some typical boats specialize in transporting aquatic products and fresh fish by river everywhere, such as Ghe Bau, built in the style of Ghe Duc, with a net perforated under the hull to lead river water directly into the boat's hold and transport live fish to all areas. Small boats are used as houses on the river for merchants as the primary means of living and a place to shelter merchants from the sun and rain. Not only does it mean a house in the usual material sense, but it is also a meaningful place to live like a hometown, a means of transporting the cultural and spiritual life of the residents of the river area. Boats go back and forth throughout the southern region.

(2) The long-standing presence of boats has created extremely rich customs associated with river culture..

In social life: for residents of the river area, many festivals use boats as the main factor. The "Tong Ong Tong Gio" festival prays for favorable weather; the "Tam Con" festival prays for peace. The "Dua the ngo" festival is typical of the Soc Trang people. In addition, people also use boats to organize wedding ceremonies and pick up and drop off brides. In some periods, boats were also used as a stage for performing "Don ca tai tu" and "cai luong," which was like a cultural information house traveling everywhere.

In spiritual life, Traditional worship ceremonies are always followed for those who make or directly use boats. The custom of worshiping "Ba Cau" and Buddha Quan The Am Bo Tat is that the gods are always believed to support, help, and bring peace to people traveling by boat. The rituals on the first day of the month include worshiping "Ghim lo," worshiping ducks or worshiping for the groundbreaking ceremony of building a new "len da," the launching ceremony, the eye-dotting ceremony for painting the eyes of the boat... Boat owners also do not set sail or launch at the hour of Mao, from 5 am to 7 am, because that is considered the birth time of "Ba Cau." When sailing, do not say bad omens or say the words "capsize," "fall," "fall," "fall," etc

In the culture of the behavior of boat owners, boat owners, and captains with each other, the owners, as well as the captain, also have principles of behavior as well as mutual assistance in the community participating in waterway traffic, the culture of giving in and helping each other during the movement. Boats go regardless of

favorable or unfavorable wind and water when approaching each other; they must shout "bat" (traditionally, boats going to the left are called "cay," boats going to the right are called "bat"). The boats will harmonize with each other so that the steering and the pole are favorable to avoid each other. If situations arise, they must consider which boat is lighter and which goes with the current. Nowadays, when boaters want to tell each other to avoid, they shout "bat" as a custom. Accordingly, people who trade on the river, "merchants," are a form of community. Because the foundation of this community is "determined by the common interests of its members" and "there is a similarity in the conditions of existence and activities of the people who make up that community, including their material production activities and other activities, their closeness in ideology, beliefs, value systems and norms, production, similarity in living conditions as well as their subjective conceptions of goals and means of activities" (Institute of Social Science Information, 1990).

(3) The characteristics of the long-standing river culture have created a creative and unique floating market culture.

For floating markets, the use of boats is inevitable. There are many boats in the floating market. Old merchants previously described the Cai Rang floating market as: "stretching over 10km and bustling from 3-4 am". The floating market is crowded with many boats, diverse shapes, sizes, designs, and bustling activities. Large boats from regions carrying rice, specialty fruits... from all over gather, buying and selling takes place quickly when large boats can buy from many small boats or large boats in regions such as Long An, Gia Dinh, Bien Hoa carrying large ceramic items join in buying and selling. Small boats selling shrimp, fish, and vegetables, large boats carrying fresh fish, and boats selling food and drinks are bustling with buying and selling, creating a vivacious atmosphere full of life colors. Nowadays, because the primary function of floating markets is to trade, the types of boats are also very diverse, mainly merchant boats transporting agricultural products. Now, floating markets are also places to serve cultural tourism services, so boats have also changed a lot, especially in form, aiming to transport customers better and attract more attention.

Beo Tree: Because all boats are on the river, other ships can easily see the items they are selling; the people here are very flexible in hanging the items they are selling on bamboo trees and placing the pole on the boat to be most visible. Boats selling vegetables and fruits hang whatever they sell, hang pumpkins, hang melons to sell melons, or hang many agricultural products simultaneously. This pole used to hang agricultural products for advertising is called "Beo Tree." However, there are also unique things surrounding hanging goods in the sense of hanging whatever you sell. Here, there are four distinctive types of hanging that everyone knows: Hang whatever you sell, hang this but sell something else (if the boat owner wants to sell the boat, he will hang a roofing board, that is a signal to notify that the ship is for sale), in addition to "hanging but not selling," there are the boat owner's clothes hanging to dry, due to the nature of living on the boat, it is normal for them to hang things to dry. There are also "sold without hanging" foods and drinks like noodles, porridge, and soup. These items cannot be hung on trees.

Each boat has its characteristics of function, shape, or decoration. Boats from areas with strong currents are often longer than those of temperate regions, which are often rounder and have larger bows. Boats from places with developed economies or

long-standing boat buildings such as Tam Bang the Bau Can Duoc have "red bows and green hulls," or Soc Trang are also shaped by Ca Dom and Duc boats. Boats carry products, carry the best features of regions to places where cultures converge for exchange and trade, and bring each province's good things together. Each area has different types of boats, creating diversity in form and showing cultural diversity. The ship carries agricultural products and cultural exchange and integration, carrying people's lives when traveling together and witnessing the ups and downs of merchants living on the boat.

