



## Research Article

© 2022 Le Thi Thu Hien and Tran Thi Mai An.  
This is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons  
Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Received: 31 January 2022 / Accepted: 8 April 2022 / Published: 5 May 2022

# Transformation in Traditional Beliefs of Coastal Residents in Vietnam During the Current Urbanization Context: Case Study from Da Nang City

Le Thi Thu Hien

*The University of Danang,  
University of Science and Education,  
Da Nang city, Vietnam  
Corresponding Author*

Tran Thi Mai An

*The University of Danang,  
University of Science and Education,  
Da Nang city, Vietnam*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2022-0079>

## Abstract

*The article studies the transformation in belief of coastal residents in Vietnam under the impacts of the urbanization evidenced from Da Nang city between 2013 and 2020. This paper is conducted based on a combination of the approach of cultural anthropology, sociology and interdisciplinary through analyzing the content of scientific publications related to the topic. The paper focuses on the change in beliefs of the current coastal residents in Vietnam through data from Da Nang city and pointed out the factors affecting the beliefs change in the urbanization context for 2003 to now. The result contributes to regulatory agencies to refer to and direct their rational development policy. It can also be used for academic purposes in universities, researchers, lecturers of culture and human science as well as learners.*

**Keywords:** Vietnam, Da Nang, beliefs, coastal residents, urbanization

## 1. Introduction

Vietnam is a country located on the East coast, with a coastline of over 3,260km long and more than 3,000 islands. Total population of the coastal strip is about 49,487,300 people, accounting for 51.3% of the country's population; in which urban population accounts for 34%; population density is about 1.9 times higher than the national average density; The average population growth rate is about 0.91% (General Statistics Office, 2020); (Hoang Van Khai, 2020). As a result, Vietnam is a country with great advantages and potentials for the development of marine economy, such as: sea transportation; mineral exploitation and processing; exploitation, aquaculture and seafood processing, marine tourism...

Danang is the most famous and largest coastal city in central Vietnam. The Vietnamese immigrant communities from the North Central region coming to this land and settling in the

fourteenth century created unique cultural values associated with the marine ecological environment (V. M. Ngo, 2007). The research results showed that the traditional beliefs of the coastal communities in Da Nang were the result of interaction between human and coastal environment during daily life, labor and production (Tong & Vo, 2010). Living by the sea, exploiting resources from the sea and their lives depended on each voyage of going out to sea, the beliefs of the Vietnamese coastal people in Da Nang turned to new gods on the sea and such beliefs satisfied their needs of protection and peace.

In terms of tradition, the beliefs of the coastal residents in Da Nang are diverse and plentiful, including popular beliefs of worshipping God of Whale, worshipping Sages, worshipping Tutelary god, worshipping Mother Goddess, belief of worshipping underworld spirits. The diversity is also reflected in the same belief morphology, but in each village, there is a difference in worship, creating a colorful picture for religious activities here. For hundreds of years, the traditional beliefs have been preserved and practiced quite often in daily life by coastal residents in Da Nang. The maintenance of the traditional appearance of the beliefs among the coastal residents in Da Nang comes mainly from the awareness of the subject - coastal residents/ fishermen in Da Nang. That self-awareness has created a vital swallet for the long-term existence of the traditional belief system of the coastal residents in Da Nang for the past time and created an intrinsic strength to cope with the fluctuations of the era.

At the end of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, in the process of industrialization and modernization of the country, Da Nang rose to become one of the typical localities of the country in terms of efficiency and speed of urbanization. Da Nang city has been constantly changing, especially after the separation of the province in 1997 and becoming a central city. In particular, with being recognized as an urban area of class I in 2003, the urbanization of the city has been increasingly promoted and created many big changes in the fields of economy, culture, society, etc., including beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang. Like many other coastal localities of Vietnam, Da Nang has been proactive in the trend towards the sea, building marine economic and cultural relationships for the purpose of developing in a comprehensive and sustainable way in the present and in the long term. That means, the culture of coastal residents will play an important role in economic development here. However, under the impact of the urbanization process in Da Nang, many cultural values of coastal residents have gradually changed in both positive and negative aspects, including traditional beliefs. The understandings of the beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang in current urbanization context will have many meanings for the preservation of marine culture and beliefs, contributing to harmonious settlement of the relationship between cultural preservation and local socio-economic development, so that traditional culture becomes one of the important driving forces to promote the sustainable socio-economic development of Da Nang.

## 2. Literature Review

Studies on the beliefs of coastal residents in Vietnam were recorded in a number of works at the end of the nineteenth century, but they were scattered and unsystematic records, mainly about the coastal whale worship belief. In the early twenty-first century, beliefs of Coastal residents in Vietnam became the concern of many researchers, as a component of Vietnamese coastal village folklore. The first group included works that specialized in coastal village culture or the fishermen community in Vietnam (D. T. Ngo, 2000); (D. T. Nguyen, 2007); (D. V. Nguyen, 2003). The beliefs of Coastal residents in Vietnam presented in the above works were only generalized as part of the system of traditional marine cultural elements. The actual situation of beliefs of coastal residents in Vietnam in the current urbanization context with the changes and the problems raised has not been mentioned in the above studies.

In addition, there were works, articles in magazines, debates in seminars on traditional beliefs of coastal residents in the provinces and regions of Vietnam such as beliefs of worshipping God of Whale (Pan, 2006); (Parnwell, 2013); (T. V. Le & Nguyen, 2012); (Brian & Thomas, 2007); (D. T. Ngo,

2000); (Dinh, 2014), worshipping Mother Goddess, belief of worshipping forsaken spirits (T. T. X. Nguyen, 2016); (Li, 1999); (T. L. Nguyen, 2014); (X. H. Nguyen, 2011); (Pham, 2007). On the other hand, the issue of the beliefs of coastal residents in the market economy associated with the preservation and development of cultural values and traditional beliefs has initially been noticed (D. B. Nguyen, 2008); (H. L. Le, 2010).

In general, the research on the beliefs of the coastal residents of Vietnam has been carried out in many aspects, basically clarifying the issues of specific belief types, characteristic manifestations of traditional beliefs such as origin, subjects of worship, establishments of worship, rituals ... However, the beliefs of coastal residents are explored mainly in the traditional aspect with surface manifestations, their changes under the influence of contemporary factors today have not been intensively studied. Most apply qualitative research methods such as observing, participating, making in-depth interviews with description, narrating, combining with comparison, analyzing and achieving many results in reconstructing and depicting traditional marine beliefs in Vietnam. There are not many works using a combination of quantitative methods in studying beliefs of coastal residents to be able to "measure" the intangible and abstract research subjects such as values, thoughts, attitudes and faiths... of the subjects of belief (T. H. Le, 2018).

Regarding the beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang, (X. H. Nguyen, 2009) analyzed and described the different belief types of the coastal residents in Quang Nam - Da Nang such as: Worship of God of Whale, Mother Goddess, Forsaken spirits and Sages. The system of beliefs, festivals and community cultural activities mentioned in the work were approached by the author in terms of types under the history of formation and development process. Although it's a systematic important work on beliefs of the coastal residents in Quang Nam - Da Nang, it's only surveyed in terms of history and expression of beliefs, some changes of beliefs such as taboo customs, rituals and customs mentioned at the end of the book were considered by the author as a change to suit modern life. Furthermore, coastal beliefs in both Quang Nam province and Da Nang city were generally mentioned.

In a narrow/specific scope, the worship of God of Whale - one of the most characteristic belief types of coastal residents and the Whale honing festival is the Fishermen Festival in Da Nang that are taken care of by some researchers. In addition, the beliefs of the coastal residents of Da Nang were also surveyed in terms of the basis of worshipping the gods and ordination of the sea village with the main method of narration and description, lacking works focusing on existing beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang in the first nearly 20 years of the twenty-first century.

### **3. Methodology**

The article mainly uses participatory observation method and sociological survey method. By being present in the research site and actively participating in local traditional religious activities, the authors gained a more intuitive view, gaining valuable information about the depth of the changes in beliefs as well as views and opinions of local residents on those changes.

In addition, the study of beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang city in the urbanization context is not only done on the basis of the documentation system obtained from the use of field research methods but also from local development reality. Therefore, using the sociological survey method is the best method to allow the authors to approach the issues of change in beliefs of the coastal residents in Da Nang city through questionnaires, in-depth interviews, thereby having a comprehensive and accurate view.

Regarding the questionnaire-based interview, the research team conducted a layered sampling survey with 360 households residing in 3 locations that were 3 former coastal villages, namely: Thanh Khe village (now Thanh Khe Dong ward, Thanh Khe district), My Khe village (now Phuoc My ward, Son Tra district) and Nam Tho village (now Tho Quang ward, Son Tra district) in Da Nang city and used math statistics to calculate survey data.

However, there were issues that the quantitative questionnaire failed to be fully or thoroughly

addressed, so the authors combined with in-depth interviews. During the observation and attendance process, the authors met, exchanged, and interviewed local residents, people in the relic management board, people in charge of ward cultural management, and ritual practitioners. The content of the interview was prepared in advance with questions built on the principle of suggestion, so that the respondents had many choices when giving their viewpoints and opinions.

In addition, the article also uses statistical, descriptive, analytical, generalization and comparison methods to clarify the research problem.

#### 4. Results

##### 4.1 Actual situation of traditional beliefs of coastal residents

In order to have specific information and data to serve the analysis of actual situation and change in beliefs of the coastal community in Da Nang during the urbanization process, we conducted a survey using 360 questionnaires at 3 areas that were formerly coastal villages with the majority of residents engaged in fishing activities, namely My Khe village, Nam Tho village and Thanh Khe village, 120 votes were applied to each village. In which there were 188 males and 172 females; 65 people who were fishermen, 64 people who were doing business and services, 54 people who were officials, employees and 177 people who were working in other sectors (such as farmers, students, the unemployed ...). From the survey results, through data processing, we obtained the following result:

##### 4.1.1 Change in religious belief

The religious belief of coastal residents in Da Nang is associated with supernatural subjects that protect their working and survival life. Here, we focused on gods worshiped in public places such as communal houses, mausoleums and shrines. The survey result showed that coastal residents in Da Nang still put their faith in the village gods such as God of Whale, Lady Po Nagar, Tutelary God, Sage, Forsaken spirits with different levels.

**Table 1:** Religious belief of local residents at three research areas

Types of belief	My Khe	Nam Tho	Thanh Khe	My Khe	Nam Tho	Thanh Khe	My Khe	Nam Tho	Thanh Khe	My Khe	Nam Tho	Thanh Khe
	Believe			Doubt			Unbelieve			No idea		
Turterly god	25	30	74.2	5	0.8	10.8	27.5	65	14.2	42.5	4.2	0.8
Sage	4.2	30.9	75	14.2	0.8	9.2	41.6	10.8	15	0	57.5	0.8
Go of Whale/Nam Hai God	7.5	68.3	75.9	5.8	10.9	8.3	45.9	20.8	15	0.8	0	0.8
Lady Po Nagar	0	69.2	73.4	0	10	10	0	20.8	15.8	0	0	0.8
Forsanke spirits	0	68.3	70.9	0	11.7	10	0	20	18.3	0	0	0.8
Fishing God	0	65.8	0	0	10	0	0	24.2	0	0	0	0.8

**Source:** (Author, 2020)

In table 1, it could be seen that the belief of coastal residents in Danang in the gods was not homogeneous. In My Khe, with 120 surveyed people, no more than 50% of respondents believed in the sacredness of Tutelary God, Sage and Nam Hai God, the majority of respondents disbelieved in or had no idea about gods, so they did not choose any answer (in 3 answers: Believe, Doubt, Unbelieve). Meanwhile, in Nam Tho, also with 120 surveyed people, local residents mainly believed in the gods associated with the sea profession such as: Nam Hai God (68.3%), Lady Po Nagar (69.1%), forsaken

spirits (68.3%), God of Whale (65.8%). Not only the gods associated with the sea profession were believed by the majority of local residents in Nam Tho, the belief of coastal residents in Thanh Khe was spread evenly in both Tutelary God and Sage, even its level was even denser with 74.2% believed in the sacredness of Tutelary God, 75% believed in Sage, 75.9% believed in God of Whale, 73.4% believed in Lady Po Nagar, 70.9% believed in forsaken spirits.

The survey result also showed that, although most of the coastal residents in Da Nang today haven't known much about the gods or the meaning of the rituals and festivals they participated in, they still had faith in the sacredness of the gods and attended worship rituals quite regularly. In My Khe village, the number of respondents who knew about the gods of the belief of worshipping Tutelary God, Sage and God of Whale were 49 people, 21 people and 19 people, respectively, over 50% did not know who are those gods, even 77.5% of people did not know gods that the coastal residents worship, as in the case of God of Whale. In Nam Tho village and Thanh Khe village, the results did not differ much, over 75% of residents in Nam Tho and over 72% of residents in Thanh Khe didn't know which gods they worshipped when asked.

Similarly, for the significance of festivals and rituals, the survey result showed that 38/51 people who ever attended knew exactly the meaning of the communal house ceremony (accounting for 74.5%). 26/51 people knew the significance of the Whale worshipping festival in My Khe village (accounting for 51%), while this figure in Nam Tho was 46/73 people (63%) and 57/73 people (accounting for 78.1%). %, 50/99 people in Thanh Khe (accounting for 50.5%) and 77/99 people (accounting for 77.8%).

We analyzed the data collected in each of the villages covered by the survey. The analysis result showed that the degree of change in belief of each village was shown in table 2, table 3 and table 4.

**Table 2:** Change in beliefs of residents in My Khe village, Son Tra district, Da Nang city

Types of belief	Believe		Doubt		Unbelieve		No idea	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Tutelary God	22.5	25	10	5	37.5	7.5	30	42.5
Sage	44.7	41.2	15.8	14.2	41.7	41.6	0.8	0
God of whale	35.8	37.5	16.7	15.8	46.7	45.9	0.8	0.8

Source: (Author, 2020)

**Table 3:** Change in beliefs of residents in Nam Tho village, Son Tra district, Da Nang city

Types of belief	Believe		Doubt		Unbelieve		No idea	
	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now
Tutelary God	28,3	30	0,8	0,8	13,4	65	57,5	4,2
Sage	28,3	0,9	0,8	0,8	15,9	10,8	55	7,5
God of whale	63,3	68,3	11,7	0,9	25	0,8	-	-
Lady Po Nagar	64,2	69,2	10,8	10	25	20,8	-	-
Forsanke spirts	64,2	68,3	12,5	11,7	23,3	20	-	-

Source: (Author, 2020)

**Table 4:** Change in beliefs of residents in Thanh Khe village, Thanh Khe district, Da Nang city

Types of belief	Believe		Doubt		Unbelieve		No idea	
	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before
Tutelary God	69,2	74,2	8,3	10,8	20	14,2	2,5	0,8
Sage	70	75	8,3	9,2	20,9	15	0,8	0,8
God of whale	70,9	75,9	8,3	8,3	20	15	0,8	0,8

Types of belief	Believe		Doubt		Unbelieve		No idea	
	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before	Now	Before
Lady Po Nagar	68,3	73,4	9,2	10	21,7	15,8	0,8	0,8
Forsanke spirits	65	70,9	8,3	10	25,9	18,3	0,8	0,8

Source: (Author, 2020)

Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4 showed that, the coastal residents in Da Nang in the three survey points had a change in their beliefs, although not really clear, not more than 5% of the respondents had a change in their belief. That change takes place in two directions: increase or decrease. In general, there is a part of coastal residents in Da Nang today that no longer believe in the village's religious gods, while previously believed by the marine community, the most obvious manifestation is My Khe village; And for each individual, the dominant trend is still to increase the religious beliefs. According to the survey result, the change in beliefs is often stemmed from a number of main reasons as follows: Firstly, due to the age, coastal residents of Da Nang have a change in beliefs:

*"I didn't believe it when I was young. Young people are eager to play, take care of doing business, when they become old, they will believe in gods".*

Secondly, due to ups and downs in life and career change:

*"In the past, I had a son because I did not believe in the gods, so when I asked him to go to the temple, communal house to burn incense, donate money to pray for the accident to go away, but he refused to go because he did not believe. After that, my son died in a traffic accident, so I believed in gods more.*

*"My hometown is Quang Nam, when I was 20 years old, I came here to live. After moving to a marine profession, I must believe in order to prevent from the accidents".*

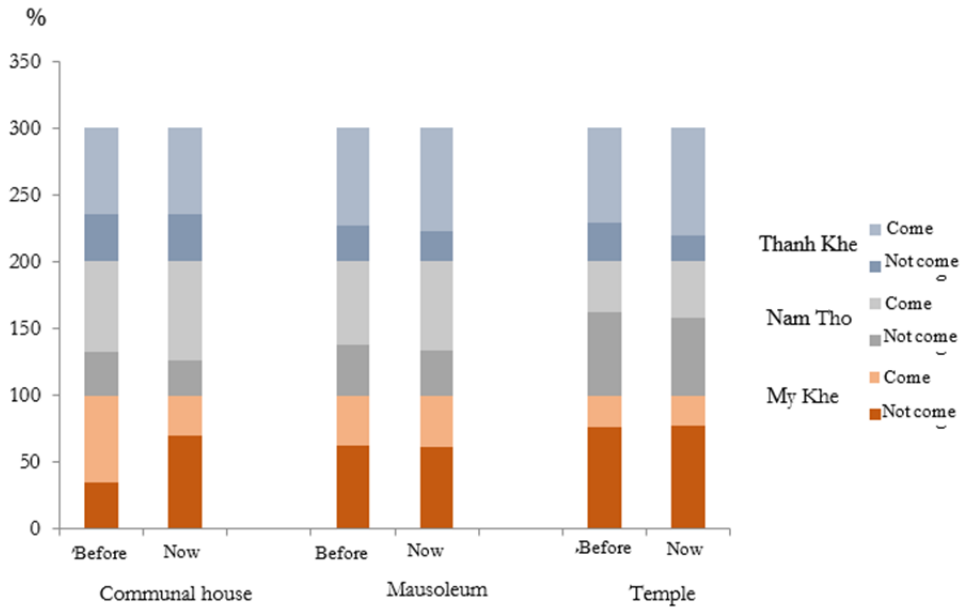
*"Before he was a marine worker, so he had to believe that the gods could help him. Now I stopped working in marine profession, so I don't believe it".*

Thirdly, because people are aware of the need to "when in Rome, do as the Romans do!":

*"Before, I lived in another place (North native), so I didn't know these gods, from the time I came here (in 1999) I started to believe."*

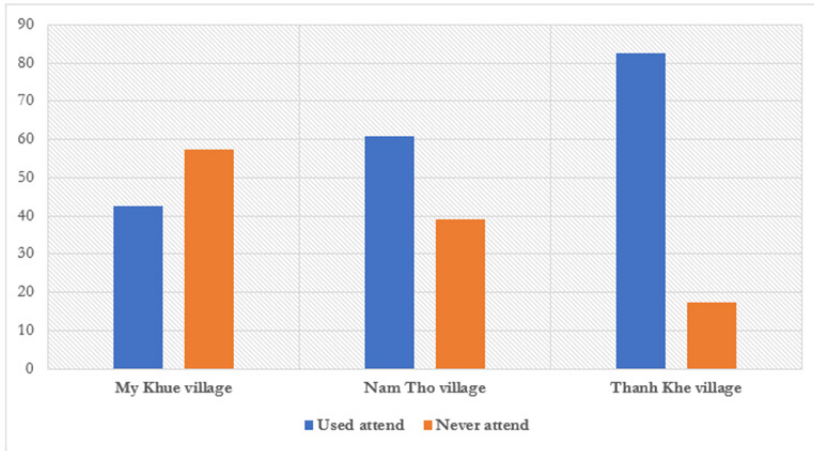
#### 4.1.2 Change in practice of belief

Faith is often manifested by specific behaviors. When asking questions related to the practice of belief of the coastal residents in Da Nang in the past and at present, we obtained the following results:



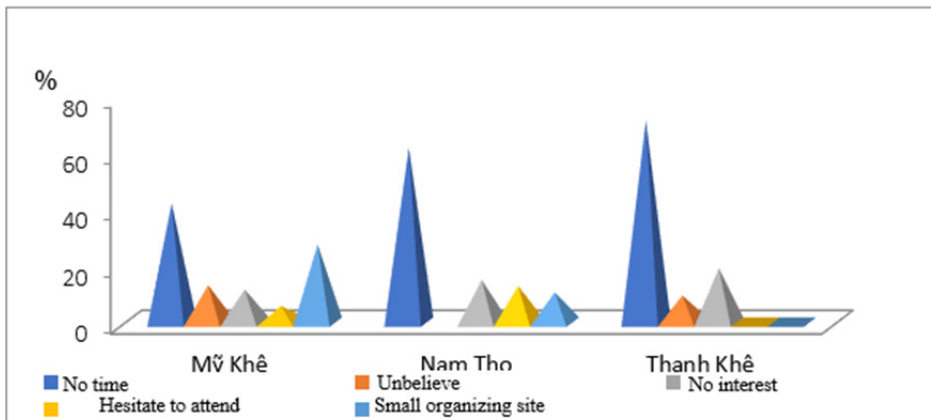
**Chart 1:** Residents go to worship facilities of My Khe village, Nam Tho and Thanh Khe

With the issue of the time to go to the worship facilities in one year, the survey result showed that in My Khe village, the number of people coming to the communal houses and temples has been decreasing. The number of people coming to mausoleum of the Mother Goddess has increased but not significantly because nowadays, the mausoleum is located close to My Khe coastal road without fence wall, so people go to swim at the beach or do morning exercise can easily come and see, especially when there is a worshipping ceremony. In Nam Tho village, despite of communal house, mausoleum or temple, the number of people coming to these worshipping establishments tends to increase, mainly 1-2 times/ year on occasions with large worshipping ceremonies such as ceremony of praying for peace at village communal house, Whale worshipping ceremony at Ong mausoleum or The Lady of the Realm ceremony at Lady Po Nagar temple. In Thanh Khe, as Nam Tho, the number of people going to the village's religious establishments tends to increase, but the number of people coming to communal houses remained unchanged and coming to the mausoleum in a less manner. The people said that Ong mausoleum, Boat Temple, and Ba Chua Xu Temple were located in the hamlets so it's convenient for traveling and worshipping. Moreover, the subjects worshiped here were closely linked to their daily working life. While the communal house was located relatively far from the residential area at the survey site, the part currently belonging to Thanh Khe Dong ward, close to the coast, so residents came less often. Besides, there are some similar reasons in the opinions of residents in three villages when asking about the change in going to the village's religious establishments: Going more because of being a member in Reception Board of the village or the Association of the Elderly (so they are often invited), have more free time because they do not work anymore, they become older so they go more often, their economy is better so they come to worship more often; while going less because they are busy at work, become old so their health is weak or they no long work in marine profession.



**Chart 2:** Participation in festivals of local residents

The data above showed that residents in Nam Tho and Thanh Khe villages attended the festival (the communal festival or Whale worshipping festival) more than those in My Khe village. In all three villages, the number of people who attend the ceremony only and both the ceremony and festival part was quite large. This did not mean that residents were more interested in or paid more attention to the ceremony than the festival. Through interviews, some residents chose the answer to attend the ceremony of two villages, most of the opinions said that when they came to worship money, it's usually the right time of the worshipping ceremony, so they stood and watched for a while then went away.

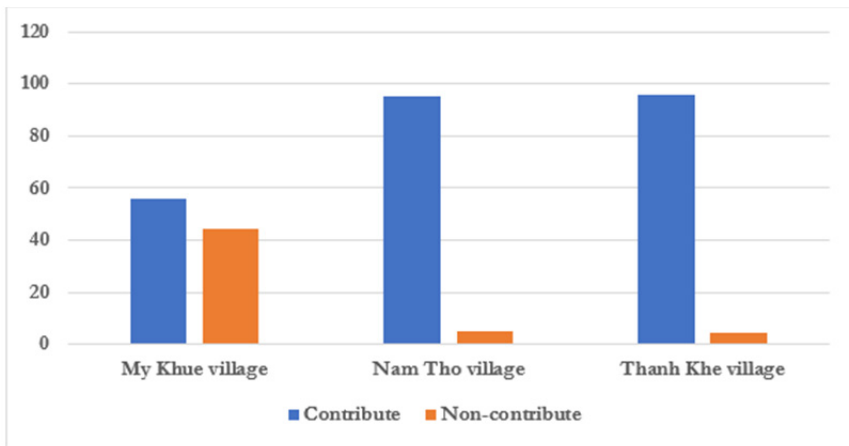


**Chart 3:** Causes for people's non-attendance in the festival at the research sites

The survey result showed that, for those who did not attend, the main reason was because they did not have time because they were busy for work, other reasons such as: they disbelieved so they did not attend; they were not interested, so they did not attend, people from other regions hesitate not to attend, because the fact of not attending due to small organizing location accounted for much less proportion.



As for the "family's contribution to local religious activities (building and repairing worship establishments, organizing festivals, worshipping ceremonies...)", the result showed that most of the residents in Nam Tho and Thanh Khe villages both voluntarily donated between 50,000 and VND 300,000 to the village's worship, only 6/120 people (5%) in Nam Tho village and 5/120 people (4.2%) in Thanh Khe village did not donate money to protect and repair religious establishments. Meanwhile, in My Khe, the number of people who did not make material contributions was up to 53 people (accounting for 44.2%).



**Chart 4:** Contribution of households to religious practice in 3 villages

Thus, also a belief, religious practice of the coastal residents in Da Nang in the urbanization process has been basically maintained, but still had certain changes. Religious belief recorded a decline in coastal fishing villages of Da Nang. Although the religious belief in each of the respondents had little change, however in terms of the overall number of respondents in three villages of Thanh Khe, My Khe and Nam Tho, it could be seen that the belief in the gods decreased quite much, besides, there were people who did not know who the gods in their belief are, so they did not know whether to believe or not. These people mainly belonged to the ones who did not work as fishermen or who recently moved to settle down. And this was also one of the reasons why the practice of beliefs of the coastal residents in Da Nang such as worshipping, attending festivals, and traditional worshipping ceremonies of the village tended to decline, among other reasons such as busy work, no interest...

On the other hand, through the survey result, it could be seen that belief and religious practice of the coastal residents in Da Nang today have differed among villages. Compared to My Khe village, currently transformed into a service and tourism area, Nam Tho and Thanh Khe villages - where there are still a large number of residents as fishermen who believe in gods (especially gods related to the sea) in a bolder manner and the religious practice is also more frequent and crowded.

Meanwhile in My Khe, some villagers said they did not attend the village festival because they did not know, did not have information or did not donate money because they did not see anyone to come to mobilize. According to the Reception Board of the village, "On the occasion of the worshipping ceremony on 24 January, invitations will be sent to the whole village, but out of 500 invitations, there were 300 people coming and donating, they were also invited for the following time but didn't come, if they didn't come in 3 times, they will not be invited any more".

And as subjects of traditional belief, the decline in belief and religious practice of coastal residents in Danang will affect the maintenance and preservation of community beliefs that have existed for a long time here.

#### 4.1.3 Change in worship establishments

##### *Change in worship space*

Currently, urbanization makes the ecological landscape around the village's religious worshiping establishments no longer the same as before. From a quiet place, quite separate from the residential area, now many worship establishments become "frontage", located on the main roads of the ward and the district such as Thanh Khe communal house, My Khe communal house, Ba My Khe mausoleum, Ong Nam Tho mausoleum, Ong Chai temple, Ba Dang Que temple. Because of that, the religious establishments seem to become out of place among modern civil structures such as residential houses, schools and state agencies and reduce the reverence and mystery because of being surrounded by noise and bustling street scenes.

On the other hand, the quiet, vast and dense spaces of religious establishments are disrupted by natural and mechanical population growth. The narrowing in the area of the worship places is inevitable. After 1975, especially entering the period of renovating, accelerating industrialization - urbanization, religious spaces in the coastal villages of Da Nang were strongly disturbed with some specific manifestations as follows:

- The narrowing of the mechanical spaces (the original spaces constituting the relic) such as: My Khe village communal house, the campus of the old communal house was very large, including the land of the headquarters of the People's Committee of Phuoc My ward and Phuoc My pagoda today. Thanh Khe Communal House, from over 2,000 square meters, is now only about 500 square meters, narrowed by the construction of Thai Phien High School and ward police headquarters. Ong Thanh Khe Mausoleum and Tap Linh mausoleum were encroached upon by the local residential houses. Nam Tho communal house's area is also narrowed due to the expansion of the village pagoda and land for the primary school, behind is the land encroachment house.
- There is a spatial movement such as: Than Hoang Temple and Ba Dai Can Temple in Nam Tho Village. Than Hoang Temple, due to being relocated and cleared, was rebuilt in Tho An 4, Tho Quang ward. The old Ba Dai Can Temple was located in the middle of Lam Cam forest, located in the southwest boundary between Nam Tho and Tan An. In 1740, the boundary between these two communes was split, the temple belonged to Tan An land. In 2004, the city planned to be a residential area in the south of Phan Ba Phien street. The above temple was cleared and the temple was built at another place (in Man Thai ward). But Ba Honour was still placed in Nam Tho communal house.
- Some sacred spaces "disappeared" such as: Ong My Khe mausoleum, Ba Dai Can temple and Am Linh temple in My Khe, Ba Ngu Hanh temple in Nam Tho. Located in the clearance area, Ong My Khe mausoleum, formerly located 200m southeast of Ba mausoleum, is no longer present. Dai Can Nam Hai Temple in My Khe village also disappeared due to road construction. The road running from Nguyen Van Troi bridge today to My Khe beach (Nguyen Van Thoai street) occupied a part of My Khe land in the south, including the temple of Dai Can Quoc Gia Nam Hai. Dien Linh Temple of My Khe village located near Ba mausoleum was destroyed after liberation. Ngu Hanh Temple in Nam Tho village after the liberation day was destroyed. Around 2010, some people here put a small clump under the tree foot to worship.