With the above factors, it can be seen that boats participate in all social activities of the people. The life of merchants is closely linked to the boat, so based on the concept of "the social life of things," boats have a vibrant social life, integrating into the merchant community as a symbol with a soul. Each boat owner's boat can be passed from generation to generation; people are born and grow up on the boat, and all activities, maturity, or emotions take place on the boat; they adapt to life and create a merchant community with its own open and generous culture of behavior, always respecting the boat as both a home and a shelter containing the best feelings. Boats witness and participate in all aspects of the people's social life, thereby creating the social life of each boat, containing rich material, mental, and spiritual culture.

4. Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Ban) The Bau boat (Tam Ban boat) is one of the most typical boats of the Mekong Delta in terms of design, function, meaning and cultural value.

Bau boats (Tam Ban boats) are numerous in the Mekong Delta. Observing the naked eye of the Cai Rang floating market, it can be seen that the proportion of Bau boats (Tam Ban boats) accounts for more than 50% of the water vehicles here. Bau boats (Tam Ban boats) are flexible in load size and can be used in many cases. Regular boats have a load capacity from less than 1 ton to more than 70 tons. Small boats trade in small items such as food or drinks and small quantities of agricultural products, and large ships transport large amounts of farm products.

The decoration on the boat's bow can also show the boat's origin from which province or city, even whether the boat is old or not, and what goods or specialties the ship may carry. The bows of boats painted red or other colors are always painted with eyes as an object with a soul, showing that the spiritual life of the ship is respected and highly valued, related to the traditions and views of the boat owner in particular, as well as the community of boat users in general.

The Bau (Ghe Tam Ban) further demonstrates its overall value, especially regarding cultural significance. With its many roles in society, Ghe Bau has accompanied and contributed significantly to all activities of residents in the river area. From being a means of transportation to transportation for individuals, for the community, for business, to becoming a seemingly fixed place as a home, a place to live, a place to grow up, a place to shelter each member, whether human or animal, ornamental plant... The boats move to different places, arriving at the same place to anchor together to transport goods; the exchange, acquaintance, and possible marriage between people on the ship is also a stunning result of cultural exchange. The cargo transported on Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Ban) is not only a typical type of local boat but also a regional culture, a characteristic of the area, and the life and ups and downs of the people on that boat. Boats also participate in wedding ceremonies, take on the role of picking up and transporting people, participate in creating stages for performing

arts, and transport cultural information everywhere; boats also act as supermarkets or mobile small markets, following rivers and canals with many goods to reach people in the most remote areas.

Discussion

Boats are the decisive factor in creating the cultural characteristics of countries or regions where river culture appears. In Vietnam in general and the Mekong Delta region in particular, Bau Boats (Tam Ban Boats) are the typical elements of river culture, playing a key role in the formation, identification, and development of this unique culture when they are present in most of the elements that make up the floating market culture recognized as an intangible cultural heritage of Vietnam. Therefore, the social life of boats, especially Bau Boats (Tam Ban Boats), is vibrant, leaving many good values that need to be preserved and promoted. This is the main topic of this thesis. In previous studies, Bau Boats (Tam Ban Boats) are often mentioned as a secondary element in the Mekong Delta region's history, economy, and culture as a means of water transport. However, few studies have considered Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Ban) as an independent research object. Moreover, there has been no study that approaches Ghe Bau (Ghe Tam Ban) from the perspective of "the social life of things" and "Cultural Riverscape."

In the research paper "An article on traditional boats in Vietnam" by author Thieu Thi Thanh Hai, Faculty of History, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, it is stated that boats are the only means of transportation. The river's history is considered a mirror reflecting cultural exchange and cultural diversity through its shape, structure, and usage. Boats are products of a culture, and many factors affect its structure and function: technology, raw materials, environment, economy, context, religion, society, ideology, and Ideology. Boats in history are an indispensable part of maritime history. This study shows the important historical significance of boats to Vietnam. Approached from the perspective of boats as a means and mentioned the cultural reflection of the region through boats. This shows the importance of studying boats and the cultural issues surrounding them.

The Southwest is considered a land of rivers. Many large and small rivers and canals are intertwined like a spider web. This river element has affected the people's lives here and created a "river civilization" (Son Nam, 2017) "River civilization is the result of residents adapting to the natural environment of the Southwest. This is clearly shown through the lifestyle, housing, tourism, and cuisine. The most obvious manifestation is the trading method of the people". community, typically the floating market" (Huynh Ngoc Thu, 2015, p.65). Suggesting that the river culture in the southern region leads to lavish lifestyles, especially the community trading method through floating markets; boats are mentioned from the perspective of creating sudden raids on floating markets. This study has not yet gone into detailed research on the diverse types of ships in the Mekong Delta. The diversity of boats is also a valuable asset that deserves to be clarified to highlight the critical role of vessels in the region's social life.

The authors Ngo Duc Thinh and Nguyen Viet (1984) with the study of "Traditional Vietnamese boats - raising some issues from the ethnographic perspective," Journal of Historical Research, No. 219 (June 1984), 48-55. The Internal Data Library, Hanoi National University, clearly stated that water transport and

transportation play an essential role in the environment or geographical conditions related to waterway traffic, from which boats participate in the material and spiritual life of people and leave strong marks in the cultures of ethnic groups. Of ethnic groups, boats are an essential and attractive field of study. The southern delta region creates favorable conditions for developing river culture and boat travel. In addition, Vietnam has had strong cultural ties with neighboring countries and territories, creating favorable conditions for the absorption of cultural influences in general, including boat-building techniques with different characteristics. The quality of boats built by Vietnam has high-level boat-building techniques when ordered by other countries, especially during the Nguyen Dynasty. Boats are a means of transportation and a cultural product with customs, practices, and rituals. Thus, through this study, it can be seen that boats are affirmed to be important to the socio-cultural economy of Vietnam, especially in the Mekong Delta.