Thus, the change of sacred space in the coastal villages of Da Nang comes from many different reasons: due to the urban planning and embellishment of the city government; land encroachment by people; giving up land to build school, ward police station. Some places were encroached by local households quite "roughly" (as the mausoleum of Ong Thanh Khe). The narrowing of religious living space in the coastal residents of Da Nang is inevitable in the urbanization process for the modernization of the city, but more or less affected daily religious practice of the residents here, especially on the festival occasion. The narrowed space also leads to changes in traditional

architecture, such as Tam Vi Temple and Ba Thanh Khe Temple, which had a architecture “*tiền đàng hậu tẩm*”, but when rebuilt, there was no “*hậu tẩm*” due to the small land area. The surrounding area was encroached on by local households.

#### Change in architecture and decoration

Basically, the architecture of the religious worship facilities as well as the layout and decoration at the worship places in three coastal villages of Nam Tho, My Khe, and Thanh Khe has still remained the traditional style, including worship facilities that have undergone many restorations, such as communal house of Thanh Khe village, mausoleum of Ong Thanh Khe, communal house of Nam Tho village, mausoleum of Ong Nam Tho, communal house of My Khe village. However, a number of rebuilt or newly built religious worship facilities, especially in the period from 2000 onwards, have more or less followed different architectural features.

The mausoleum of Ba My Khe was rebuilt in 2006. Previously, the mausoleum was made of wood, with empty gongs and drum tower, at this time, it's built entirely of reinforced cement, not following the familiar architecture of the mausoleum of God of Whale, there are only mausoleum with a 3-compartment structure having an area of only 24m<sup>2</sup>, without the naming of the worship facility and without no surrounding fence.

Dang Goddess Temple (usually called as Ba Dang Que Temple) in Nam Tho village, formerly just a small temple with about 3m<sup>2</sup> in area, carved with the word Goddess on the altar. Before 1975, a villager, namely Ms. Hong, was saved by Ba Dang Que, so she voluntarily went to take care and worship. About 5-7 years ago, the temple was becoming more and more sacred, so there were a lot of donations to worship her. In the Dang Goddess temple, there is currently a statue of Mother Goddess of Heaven in red outfit, in the middle, the left is the “*Đạ Tiên Thánh Mẫu*” in yellow outfit, the right is Co Chin Suoi. Outside the temple, the left hand side is the area of Luc Dong Son Trang (Six-cave mountain farm) that worships Thuong Ngan Mother Goddess. Behind the temple, a new worship space is built to worship Lady Po Nagar.

Sage Ancestral House in Thanh Khe village was built in 2000. Initially, Sage was worshiped at the communal house with the rituals of worship, but later, due to the desire of the Ho clan, it was brought to the clan ancestral house to worship. The gate of Sage Ancestral house was casted with pillars, slope and tile-paved roof, the signboard inscribed with the National language script: Ho Phai I - Sage of Thanh Khe village. Its yard is very small, less than 1m wide, there is a large brass incense burner in the middle, decorated with dragon relief on both sides. There are two large stone-made small lions at two sides of the 3-step staircase. On the left hand side, there is a shrine dedicated to the young dead in the clan; and there is a shrine dedicated to the first people to contribute to the construction of the ancestral house on the wall of veranda in the left hand. The main hall is also designed with 3 compartments, horizontal door in modern style. At the side border of the main hall, on the left hand side, there is an annex used to prepare offerings for worship, Sage ancestral house of the Dam clan in My Khe village was rebuilt in 2010 due to the city's clearance planning. The new ancestral house has a larger and more solid scale, although the architectural design, decoration and layout of the altars inside are not different from before.

Tam Vi Temple in Thanh Khe village was rebuilt in 2009. Its gate has a horizontal lacquered board with the title in Han scripts and National language script: Tam Vi Temple. Next is the tiger-shaped embossed screen. The main hall is structured in a modern style, consisting of three spacious compartments; clean, glossy ceramic tile floor. Because its area is narrowed compared to before, the main hall does not build rear structures. Tutelary God Temple in Nam Tho village was rebuilt in 2000, has a relatively similar architecture to Tam Vi Temple in Thanh Khe, but its main hall is smaller, one compartment with two annexes. The screen in front of the temple is embossed in the shape of a dragon horse, built with a fence to save space.

Ba Temple in Thanh Khe was rebuilt in 2009 with a completely different architecture. If before, the temple had a rolling door with the rear structure inside, the right side in front of the temple had a small shrine dedicated to God of the Earth that is currently a small house of about 20m<sup>2</sup> with three altars placed evenly, the middle altar worships Lady Po Nagar, The left altar worships Ngu Hanh Tien

Nuong (Goddess of Five Elements), the right altar worships Tam vi cong tu (Three Princes), it has no rear structure because the area is too small due to the encroachment by local households. Because the temple is too small, in the spirit day when the incense smoke was spiralling up, dense, in order that the Goddess doesn't feel "unpleasant", Reception Board of Thanh Minh hamlet constructed another altar on the terrace and also because there was no land, the Earth God worship tower was brought up on the terrace, located on the right hand side of the altar.

In the temple system of the coastal villages in Da Nang, the highlight of the difference is the architecture of the Boat Temple in Thanh Khe village. The official name of the temple is Co Bac Temple, while the name of Boat Temple that villagers are accustomed to call comes from its appearance. The new temple was built in 2010, on the foundation of a small temple that collapsed, to commemorate the souls of the fishermen in the village who died at sea after two big storms named Chanchu and Sangxane (2006). The temple has the architecture of a boat, the bow of the boat has the symbol of anchor and a yard space which is 1m high compared to the boat's plan, having stairs up and down. Above is the altar of the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, below is Maitreya Buddha temporarily placed on some enameled bricks. Next is the hexagonal tower with a wheel symbol inside, next is the unicorn and dragon embossed screen, and then the Council altar. Opposite to the end of the ship is the altar of the forsaken spirits, the last is the main hall to worship Co Bac.

In addition, some worship establishments, through restoration times and due to the impact of urbanization with urban planning and embellishment policies along with population growth, had some changes in architecture and overall layout, typically Ong mausoleum. Ong mausoleum in the coastal villages of Da Nang used to have an architectural model that looked like a communal house, but its scale was smaller, had a screen and decorative top upper rectangular structure, altar inside the screen and mausoleum house. Construction materials were green stone (foundation), brick-made statue, voussoir arch, roof paved with yin and yang tiles. But in fact, Ong mausoleums in Da Nang today, over time and the restoration times, have changed from the original architectural model.

The Mausoleum of Ong Thanh Khe has a horizontal roof gate, below are 2 solid support pillars. A horizontal lacquered board was engraved in a plain manner with the national language script-based title Ong Mausoleum of Thanh Khe village. The screen lies horizontally to the gate, forming a barrier wall in front of the mausoleum. The back of the screen is decorated with the shape of a screw, dragon horse running on the waves, boats and whales. At the foot of the screen, there are a few incense bowls to worship forsaken spirits. Next to the courtyard, about 200 square meters wide, is the main hall/mausoleum house with a traditional 3-compartment structure, but the door is not built with a traditional voussoir arch but is built horizontally like a modern house. Half of the yard is placed with concrete and the flat roof is built to shield from rain and wind during the worshipping practice.

The gate of Mausoleum of Ong Nam Tho was previously located in the East, faced the sea, but under the city's subdivision planning, the local households were built in front of the mausoleum, the new gate was rebuilt next to the mausoleum, in the north (frontage of Phan Ba Phien street). The gate was built simply, two pillars were poured with concrete with a board cast in concrete with the national language script word: Mausoleum worships God of Whale of Nam Tho commune. The old gate only leaves traces of screen interconnected to the fence of the mausoleum. In the mausoleum precinct, next to the mausoleum house is the shrine of forsaken spirits. In front of the temple, there is an altar for worshipping forsaken spirits and a screen. Right next to the shrine, on the left hand side, there is an anonymous grave.

In addition, the interior decoration also has small changes, especially hanging photos, certificates of merit or boards engraved with names of those who donated money for the construction and restoration of worship establishment in the same as in Thanh Khe village. On the wall in the main hall of Ong Thanh Khe mausoleum, there are lists of donors to restore Ong mausoleum in 2002 and 2013. Tap Linh communal house in Thanh Khe Village is also engraved with the names of those who contributed money to restore communal house in 1991 on the wall, in the middle compartment of the main hall, on the right side, there is a glass case with a wooden statue of Ong Chai inside picked up by a villager at sea 7 years ago. In Thanh Khe communal house, in front of the altar in the

middle compartment, there is a stone stele engraved with the rank of the temple's relics, placed in 2008 when the communal house was recognized by the People's Committee of Da Nang city as a City-level relic.

For hundreds of years, some worship establishments in coastal villages have been gradually downgraded, such as Nam Tho communal house, My Khe communal house with broken tile roof, cracked and mouldy walls... Funds for the restoration were mainly from two sources, mobilizing villagers and support from the authority, but at present it has been increasingly difficult. Da Nang City's budget for cultural activities is very low, leading to limited spending on culture, including beliefs at the district and ward levels.