Bau boats in the south-central region of Vietnam and boats in the South of Vietnam "by author Nguyen Thanh Loi, a cultural and information publisher, 2014 mentioned the types of boats in the southern and central regions of Vietnam. With the unit mentioned as Ghe Bau, the focus is on the type of Ghe Bau in the central area of Vietnam. Not to mention Ghe Bau in the south of Vietnam, also known as Ghe Tam Ban.

In addition, in this document, the author has researched and listed the factors related to boats, including types of boats. In addition, the author also mentioned the social and cultural activities related to river culture as a vivid reflection of boats in Vietnam. All these factors reflect the deep connection of boats with the life of life. With the content of this study, it can be seen that boats have been interested in exploiting more aspects of diversity, contributing to the development of Vietnam's river culture. However, The detailed perspective on the social life of boats in southern Vietnam or the Ghe Bau (three-wheeled boat) of south Vietnam has not been clearly shown. The Ghe Bau of central Vietnam is mentioned in more detail.

In an article published in the scientific journal Yersin, author Vo Van Son (2016), with the topic "Floating markets in the Southwest - A cultural perspective," analyzed floating markets and floating market culture in the Southwest since ancient times. Since ancient times, floating markets have been a unique cultural feature of the Southwest region (Mekong Delta). The article introduces some main features of the history of the formation and development of floating markets, the location of markets, means of transporting goods, methods of marketing products, trading rules, religious beliefs, and images of floating markets in the literature and art of the Southwest. Mentioning boats and gourd boats - tam bang boats is a statistically significant factor; to exploit the "social life of boats" with a "civilized river landscape" has not been mentioned in depth.

The Social Life of Things: "The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective" is a book by Arjun Appadurai that explores the cultural, social, and economic dimensions of commodities. Appadurai argues that commodities are not only objects of economic exchange but are also deeply embedded in cultural and social systems (Arjun Appadurai, 1986). This is an important contribution to the field of anthropology, providing a new framework for understanding culture and society. Following this book, the concept of "commodities as social relations" is introduced to describe how commodities acquire meaning through their social and cultural contexts,

how commodities are transformed as they move across cultural and geographical boundaries, and how they are used to construct identities and social relationships.

The study by author Huynh Van Sinh (2006) on "Vietnamese Character in the Mekong Delta", Ho Chi Minh City Open University Science Journal, 2006, stated that this place has a flow of culture and art. Rich in river landscapes. Boats move back and forth on the water on the intricate canal system. The natural environment and social conditions play an important role in forming the aesthetic views, thoughts, psychology, philosophy of life, and spiritual life of the community. They came here not with "swords and spears to open the world" but with intelligence and courage... That was also the initial integration and development process of some Vietnamese migrants on their way to the South. They have made many positive contributions to the exploration and enrichment of the common culture of Vietnam. This study also shows the role of boats in forming the culture and character of Vietnamese people in social life in the South of Vietnam. These are closely related to each other similar to the theory of social life of an object, which includes many factors that create the value of an object. This is related to the local dialect habits, some places have called the Study of residents as a factor that both transports and protects river residents, and contributes to the rich life of merchants. It also carries the soul or becomes the soul and symbol of the social life of river residents. Moreover, boats have contributed to the great cultural flow of Vietnam through its own journey. Boats have a long life span, so they have created a close connection between generations. These studies show that boats, especially sampans in river culture and economic development for the region, hold an essential position in the socio-cultural development of the Mekong Delta province. However, there has been no research that has fully and directly explored this topic through each stage of development, from formation to development, crisis and revival. By studying Quang Nam Silk from two perspectives: "Material Culture" and "Storytelling", this thesis presents new knowledge as follows:

1. The new knowledge of Research Text

1.1. The Mekong delta Boats in Various Social Contexts

River culture and boats are typical characteristics of the rich culture of Vietnam, especially in the Mekong Delta, where there is a terrain of many rivers and a history of using and building new boats of international quality. Boats in the river culture are recognized as an intangible cultural heritage; this is an element of essential material and spiritual value to the Vietnamese people, especially the people of the Mekong Delta, through different periods. From the perspective of intangible culture, the social life of boats, Bau boats - Tam Bang boats play a role in culture. Boats are a prerequisite in the region's economic, cultural, and social development in Vietnam. Boats were used very early in Vietnam, from traditional to modern; throughout the period, boats still played an essential role when they were present in all social lives of Vietnamese people, in general, and residents of the Mekong Delta, in particular. Boats and boat-building techniques in Vietnam have also affirmed their position internationally by constructing new boats during the Nguyen Dynasty, which were exported to several other countries. Boats serving the army were often increased in number and built skillfully, ensuring high technology and creating substantial contributions of boats in the transformation of Vietnam in historical periods. The great understanding of boats and rivers also demonstrates the spirit and intelligence of the Vietnamese people through the historic victory of General Ngo Quyen, defeating

the Southern Han army on the Bach Dang River in 938 BC. Kings used boats in the military, in daily life, and the people's daily lives, becoming more closely linked. Boats are also diverse in form and flexible in use or decoration. From the past to the present, boats have always played a unique role in the typical river culture of Vietnam.