Meanwhile, residents are in the coastal villages of Da Nang, most from other villages, other provinces in some places, such as My Khe village, so the mobilization of funds for repairing and rebuilding the worship facility of the village has become an increasingly hard problem.

#### 4.1.4 Change in rituals

The traditional rituals in the three coastal villages of Thanh Khe, My Khe and Nam Tho have been maintained for the past time, preserving many traditional elements, but there is a decrease to suit the circumstances and conditions. The current mainstream in practicing rituals is to simplify, manifested in the reduction of time, maintaining or shrinking the organization scale, removing some minor rituals, as well as not sophisticated and ceremonious in the divine offerings.

##### Change in worship offerings

The changes in beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang today are reflected in offerings. Abstinence from divine offerings in ceremonies is no longer as strict as before, such as Long Chu. In the past, Long Chu was made by villagers, if it was made too "sophisticatedly", it would not be good, the divines would punish, and at the same time, it's required to comply with the size and material. However, at present, it's ordered, so it's different from before. As in the Neu pole lowering ceremony in 2016, Long Chu of Nam Tho village was made entirely of paper placed on a banana raft instead of paper-sticked bamboo; The size is about 1m long, 40cm wide, while the traditional model was 1m6 long, 60cm wide. Or the paintings of the life-like figures used in the bad luck expelling ceremony or pool worship ritual in Nam Tho village, drawn by the villagers, now bought in the market, printed in form, not fully expressing the original meaning. Example: "Guise of Goddess of Sea" depicted a woman with the upper half of a human, the bottom half of a fish, surrounded by waves, unlike before, she was surrounded by her "assistants" such as sea snake, olive ridley sea turtle.

Change in offerings in the direction of simplicity and convenience. In Nam Tho, in the previous pool worshipping ceremony, each worship establishment was placed a chicken and lean pork paste and to see good or bad omen for the fishing village in the year, but currently this practice has been removed because the fund is limited. The offerings include the pig head covered with omental fat and boiled pork (the whole roast pig will be prepared if doing big business in the year), boiled fish, the drawing of the lifelike figures, guise of whale, guise of Goddess of Sea, Goddess of Wood, Goddess of Five Elements, a crab, a plate of fish salad, four shrimps, four duck eggs. Recently, the offerings in the pool ceremony in Nam Tho village only include the head of pig covered with omental fat and boiled pork, a plate of pig innards, chung cake (traditional Vietnamese rice cake), rice paper, raw vegetables and guise of Goddess of Sea. In 2016, after 6-7 years, Nam Tho fishing village just held the large-scale pool worshipping ceremony with participation of students, octet, person who chanted, read the open and read the oration, and offerings with more cuttle-fish and roast pork.

Convenience is also expressed in pre-purchase or ordering of divine offerings. Not only the main offerings for worshipping such as pigs or chickens, a common feature among the current coastal villages is that the offerings are generally pre-purchased from the market and fetched to process or sometimes ordered, such as the Sage worshipping ceremony in Thanh Khe village. Due to the well-off economic conditions, during Sage worshipping ceremony in 2015, Ho clan ordered for cooking 3 offering trays with banquet-like dishes such as salad, soup, bread lagu, steamed fish rolled with rice

paper, chicken wrapped in cooked sticky rice, drinks such as beer and soft drinks. During major worshipping ceremonies such as KyYen ceremony in 2016 in Nam Tho village or the Lunar New Year in 2013 in My Khe village, they mainly order ready-made meals.

The aforementioned characteristic causes the time of offering to change (such as forsaken spirits worshipping ritual, instead of being held at dawn, around 4:00, is held at 6am, or even later), and also reduces the standards in the selection of the divine offerings. Because instead of going to choose and buy as before, now order is applied, even though the seller is asked to choose carefully under the certain standards, many times it still does not meet the requirements, but because the seller has made and delivered in place, so there is no way but to accept.

As a part of the beliefs of the coastal residents in Da Nang, the offerings, whether long-term or temporary, play an important role, are indispensable components, can increase or reduce depending on the conditions and circumstances of the villagers, but they can't miss, in one hand, it shows the respect of the people; on the other hand, they are afraid that the Gods will not bless or even blame if people fail to prepare fully and disrespect the Gods.

Changes in the Whale worshipping ceremony

In addition to maintaining and preserving the traditional elements, the Whale worshipping ceremony in the coastal community of Da Nang today has more or less changed as an inevitable result of the process of mobilization and socio-economic development of the city in the process of urbanization and modernization.

In terms of time and scale: Currently, the start time of the Whale worshipping ceremony has not changed, but the time of the ceremony has changed in the direction of shortening the time. The grand ceremonies in the past sometimes lasted for 3-5 days, but now they are usually celebrated within 2-3 days. In My Khe village (now in Phuoc My ward, Son Tra district), the Whale worshipping ceremony has been absent in the religious life of the community here for more than 20 years, now only God of whale worship ceremony is conducted in form of integrated into the village's New Year's ceremony of praying for peace on January 24 lasting only about half an hour. The reason can be explained that the number of households in the village is only a few dozen households, most of whom have sold land, resettled or changed jobs, leading to their "ignorance" to the God supporting them in fishing profession (manifested in worship practice and attendance of the festivals).

In addition, there is also a link between the villages in organizing the Whale worshipping ceremony under the policy of socialization, thrift, anti-wastefulness, limiting rampant festivals, building a cultural life and municipal and civilization of city government. Typically, the Whale worshipping ceremony in Thanh Khe district, starting in 2010, was rebuilt under the traditional process and by three wards of Thanh Khe Dong, Thanh Khe Tay (formerly Thanh Khe village) and Xuan Ha (formerly Ha Khe village) alternately take in charge of hosting. The place instead of Ong mausoleum of these villages has been relocated to the coastal area near Boat Temple of Thanh Khe village (Thanh Khe Dong ward) or Xuan Ha beach (Xuan Ha ward). On the other hand, the relocation of the worshipping ceremony to near the beach creates a large space for villagers as well as visitors from all over the world and visitors to have access to traditional religious activities of coastal residents in Da Nang, but at the same time, making the atmosphere of the ceremony lack solemnity and respect by separating the traditional sacred space and somewhat affecting the traffic safety held on the sidewalk and a part of Nguyen Tat Thanh street.

Regarding rituals: The order and rituals in the current Whale worshipping ceremony in Da Nang have been still conducted under the tradition, basically the ritual part includes the following sub-rituals: Ritual of greeting God of Water, Eve ritual, ritual of offering forsanke spirits and the main ritual, the ritual of xây chầu hát bội. In addition, Thanh Khe village, before ritual of offering forsanke spirits, holds the ritual of greeting Ong Sanh (Dong Hai Ngoc Lan) offshore to enter, witness the ritual of offering Ong Tu (Nam Hai Ngoc Lan). Before going to the sea for greeting God of Sea, the ritual of vía bà Thánh phi – Lady Poh Nagar must be conducted. After the ritual, the monks are invited to chant sutras and say a mass for the peace of soul of the fishermen who were lost at sea. Both of these rituals have been currently abandoned.

To adapt to the times, some customs and rituals have been removed. Especially, the ritual of *xây châu hát bả trạo* no longer appears much in the Whale worshipping ceremony in the coastal villages of Da Nang because of a lack of successive staff. For recent years, when the issue of preserving and restoring the national traditional cultural values has been focused, the Reception Board of a number of villages has been making efforts to restore the original appearance of the Whale worshipping ceremony, completing the basic steps of the rituals in the process of the ritual part, including *bả trạo* signings such as the Whale worshipping ceremony in Thanh Khe district that hires a group of *bả trạo* singing in Hoi An, however only a short act is performed, not long time and adequate content of *bả trạo* singing as before, so the ritual of *xây trầu* and *bả trạo* signing as an opening ritual for the session of *hát thờ* in the third night of the ceremony is no longer seen in all three villages of Thanh Khe, Nam Tho and My Khe. In addition, the opening ritual of the ceremony appears additionally (making an opening speech, beating the opening drum).

Regarding festival part: At the festival part, the meal undertaken by women in the village is mainly made from pork and chicken ingredients with a more diverse and varied dishes than before. Drinks include beer, soft drinks instead of rice wine. For the art performance part, modern songs praising the country as well as *hát bội*, *hát bài chòi* (singing performances). In addition to boat racing, basket boat shaking, tug of war, stick pushing and mesh knitting, there are also modern games such as soccer on the beach.

The difference between the old and present Whale Worshipping Ceremony is also reflected in the appearance of modern cultural elements in the festival. That is the support of technology, science and technology such as speakers, amplifiers, flashing lights on the altar, worshipping lights. Use computerized invitation letters to announce the date of holding the ceremony. Also thanks to the storage of computers, the oration is made into many copies, which resulted in the merger of *tư vãn* và *tư lễ*. In the offerings, there are "imported" goods such as western wine, foreign confectionery and exotic fruits. The worshipping outfit is traditional *áo dài* (long skirt) dressed with ready-to-wear turban but modern footwear. In the content of the prayers and the purpose of the ceremony, there is also prayer for crops associated with the ward's opening ceremony to catch seafood.

Changes in other worshipping ceremonies

Similar to the Whale worshipping ceremony, other rituals in the coastal village of Da Nang for the past 10 years have changed compared with those in the past, but they have less changes than in Whale worshipping ceremony.

At the Co Bac rice offering ceremony in Thanh Khe village, the current ceremony content and order are different from before. Specifically, the former was the ceremonies of greeting God of Water – Mantra opening and praying for the dead's peace – Ceremony of Setting free – Tuc ceremony - main ceremony, respectively, the present is ceremonies of greeting God of Water – Setting free - Mantra opening and praying for the dead's peace - Tuc ceremony – forsaken worshipping - main ceremony. Ngo worshipping ceremony, which is the ritual of worshipping and chanting for Co Bac inside and outside the mausoleum at noon on March 23 (lunar calendar), after the ceremony of opening prayer and greeting Buddha, the ritual of praying for the dead's peace is canceled, replaced by the forsaken spirits offering ceremony at 5pm on April 23 (lunar calendar). The ceremony of setting free is conducted right after the ceremony of greeting god of sea and tuc ceremony are conducted before the ceremony of praying for the dead's peace. The time for the ceremonies has also changed and shortened. The ceremony of greeting god of sea is held at around 5:00 pm on March 23 (lunar calendar), followed by the ceremony of setting free, tuc ceremony, the ceremony of opening prayer and praying for the dead's peace, lasting until 10pm. At 5:00 am on April 23 (lunar calendar), the forsaken spirits offering ceremony is conducted and then the main ceremony.

For recent years, after the Boat Temple was built from donation of Thanh Duyen - Thanh Thuy, the forsaken spirits rice offering ceremony is also celebrated here on March 24 and 25 (lunar calendar), 1 day after the ceremony of the village. The process of the ritual is not different from forsaken spirits rice offering ceremony at the Tap Linh ancestral house. But there is still a difference. Before the ceremony of greeting God of Sea, there is a parade of the basket boats of bottles at sea. The

ceremony is chaired by the Buddhist monk who will open for the worshipping committee, perform the ritual and chant the sutras. This ceremony is followed by túc ceremony that takes place with a basic traditional ritual, but the only difference is that three deacons (ie. students joining the ceremony) do not go from outside but pour and bring wine from the altar to the worshipping master, divide and dedicate to the God. The following early morning, the forsaken worshipping ceremony and main ceremony are held with the same rituals as the túc ceremony.

For the ceremony of the Goddess death anniversary in Nam Tho village, it has been no longer held as big as before for more than 10 years (in 2 days), but the vông ritual is abandoned, soul worshipping ceremony and the main ceremony are performed on January 25 morning of lunar calendar, from 8:30 to 10 o'clock. Previously, the death anniversary ceremony was entirely charged by the village, but now the village only performs the worshipping ritual with a small amount of money, the offerings to the Goddess are mainly brought by the ladies in the Village's Mother Goddess Association and all made by vegetarian products. The rituals of offering flowers and offering lamps have been abandoned because there are no human resources to act as "students". At the same time, there is no longer a rule that the mausoleum keeper must apply the vegetarian diet 4 times in a month and chant prayers for the Goddess. In addition, the old rules such as when the fishing village experiences unfortunate things, the mausoleum keeper must apply vegetarian diet and lie on the ground, chant prayers and strike wooden bell in 7 days at the mausoleum or when the boat fails in doing business continuously, the boat owner comes to the Goddess's mausoleum to pray and ask for Cam Lo water prayed and spelled by the mausoleum keeper and fetch it to rinse the fishing instruments and facilities ... haven't been applied at present.

In the tống ôn ceremony (a ceremony to expel bad luck and pray for peace) of the coastal residents in Da Nang today, many details have been reduced, especially what is related to the Sorcerer - who performs rituals of nương ôn ceremony (a ceremony to relieve from bad lucks) such as expelling evils and applying chin mudra and reading worshipping text. The ritual of opening up the eyes and disinfecting Long Chu performed by sorcerers was also no longer conducted in tống ôn ceremony in Nam Tho. Long Chu was released into the sea, instead of burning and expelling to the sea as before, at the same time, the custom that the worshipping master must conduct xin keo (casting of lots) ritual before placing Long Chu on the boat and discharge it to sea. This tống ôn ritual in Thanh Khe and My Khe villages is no longer present, but in this day, the worshipping masters of two villages go to the communal house to burn incense and perform hạ kỳ ceremony: "In the past, the worship ritual include sorcerer, a raft carried by 4 people, the sorcerer will put something bad on raft and such a raft is carried to another village, through the forest, out to the sea and expel them to the sea. At present, the ritual will only include worshipping and reading orations in the village without raft to get rid of back lucks".

As for other worshipping ceremonies, such as the Sage worshipping ceremony in My Khe village after rebuilding the ancestral house of the clan in 2010, the Dam clan restored the traditional worshipping rituals with a larger scale than before. The grand worshipping ceremony is organized every three years, lasts 3 days and 2 nights, the bội singing troupe is invited for the festival part outdoors to serve the attendees, there are also art performances with genres of music: pre-war music, revolutionary music, young music...

Meanwhile, the ceremony of Sage's death anniversary in Thanh Khe was organized by the village, but the Ho clan applied to bring it to the ancestral house of the clan, so in 2010, the village handed it over to the clan in charge. The worship of Sage's death anniversary is performed by the head of Ho clan with the full roles: celebrant, assistant to celebrant, chanter, thị lập (a person to stand for attendance), oration reader, student joining the ceremony (if it is a grand ceremony), conducted in two days, eve ceremony on April 7 of lunar calendar, the forsaken spirits offering ceremony and the main ceremony on April 8 morning and follow the order of divine worshipping ceremony at the communal house. However, in 2016, due to a dispute between two Ho clans, clan 1 and clan 2 about the worship of the sage of the clan, and also the sage of the village, the final decision was made in 2017, the Sage worshipping ceremony was handed over to the village in charge. The Ho



clan gave the Reception Board VND 20 million to support the village to worship the Sage.

Ky yen festival in My Khe village only worships in 3 weeks of wine without reading oration or playing music, its scale is at the middle ceremony or small ceremony without festival part. Nam Tho village, after nearly 40 years, new ky yen festival is reorganized with a full range of traditional rituals, including both the ritual and the festival parts, but the new festival part only includes bôï singing, many exciting folklore games have been removed, such as: boat racing, basket boat shaking, tug of war ... Particularly in Thanh Khe village, ky yen festival is held more regularly, every 3-4 years. However, for the past 6-7 years, the village has only worshiped the middle ceremony, unable to organize festivals, mainly because of limited funds.

#### Change in the organization and practice of rituals

Basically, the organization and assignment of tasks in the ritual part and festival part in the coastal villages of Da Nang now belong to the same village's Reception Board as before. But in order for "correct cause and strong words" in mobilizing funds, especially from enterprises, there is an "underground" combination and assignment: People's Committee of the ward is in charge of invitation letters, while the village takes care of preparing the ceremony, offerings and the committee will assign staff in the Organizing Committee of the festival, usually the position of deputy head. "The grand ceremony is organized in coordination with the People's Committee, the People's Committee acts on behalf to invite participants of the city, district and radio stations to report. As for small and middle-scale ceremonies, the village will organize, all the village rituals will be taken care of, while the People's Committee only takes care of the external affairs, not the budget.

There are some places as Thanh Khe, the Whale Worshipping Ceremony is organized by the People's Committee of Thanh Khe district together with the Farmers Association of the district in coordination with the wards, the Mausoleum Management Board and fishermen, in which the Head of the Organizing Committee is the Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Thanh Khe district, thereby the content and atmosphere of the festival are partially changed. During the Whale Worshipping Ceremony in Thanh Khe district, the rituals are performed by the Village Ritual Committee, but it is not fully ensured in terms of the rituals and time. The representative of Thanh Khe village's ritual committee said: "Making offerings to the district is just a form, to have movement, to socialize. Make an offer but urge practicing quickly. Parade to the ceremony, then worship the deity in the main ceremony, but the main ceremony of the village lasts nearly 1 hour while now it takes only about 15-20 minutes. The village's Whale worshipping ceremony is on January 23 of lunar calendar, in the 23rd day afternoon, tuc ritual is held around 17 pm. At night, on the early morning of the 24th day, at 4 o'clock, welcome the God of Whale to celebrate the forsaken spirit worshipping ceremony, then at 6 o'clock, the main ceremony is performed, so it's more important, offerings are more adequate than in the district's Whale worshipping ceremony. Thus, the worshipping ritual in Whale worshipping ceremony held by the district is only symbolic. At 6am, the ceremony of greeting six gods of sea, processing to the stands and the main ceremony is performed and finally the festival part is performed, in addition, the main ceremony time is also shortened, just as the ba trao ritual only takes place around 10-15 minutes without full content under the process of a ritual.

The selection of the ritual practitioner is not so formal as before. For example, students who practice the ritual first are carefully selected in terms of family background, quality and age, while at present, they only need to meet relative requirements for age (18 - 20 years old, even more), those who have wife and children are also included as in Nam Tho village. Thanh Khe village takes students to join the ceremony from young people in the militia team of the ward. The young will practice once or twice and be given VND 50,000 - 100,000. In My Khe, the oration reader is hired from the congregation Nguyen Hien Dinh for a price of VND 500,000/ time.

An ongoing actual situation in the coastal villages of Da Nang is the fear of the residents to take over positions in the Ritual Committee in particular, the Reception Board in general, leading to the risk of shortage of human resources for ritual practice, maintenance of traditional beliefs. This is explained from many reasons, not to mention benefits, even the spiritual status (respect) in the resident community is not equal to the previous days. Therefore, it's unable to compensate for the

fatigue brought about by the responsibility along with the deterioration of health due to age, disease... Most of the "key" characters such as the festival host, offering host of the coastal villages in Da Nang show their desire to rest when being interviewed:

In order not to be short of the ritual practice team in the coastal villages of Da Nang, the elders encourage the descendants in the village to join the worshipping and procession teams quite early, ignore the old rules: "Before, when wanting to be a student, the family had to take their children to the village to apply. They must be unmarried youth, noble children. They wanted their children to be students because it was an honor for the whole family. But at present, students must be hired, but for this village (Nam Tho), they do not hire because their village has a long history, so they want to teach and train the youth generation".

Although the aforementioned "problem" is not difficult to solve in Nam Tho village, where there is still a large population of native residents, it is not easy for other coastal villages that are strongly affected by the urbanization process as Thanh Khe, especially My Khe. Therefore, the villages always encourage the young people in the village to participate in the ritual practice in order to master the ritual practice, inherit and preserve the long-standing beliefs of their village in the future.