In the Nguyen Dynasty, boats were invested in by kings and lords to learn from Western countries, thus affirming Vietnam's position by exporting boats to other countries. The navy was also a force that received substantial investment from kings and lords, and the construction of new boats was always focused on development with many workshops. With the Nguyen Dynasty's migration to the south, boats were the decisive factor directly participating in this process. The lives of Vietnamese people in the southern region were primarily linked to boats when all activities such as fishing, trading, transporting, and living were based mainly on rivers and aquatic products, agriculture, and livestock. Boat-building camps also developed enormously in the south along the main river flow. Boats are one of the essential items that are favored and respected by river residents. The richness and diversity of boats in the South are recorded in many contemporary works in literature and art, from research books and poetry to films and paintings.

The development of boats also created boat-building workshops along the main river flow, which created jobs for river residents. The profession is passed down from father to son, creating unique cultural values with the power of time and experience, bringing valuable social and cultural values to the villages. Besides the development of floating markets where various boats are crowded, in all provinces and cities of the Mekong Delta region, boats always "move to the rhythm of time or the flow of the river." The existence of many days on the river in transporting goods or living has formed customs related to the behavioral culture of merchants and the perspective of spiritual life with rich festivals and regulations. This also forms a large community of boat users and creates strong solidarity and mutual support among residents.

Boats often have a long life of up to 50 years, creating a connection and attachment between generations of users or builders and repairers. In recent years, wooden boats in the Mekong Delta have rarely been built new but are often repaired. People can install additional metal to prevent scratches or cover holes in the boat with traditional glue or secret methods to save costs while still being used well. Therefore, people who want to repair boats will also have a close relationship with the workshop or craftsman. All exchanges and transactions are created from quality and mutual trust. For merchants or boat builders, there is an element of preserving and promoting tradition and cultural identity through the transmission from father to son.

1.2 MeKongDelta Boats in a New Context

In the past, boats were the central element in the army as well as in the life of the Vietnamese people. Boats were rich and diverse in form and had their names, shapes, and regulations for each social class. The hierarchy of mandarins was also shown through the type of boat or the boat's appearance. The king's boats had dragon boats, and the boats of the patrolling mandarins could be called "The Dieu." Boats also contributed to the formation of river culture and promoted the development of goods and economic exchange between regional provinces and countries. Although the shipbuilding industry was strongly developed in the past and helped Vietnam

reach the world, mainly due to the policy of developing warships in the army, there were still boat-building workshops serving transportation, from government goods to boats for merchants. During this period, boats in Vietnam reached the international level. However, historical changes and wars have caused the boat-building industry to move into another phase, mainly focusing on the people and all social classes, no longer distinguishing between "king's dragon boats" as before. Boats have since taken on new values as they participate more in people's lives. Designs and models have also been refined depending on their functions. Although production has been limited, this has further expanded the boat industry into people's lives without losing its value and historical significance.

In addition, with the development of waterway trade through floating market culture, the shapes of boats are increasingly diverse. Since ancient times, boats have also shown the origin or geographical characteristics of the region through their shape. Boats in strong currents are often shaped like long, slender boats, while boats in calm waters are usually larger and rounder. During the war, small boats helped Vietnamese soldiers march through rivers or flooded forests. Combined with guerrilla warfare, soldiers could capsize boats on rivers for cover or hide in dense, flooded forests. Boats could temporarily turn upside down or sink below the water's surface to avoid helicopter observation.

Over time, after 1975, when peace was restored and the country moved into a new phase, boats and ships were most bustling at the intersections of rivers or provinces and cities. With the influence of the flow cycle, boats and vessels became more crowded in a place that was both convenient for trading and safe for anchoring, thereby forming bustling floating markets along the flow of the Mekong River along the provinces and cities in the south of Vietnam. While the floating markets were the conditions for gathering and connecting boats and ships, goods and exchanging goods between regions became a factor that strongly promoted cultural exchange and acculturation between provinces and cities. They formed a community of residents in the south of Vietnam that was extremely open, generous, and friendly. They had gentle and friendly personalities, adapted to the living environment in harmony, relied on nature, and respected nature. Trong những thập niên 1900 những Ghe Bầu, The Tam Bang boats of the current government have transported many goods, such as wood and rice, along the southern provinces. These boats have a considerable load capacity of over 70 tons, making people admire the scale and enjoy many benefits from the shipments. Since the 1990s, Vietnam has entered a period of renovation, building, and restoring the country, and boats and floating markets have developed more strongly in number—especially boats, which have the task of transporting goods and passengers. During the peak years of the most substantial development of vessels in the Southwest, especially Can Tho, from 1980-1990, the number of ships was the most crowded; Cai Rang floating market is known to be bustling and stretches more than 10km from Cai Rang - Can Tho to Phong Dien, with up to 1000 boats, from 3-6 am the boats were bustling back and forth of all kinds. At Can Tho passenger wharf, the number of passenger ships and passenger ferries is estimated at more than 100. At this stage, there were not many large bridges, roads, or supermarkets that were not developed as today, so to serve the travel and trading needs of the people in the south of Vietnam, the main ones were boats, passenger ships, ferries, and cargo ships.

Today, on the threshold of international integration, when the southern region of Vietnam has begun to develop its economy, Can Tho is ranked among the five largest cities in the country, directly under the central government. The Can Tho bridge (the longest cable-stayed bridge in Southeast Asia) expanded the road traffic system and many new urban areas connected by the convenience of road and air traffic. Can Tho is gradually integrating with the world in many aspects, and the transformation of river tourism is noteworthy. Although new social conditions have reduced the number of boats, especially in floating markets, river culture is still a unique feature, firmly existing, affirming the role of rivers and boats in the Mekong Delta. Floating markets, in addition to their role as trading, buying, and selling points, have also become a mark and typical destination for tourists from all over the world when coming to Can Tho. Floating markets and boats have existed in parallel with the new function of serving tourism, maintaining, transmitting, and developing river culture and people worldwide in the southern region of Vietnam.

Boats in this condition are still performing their original function as housing and transporting goods, but today boats have also set a bright spot for their cultural value when transporting and carrying the best cultural values of the residents of the southern region, through the study of the social life of boats in the river cultural landscape in the Mekong Delta. To adapt to the new role in tourism transportation or serving river resort tourism services, people have transformed the shape, material, function, and decoration of boats depending on the purpose of use. This is very important to pay attention to so that boats can preserve their inherent unique values that need to be preserved and developed sustainably in parallel with the development of life and society.

2. The new knowledge of Concept

In this thesis, the researcher used the concept of "the social life of boats" to refer to Intangible Culture, which is the aspect of the social life of boats. in the context of its formation and development, closely linked to the geographical and natural characteristics of the region and historical and social changes. Through this concept, the study has clarified a number of important points: the influence of physical space, geographical location and natural conditions on the formation and development of boats in social life, the diversity and richness of boat forms and the cultural value aspects of boats in social life. To study physical space and cultural riverscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. To study the boats in dimensions of the socio-cultural identity of the Mekong Delta people. To study the Social Life of Boats and the Special Cultural Riverscape in 'Cai Rang Floating Market' at Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Selecting the research unit as the Ghe Bau to clarify the elements that make up the social life of the Ghe in the cultural landscape of Vietnamese rivers. Consider the impacts of historical and social changes on the Ghe Bau in production, business, tourism services or sustainable integration into the economic and cultural development process of the region.

The second concept used is "Cultural Riverscape." In this thesis, the cultural river landscape is the prerequisite factor that closely connects and creates a diverse and vibrant river culture. The characteristics of the river landscape, along with the many canals, have created a unique, peaceful, and friendly beauty. The rivers in the Mekong Delta, although dense, are calm and have few big waves, which impacts living habits and customs, especially for merchants and the boats used by merchants.

Boats in each place and province can be the same type, but the design will change slightly to suit the conditions of the river landscape and geography of that area. Boats in areas with strong currents will be longer than boats in areas with calm waters will be wider. The boat's bow does not need to be too sharp to cut through the waves, and the eyes of the boat must be round and gentle, not too intense like the eyes of boats in coastal areas to fight against aggressive sea monsters. Boats in Soc Trang are still Ghe Bau, Ca Dom boats have distinctively decorated bows, Ngo boats are decorated with many vivid motifs of the Khmer people, and boats in Cui inherit the high bows of the Nguyen Dynasty. Many areas always have peaceful landscapes, so residents' living cultures and behaviors towards each other and nature are friendly and gentle. A generous lifestyle, friendly, open and sociable, always choosing to solve all problems "peace is precious," "9 give up to do 10", "the good leaves cover the torn leaves," "living with the past and the future" are typical characteristics in the character of the people of the West. These values must be preserved for sustainable development over time and for future generations to continue seeing the peaceful landscape and the friendly and straightforward people. The study aims to show that in the integration process, floating market culture or social life of boats still shows its unique value and integrates but does not lose its unique identity through the form of living and the functional role of boats.

The socio-economic development of the Mekong Delta, especially tourism, has led to cultural changes and exchanges between regions, from one province to another or from one country to another. Floating markets and floating market culture are important anchors that create the uniqueness of culture and people in the Mekong Delta. This is based on the social life of boats over the centuries. To research from physical space, the study of vessels in cultural identity has been connected and linked through floating market culture. This process has led to changes in function, style, and size of many types of boats, which have been adapted to the needs of use in the new context. Sustainable development is essential in the general transformation of the region, especially the tourism industry. Thus, boats with the role of transmitting, connecting, and preserving culture in the new context both carry the primary function that has existed and change to adapt. Therefore, it is necessary to have the proper orientation to ensure the integrity and inherent value of boats from shape to decoration or function. As factors contributing to the sustainable development value of the region, boats and the social life of boats in river culture need to be cared for, preserved, oriented and developed appropriately.

Tourism studies show that the need to connect floating markets to visit other tourist attractions in the area is potential because tourists often like to learn more about temples or the people's livelihoods (Narawadee Buakwan et al., 2013). Through this, it is possible to enhance the development of a form of community economy combined with tourism that is suitable for floating markets, thereby promoting the conservation of the river landscape, demonstrating the close connection between people and nature, preserving the unique features of nature and the natural landscape and avoiding the impacts of changes to traditional lifestyles, such as the change from a barter system to a commercial system and the change in types of relationships from generosity to competition (Teeraporn Thongpanya, 2018), affecting the good nature of the culture of generosity in the river. This also affects the perspective of tourists and the international community in Vietnam.

Suggestion

1. Suggest to Academic Circle

Research on The Social Life of Boats and Cultural Riverscape in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, can be valuable documentation for educational, teaching, and creative design purposes. Higher education institutions can integrate this theme into their curriculum to enrich learning experiences in cultural studies and heritage preservation. Especially the river and boat culture in Vietnam and the Southern region, especially Ghe Bau - Ghe Tam Ban Can Tho, or similar case studies.

For creative people, students, designers, and people passionate about history, art, and traditional values, this document can be used to have information from overview to detail in expanding and focusing precisely on the value of boats for precious intangible culture, in which boats are a factor that can inspire in researching, composing, designing works of art or typical symbols of the region.

This research contributes to the benefits of society and the community. The overall goal is that interdisciplinary cooperation in the direction of management, conservation, and sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage in Can Tho, Vietnam, will create many possibilities and opportunities and result in many new achievements.