#### 4.2 Factors affecting the belief change of coastal residents in Da Nang in the urbanization process

In general, the change in beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang in the urbanization process is influenced by four following important factors:

##### Guidelines and policies of the local authority

From the orientation of economic development based on sea strength, the urbanization process of the city has been continuously promoted, especially in the coastal area. The urbanization process in the coastal area has "disappeared" a number of worshipping establishments, such as Ong mausoleum, Am Linh mausoleum in My Khe village. In addition, the urban and beach expansion also distorts the beliefs of residents and changes traditional sea festivals. Some worshipping establishments have been relocated, newly built, unable to keep the traditional ancient features or shrink their area to serve civil works. On the other hand, the construction of major roads running along the coast for tourism such as Nguyen Tat Thanh, Son Tra - Dien Ngoc along with hundreds of new streets has made the religious worshipping establishments become "facade", creating favorable conditions for people and tourists to access and turn those values into a driving force and foundation for marine economic development, especially marine tourism.

In addition, the investment policy to develop the culture and beliefs of the city and coastal localities also has a great impact on the appearance of the current beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang. Considered as one of the most developed cities in the Central region and the Central Highlands, however, the level of investment in the cultural sector of Da Nang is very low. In a report on international economic integration capacity at the local level by the National Committee for International Economic Cooperation, Da Nang is ranked 39th in the field of cultural development in the provinces and cities nationwide. At the same time, in another national ranking, Da Nang is one of three provinces and cities with the lowest budget investment in the cultural sector. At the request of the central government, localities have to spend 1.8% of the budget spending on cultural fields, but Da Nang only spends about 0.9%; in 2013, spent VND 18 billion for the cultural sector out of total VND 7300 billion in basic construction and normal expenditure was only about VND 153 billion/VND 4100 billion out of total normal expenditure of the city.

In terms of belief, except for Tho Quang ward that carries out an inventory of monuments once a year, in two wards of Thanh Khe Dong and Phuoc My, the ward and district's competent authority only sends the staff to the village to check the current status of religious relics when there is an application of the Reception Board, but rarely takes any positive action in solving the cost of construction and repair. Many worshipping establishments have deteriorated, the Village's Organization Board submits an application to the superior, however, there is no response for a long time from the authority or a limited budget is granted that is not enough to do. The religious

activities receive little support from the authority, major worshipping ceremonies such as Whale worshipping ceremony, Ky Yen ceremony, Xuan Thu Minh Nien ceremony, the People's Committees of Thanh Khe and My Khe wards often send a delegation to offer incense with fruit basket, while Tho Quang ward sometimes supports VND 2 - 3 million (on the occasion of the ceremony). Therefore, most villages only maintain the ritual part, and lack funds to organize the festival part every three years.

In the coastal areas, it can be said that Thanh Khe is a pioneer in exploiting the belief values of coastal residents in the tourism economy development of the district. Thanh Khe district advocates promoting the culture of local coastal residents through the organization of the District Whale Worshipping Ceremony on the coast of Nguyen Tat Thanh. Thanks to this policy of the district, the religious life in Thanh Khe village compared to two villages of My Khe and Nam Tho as well as many other coastal villages becomes more vibrant, the Whale Worshipping Ceremony is held regularly, creating "name" for the village's traditional beliefs. However, it is noteworthy that the not entirely true representation of the traditional "archetype" of the Whale Worshipping Ceremony as in Thanh Khe district can cause the young generation in the village, as well as outsiders who go to attend not to understand correctly about the village's traditional culture and beliefs; on the other hand, the change of the ritual practice space, the government's intervention in the content of the ceremony ... also somewhat reduces the sacredness of the ceremony.

In the policies affecting the beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang in the process of urbanization, it is impossible not to mention the policies to support the fishermen of Da Nang city. Vietnam's marine strategy of the State, concretized by the guidelines and policies of socio-economic development over years of Da Nang city, especially the policies of supporting fishermen: New shipbuilding with high capacity, early forming a fishing logistics fleet, finalizing the communication network between land and sea, building a centralized information processing station, 2 professions are applied on each ship to increase seafaring time, support for career change... The above-mentioned policies not only help improve life and ensure labor safety for fishermen but also play an important role in maintaining traditional religious culture because fishermen are subjects of belief.

#### Residential disturbances

In terms of traditional religious culture, the residential disturbances with the appearance of people from other places in the city or from other provinces nationwide have somewhat loosened spiritual cohesion through beliefs among people living in the same coastal area in Da Nang as before. Not long-term attaching to the land, having no understanding about beliefs, not doing fishing profession, these characteristics make the "residing" people become more separated from local beliefs. This further demonstrates Louis Wirth's point of view that urbanization has created "anonymous, isolated urban dwellers from their neighbors, involving in others primarily to maximize their benefits - personal economy".

In fact, through the survey, those who did not believe or did not go to religious establishments or attend village festivals are the majority of residents from other places. For example, in My Khe village, 69 out of 120 people interviewed were people from other places to settle down, 12 people doubted and 33 people did not believe in the sacredness of the gods worshiped in the village; 45 people have never set foot in the religious establishments in the village and 45 people have never attended the communal house ceremony or the whale worshipping ceremony of the village. Located not far from the city center, the urban planning, infrastructure embellishment, lot subdivision and land sales have been basically completed, so My Khe increasingly attracts people from other provinces to come to do business and live. Moreover, being a thriving area in terms of services and tourism, there are currently many restaurants and hotels in My Khe, most of which are frequented by people from other places. Under the Village's Reception Board, raising money from tourism enterprises in the village/ ward is not easy: "Now it is not easy to go to the hotel and ask for money. They come from other places, they are living near the communal house in this village, they do business, but when they come to ask people to donate, they only pay fifty thousand dong. Raise your hand and ask for fifty thousand dong for what. Even, take only fifty thousand dong when holding the

paper with the seal of the ward People's Committee to mobilize, some places can't get anything".

Meanwhile, in two villages named Thanh Khe - where urbanization was carried out early and Nam Tho - where urban planning is continuing to be implemented, because the number of people living for a long time and following the sea profession is still at a quite high rate. The mobilization of funds for religious activities is relatively favorable, contributing to helping the community belief activities continue to be maintained and developed, reflected in the renovation and reconstruction of worship establishments, regularly and periodically holding rituals, festivals, keeping faith and participating quite often in religious activities in the village...

From that, it can be seen that population disturbance is one of the important causes leading to the change and difference in belief and religious practice of the coastal residents in Da Nang in the urbanization process.

The change in career

For the fishermen, urbanization with land acquisition, resettlement, and land clearance do not impact much directly on their change in career as farmers or traders. But it creates opportunities to "change life" through compensation, land selling. At the same time, many new jobs are selectable, with higher salaries and less risky and dangerous than the "soul hung on the spar" job such as workers of factories, workshops for employees in restaurants, hotels, pubs ... thanks to the site clearance policy, construction of industrial zones, big roads convenient for business and trading, Hoang Sa and Nguyen Tat Thanh streets running along the coast to attract tourists, making restaurants, hotels and pubs develop so much.

On the other hand, the tradition of Vietnamese sea culture is inshore fishing. The psychology of being afraid of going offshore makes fishermen dare not to risk changing their fishing method, hence facing new career opportunities, many people quit their profession, while almost the whole village went fishing at sea for their living before. Data from Phuoc My ward clearly shows that. In Phuoc My, the number of fishing workers has decreased over the years: in 2007 there were 185 people, in 2010 there were 195 people, in 2013 there were 87 people and in 2015 there were only 70 people. Along with that, the number of fishing boats also decreased from 76 in 2007 to 52 in 2010, 36 in 2013 and 34 in 2015.

Because of attached with the fishing profession, when the coastal fishermen in Da Nang change their livelihoods, do not follow the offshore fishing profession and the young generation does not continue the fishing profession of their predecessors, which has a significant impact on the existence and development of beliefs in the coastal village community, especially those related to fishing profession such as the belief of worshipping Whale, forsaken spirits, Lady Po Nagar, Ba Dai Can, Ba Thuy ..., as lack of ritual practitioners, lack of funds to maintain and expand religious activities. Religious acts are no longer performed regularly. It's evidenced from a resident of My Khe village.

However, it's not easy to change the faith, belief of those who have been attached to the sea for many generations. Some fishermen who have changed to other jobs such as security guard, carpentry, on-demand music playing, motorbike taxi, seafood restaurant service ... still keep their faith in the gods of sea and gods of the village. The main reason is because: "Wherever you live, the belief in gods is there. Believe in gods of sea when working at sea, believe in gods of farming when doing farming. Although I did not work as a fisherman anymore, I still believe that because they were the people who had merit to establish the village, support and bring peace for the villagers, and I grew up here, I must look forward to the origin. If going to another place to live, we must follow the customs of that place, but if still living here, we must follow the traditional customs. If the village needs contribution from me, I will still join hands to support".

The sustainability in the belief consciousness of the coastal fishermen in Da Nang not only comes from tradition, origin, spiritual ... factors but also comes from the fact that some fishermen change their jobs from seafaring to other jobs onshore that are often unstable jobs with low income. So for some people, the sea is still a "backup" livelihood, working onshore, but when free, they still make use of going offshore, especially "if there is any bad thing, if the job is lost, then they go back to the seafaring".

Thus, it can be seen that there is a close relationship between belief and religious practice in a proportional direction, but there is still relative independence. Although moving to other professions, less practicing religious acts, the religious belief of the part of Da Nang's coastal fishermen has not decreased. However, "belief without action is just dead faith because it is lonely". And if we only keep faith in each individual, it is difficult to maintain the belief in a sustainable and long-term way.

For a part of fishermen, urbanization gives them the opportunity to "change their lives" through compensation, selling land; At the same time, many new jobs can be chosen with higher salary and less risk, less danger than seafaring with "spirit hung on the spar" such as: worker in factories, workshops or employees in restaurants, hotels, pubs ...