This research can support the policy-making of central or local governments and contribute to supplementing and adjusting the State's policies and guidelines for friendly river tourism business and sustainable development..

The research focuses on and publishes documents on boats and their characteristics in terms of structural shape and decoration associated with indigenous culture to create unique features, traditional boat models, and modern boats with environmentally friendly materials and durability while still ensuring the aesthetics of boats in the new adaptation phase without losing their inherent beauty. According to the fieldwork and research process, in the next 50 years, wooden boats will be scarce, not newly built, and challenging to survive in Vietnam due to the development of new materials such as composite or metal. Therefore, this research wishes to preserve, conserve, and promote the unique values of boats to protect and spread indigenous culture through artistic and creative activities inspired by boats. Including building a 3D virtual museum of boats, connecting the community of designers, spreading the values and beauty of indigenous culture, and encouraging and providing visual knowledge to young people who love and are aware of the value of boats in preserving and developing local beauty and indigenous culture and creating models and connecting with new technology in the creative and design industry to create 3D printed boat models to make the most intuitive and beautiful experiences of boats in a culture rich in national identity. Artbooks about boats and culture support and inspire designers to publish and create works of creative motifs or topics that promote regional characteristics to the world. This effort ensures the sustainable development of all aspects of the region to integrate while preserving intangible cultural values in the right direction. Preserving and inspiring younger generations to continue pursuing and developing traditional crafts. Preserving and developing traditional values requires the active participation of the community, especially the younger generation, to ensure that these cultural values survive over time.

2. Suggestion to tourism industry and river residents.

Revive the cultural values of southern boats by using suitable boats in tourism service activities. Design and decorate boats to serve passenger transport activities to ensure safety and aesthetics, functionality, and the unique rustic beauty of boats, the beauty originating from the accumulation of lifestyles of river residents, gentle, open, and friendly. Expand information and help tourists access Indigenous culture through information filtering, reminding visitors of the aspects that create cultural values of rivers from boats and the rich social life of boats. Revive traditional values and revive villages that build and repair boats with long-standing secret techniques. For the younger generation, it is necessary to cherish, preserve, and promote traditional cultural beauty. Build a spirit of love and appreciation for the beauty of indigenous culture. Find inspiration in studying, creating, and applying more art products, patterns, board games, models, publications, postcards... from the inspiration of the beauty of boats. For boat building and repair camps, try to maintain the traditional profession. Expand and learn more modern new techniques. Maintain and sustain the best quality of boats. It can increase the construction of areas to visit models, processes, and values of boats.

Some private collectors have collected many models of boats with historical and memorable significance. In Ben Tre, there is Mr. Nguyen Van Leo with a collection of more than 400 types of boats in the form of miniature models. Each type of boat has its own unique beauty and regional mark. Although the number of boat models is very sophisticated and rich, equivalent to the scale of a small museum of boats, economic conditions have not met the requirements to create better facilities to preserve the models and stories of these boats that are both aesthetic and have national value. This spirit needs to be supported, maintained and developed in the community. Conditions need to be created to spread and preserve the good cultural values of the Vietnamese people.

3. Suggestion to Vietnam and Can Tho Government.

To preserve, maintain and develop traditional craft villages of building and repairing boats in the Mekong Delta, local authorities can invest in building a community-based tourism model. With experiential tourism by boat, visitors can have the opportunity to experience different types of boats, combine with experiential tourism of river landscapes, experience activities and participate in festivals with boats, preserve the characteristics of the landscape and culture of the region. Create conditions for tourists to truly feel the precious cultural values of the people of southern Vietnam: sincerity, simplicity, peace, and generosity. Preserve and preserve the original rusticity of boats, along with the cultural values and typical landscapes of the Mekong Delta.

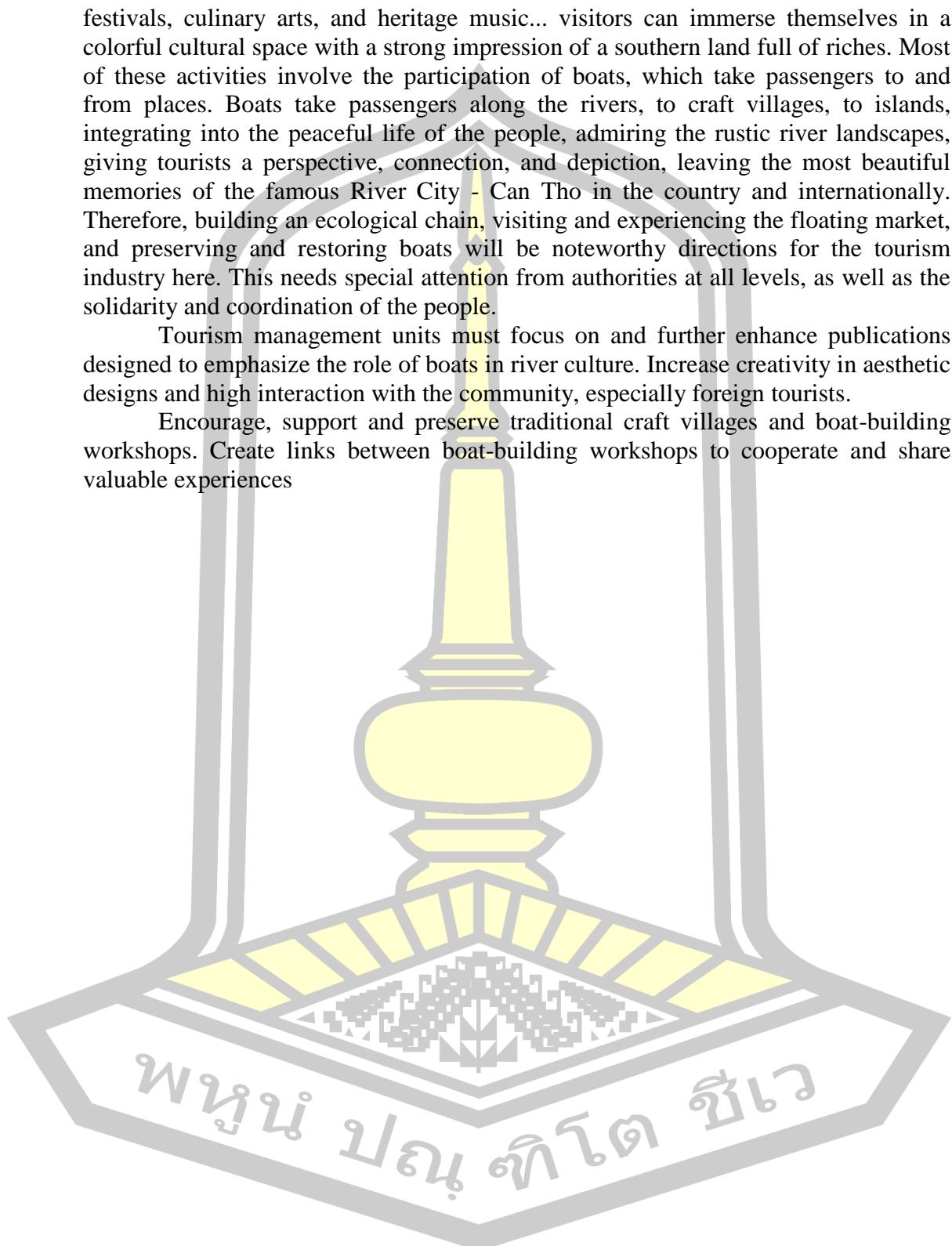
Encourage and create conditions to build a sightseeing area within the community tourism area or build a museum to display quality models of the design, meaning, and history of boats. The good and unique points that boats bring to the culture rich in national identity in the southern region.

In addition, with the change in the role of floating markets in recent years, the Floating Market functions as a place to exchange goods and has become the region's most typical tourist destination. By visiting and exploring the space and river landscape and enjoying local specialties, from cakes and traditional craft villages to

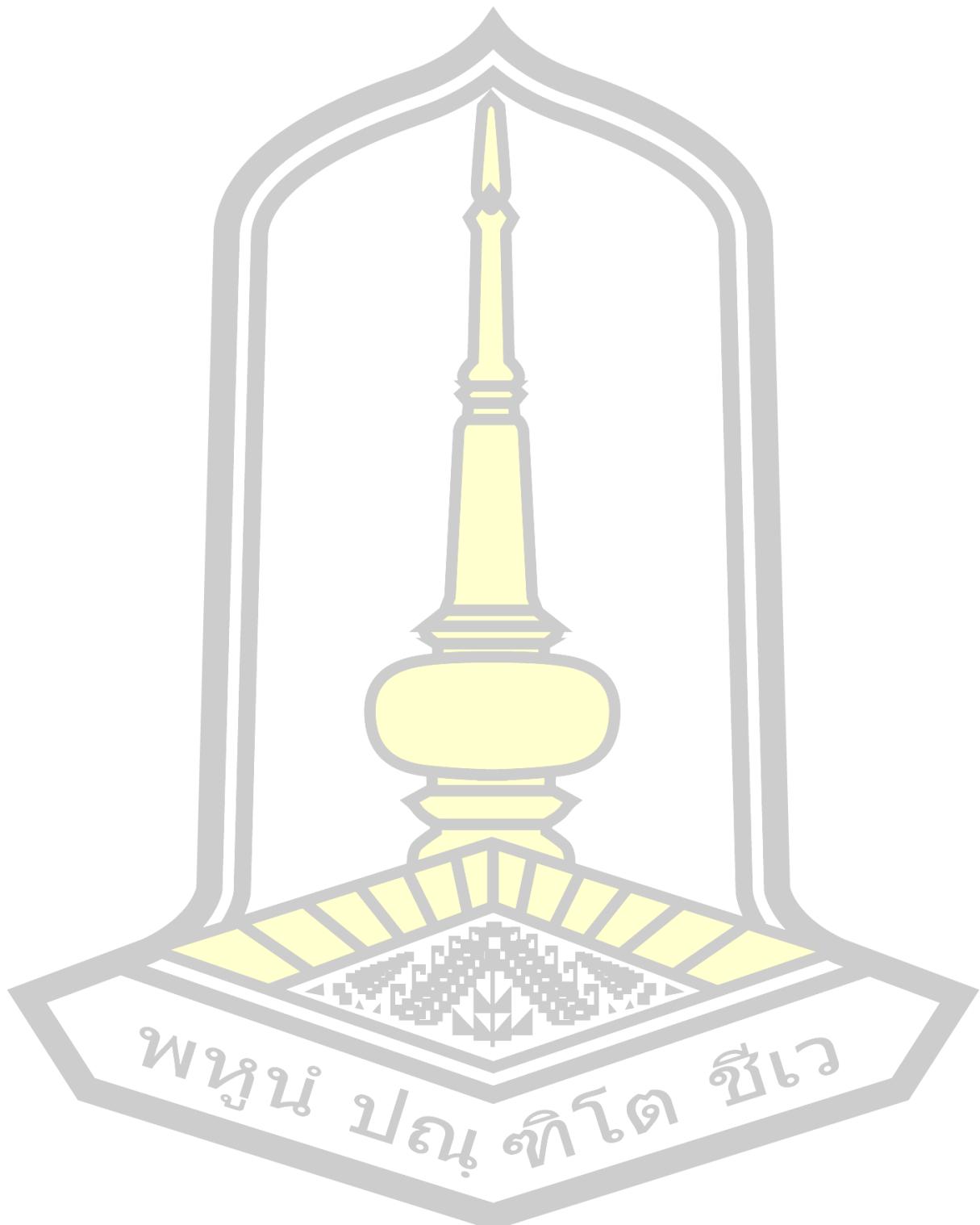
festivals, culinary arts, and heritage music... visitors can immerse themselves in a colorful cultural space with a strong impression of a southern land full of riches. Most of these activities involve the participation of boats, which take passengers to and from places. Boats take passengers along the rivers, to craft villages, to islands, integrating into the peaceful life of the people, admiring the rustic river landscapes, giving tourists a perspective, connection, and depiction, leaving the most beautiful memories of the famous River City - Can Tho in the country and internationally. Therefore, building an ecological chain, visiting and experiencing the floating market, and preserving and restoring boats will be noteworthy directions for the tourism industry here. This needs special attention from authorities at all levels, as well as the solidarity and coordination of the people.