Because the belief is associated with the profession, the fact that a part of the coastal fishermen in Da Nang changed their livelihoods had a great impact on religious practice in the coastal village community. In My Khe village, it could be seen that the decrease in the number of people who follow the fishing profession led to a shortage of ritual practitioners, a lack of funds for maintaining and expanding religious activities. Religious acts are no longer performed regularly.

Impact of economic, scientific - technical factors

Economic development has made the life of coastal residents in Da Nang become better, thereby the residents have economic conditions to contribute to the community religious activities of the village. Besides, it is impossible not to mention the significant support from the expatriates - a part of overseas Vietnamese living abroad, typically in Thanh Khe village. Thanks to that, the majority of religious worshipping establishments have been repaired, renovated to different extents or rebuilt. The Worshipping objects are renewed, more durable and beautiful. Offerings become plentiful. Religious activities have been restored. On the other hand, economic development contributes to improve the spiritual life of coastal residents, they have chance to access and enjoy many new cultural achievements, many attractive entertainment activities, therefore, the whale worshipping ceremony or village communal house festival is no longer expected and waited by the coastal residents to go to attend and watch singing for relieving stress and fatigue in work and life.

Along with the economic development in the coastal fishing villages, the fishing means and tools in Da Nang today have also changed with the help of science and technology. Modern motorboats and nets, compasses and radios have replaced old basket boats with paddles. More and more ships with large capacity are put into use, bringing high fishing yields and productivity. In Tho Quang, there were 398 ships with a total capacity of 24,416 Cv in 2015. The output of fishing increased over years (2010: 4,391 tons, 2011: 4,658 tons, 2012: 5,069 tons, 2013: 5,690 tons, 2014: 5,870 tons, 2015: 6,600 tons). In Phuoc My, there were 34 ships with a total capacity of 692 Cv in 2015. The output of fishing also increased over years (2010: 275 tons, 2011: 301 tons, 2012: 347 tons, 2013: 361 tons, 2014: 375 tons, 2015: 408 tons). Compared with Tho Quang and Phuoc My, Thanh Khe Dong has a smaller number of ships, but larger capacity. In 2012, Thanh Khe Dong ward had 42 ships with total capacity of 9970 Cv; production value reached VND 259,424 billion while Tho Quang was VND 107,048 million and Phuoc My was VND 17,997 million. The above figures also partly explained why in the three villages, the community belief in Thanh Khe village had the most prosperous development.

The improved working conditions along with the development of the society and of the marine communities lead to some changes in religious life. Modern scientific and technical achievements are also applied in worship such as electric lamps instead of oil lamps and candles; oration is made into many copies to keep; amplifiers and loudspeakers are used in ceremonies, which makes the worship become convenient. In another aspect, equipped with, supported by advanced technology, science and technology, human belief in supernatural powers, sea gods that always help fishermen in peace during each offshore trip seemingly somewhat fall into oblivion.

## 5. Discussion

Research on the actual situation and trend of change in beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang in the current urbanization context shows that there are a number of issues that need to be considered and

resolved by the authorities at all levels in order to preserve and promote religious values in the coastal community of Da Nang. That is:

- Belief and religious practice show a decline in some coastal villages in Da Nang. Although the belief of each resident have few changes, in terms of the overall number of inhabitants of a village, put in comparison between the past and the present, it's showed that the belief of coastal residents in the gods has decreased quite a lot, besides there are people who do not know who the gods in their belief are, so they do not know whether to believe or not, which makes the religious practice of coastal residents in Da Nang, such as worshipping, traditional village worshipping ceremonies and attending festivals, tend to decrease, besides among other reasons such as busy work, not interested in religious practice...

From the initial changes in terms of traditional belief and religious practice of coastal residents in Da Nang in the urbanization process of the city, it's needed to give specific orientation and action in the dissemination of the value and meaning of community beliefs of local residents in order to preserve and promote that traditional value of the coastal residents in Da Nang. The local authority should coordinate with the village's Reception Board to launch contests of learning about the local culture and beliefs; promote propaganda activities in many forms such as: supporting funds for organizing festivals to expand the scale, diversify the festival part to increase the attractiveness and attract people to participate in...

- Another set issue is that it is necessary to maintain the subject of the belief of coastal village residents when the majority of villagers have been continuing to quit the fishing profession, such as in My Khe beach village. Fishermen are the subject of the belief and culture of the sea, but the uncertainty in their life in "fake sea" together with the increasingly strong urbanization in Da Nang has led to the decrease in number of fishermen and the appearance of people from other areas of the city or other provinces nationwide, which somewhat loosens the spiritual cohesion of village communities through beliefs. In fact, through the survey, those who do not believe or do not go to any religious establishment or attend village festivals are the majority of residents from other places. At the same time, the initial research result shows that compared to My Khe village that has currently transformed into a tourism service business area, in Nam Tho and Thanh Khe villages - where a large number of residents have still followed the fishing profession, the belief has been maintained and grown stronger.

That fact shows that the belief of coastal residents in Da Nang will fall into oblivion without a part of fishermen - original and main owners of the coastal belief, hence it is necessary to create conditions for fishermen to continue their fishing profession, ensure their livelihood. Only when the fishing profession is kept, the culture and belief of fishermen will have the foundation and practice environment to survive and develop. It can be said that the degradation and destruction of beliefs in some coastal villages of Da Nang have initially left a worrying consequence that is the lack of connection between young people and traditional cultural - religious values. If the youth age - middle age - old age is below 35 years old - from 35 to 55 - over 55 years old, respectively, a randomized survey of 120 people in My Khe village showed that 62.9% of young people living in an area of My Khe village did not know the belief in the place where they live; 82.4% did not know who is the belief worshipping, 82.6% did not attend festivals, 81.8% did not go to worship establishments, 88.5% did not know the meaning of festivals and worshipping ceremonies. This has a significant impact on the issue of preserving existing beliefs in My Khe village, because the young generation will be the future owners of the beliefs here. At the same time, it also makes it difficult to train the successive religious practitioners, when the young people do not have proper knowledge and awareness about the traditional belief values of their village/ locality, leading to ignorance, even turning back.

## 6. Conclusion

Introduction to research from Da Nang city shows that, in the urbanization process, the beliefs of the coastal residents in Da Nang in particular and the beliefs of coastal residents in Vietnam in general have been having disturbances and fluctuations. The change in beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang is reflected in many aspects, from tangible factors to intangible factors. However, the changes occur with different intensity and scale in religious elements and in coastal villages of Da Nang. This change depends on many factors, but the main factors affecting the beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang in the urbanization process are most clearly identified to be: policies of the city government, economic development and scientific and technological progress, career change of seafarers and disturbances in the composition of the population in the former coastal villages. The change in beliefs of coastal residents in Da Nang also poses some issues about the subject of the beliefs of coastal residents in the urbanization context; the falling into oblivion of religious forms; training of successive religious practitioners...

## 7. Acknowledgement

This research is funded by Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training under project number B2020-DNA-13.

## References

- Brian, D. S., & Thomas, A. J. (2007). Investigation of marine mammals in Vietnam. *Asian Marine Biology*, 14.
- Dinh, T. T. (2014). Belief in God of Whale in Nam O ward. *Journal of Da Nang Socio-Economic Development*, 60, 49–53.
- General Statistics Office. (2020). *Statistical Yearbook 2019 (Summary)*. Thong ke Publish House.
- Hoang Van Khai. (2020). *Developing Vietnam's marine economy—Potentials and challenges*. <http://www.tapchiconsan.org.vn/kinh-te/-/2018/815927/phat-trien-kinh-te-bien-viet-nam---tiem-nang-va-thach-thuc.aspx>
- Le, H. L. (2010). Conservation and development of coastal folklore values in the market economy. *Folklore Journal*, 3(81), 38–49.
- Le, T. H. (2018). *Preserve and promote the belief values of coastal residents in Da Nang*. Thong tin va Truyen thong Publishing House.
- Le, T. V., & Nguyen, H. S. (2012). *Customs and Folk Beliefs of Dong Tac village*. Van hoa Dan toc Publishing House.
- Li, T. (1999). *CochinChina—Vietnam's Socio-Economic History of the XVII-XVIII centuries*. Tre Publishing House.
- Ngo, D. T. (2000). *Folklore of the coastal village*. Khoa hoc Xa hoi Publishing House.
- Ngo, V. M. (2007). *History of Da Nang*. Da Nang Publishing House.
- Nguyen, D. B. (2008). *The change of cultural values in the market economy in Vietnam*. Tu dien Bach khoa Publishing House.
- Nguyen, D. T. (2007). *Vietnamese fishermen community*. Van hoa Dan toc.
- Nguyen, D. V. (2003). *Folklore of coastal residents in Quang Ngai province*. Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies.
- Nguyen, T. L. (2014). *A view of marine culture*. Tong hop Ho Chi Minh Publishing House.
- Nguyen, T. T. X. (2016). *Goddess worshiping beliefs of coastal residents of Khanh Hoa*. My Thuat Publishing House.
- Nguyen, X. H. (2009). *Beliefs of Coastal Residents Quang Nam-Da Nang*. Tu dien Bach khoa Publishing House.
- Nguyen, X. H. (2011). *Belief in Goddess worship of the Vietnamese people in Quang Nam province*. Da Nang Publishing House.
- Pan, C. L. (2006). Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice. *Ars Disputandi*, 6(1), 61–63.
- Parnwell, M. J. G. (2013). Whale worship and tourism development in the Hoi An—Da Nang corridor, Viet Nam. *Southeast Asia Research*, 21 (3), 475–496.
- Pham, V. T. (2007). Belief in whale worship in Ca Mau. *Folklore Journal*, 3, 46–50.
- Tong, Q. H., & Vo, V. H. (2010). The sea in the lives of Danang residents. *Journal of Da Nang Socio-Economic Development*, 1 & 2, 45–50.