Tourism management units must focus on and further enhance publications designed to emphasize the role of boats in river culture. Increase creativity in aesthetic designs and high interaction with the community, especially foreign tourists.

Encourage, support and preserve traditional craft villages and boat-building workshops. Create links between boat-building workshops to cooperate and share valuable experiences



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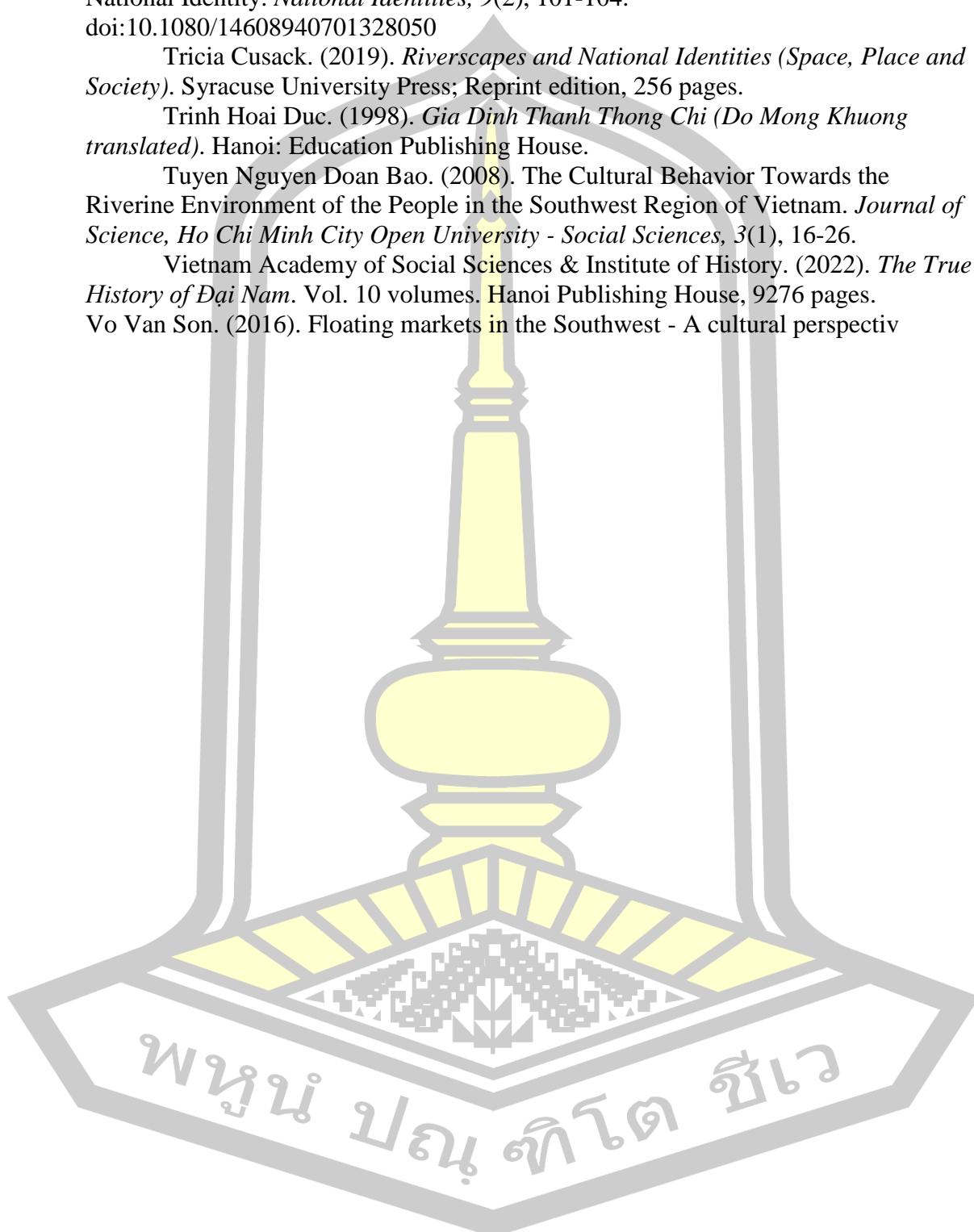
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