



In olden days, the chanting of boat songs was a regular feature of river journeys in Thailand. Today, the tradition of boat chanting has nearly died out, except for the royal barge chanting, which has been preserved as part of the nations cultural heritage.

It is said that a Royal Barge Procession is not complete without the chanting of boat songs. The barges in the procession are manned by a large number of crew members, so it is necessary for the coordination of the rowing movements for the crew. To serve this purpose and to uplift the spirit of the oarsmen, the tradition of chanting boat songs came about.

Verses sung for the purpose are known as *bot he rua*, and different verse forms are used to give varying rhythms to fit the different speeds of the strokes and patterns of movement of the oars. Most barge songs chosen for royal ceremonies in recent times are formal in subject matter and ceremonial in style.

In honoring His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua (Rama X) on the occasion of his coronation in 2019, there are three verse chapters, composed for the Royal Barge Procession, to be held on 24 October 2019, by Captain Thongyoi Sangsinchai, a retired naval officer. The chanter is Captain Natthawat Aramklua of the Naval Transportation Department, Royal Thai Navy.

Chapter One, in praise of His Majesty the King, gives a recitation of events in His Majesty the Kings benevolent reign. His ascension to the throne of the Royal House of Chakri has brought great joy to the people and given them encouragement and happiness. All Chakri kings are recognized as the pillars of the nation. Thai people unite their hearts as one to pay tribute to His Majesty the King. May His Majesty be blessed with happiness and his wishes be realized in full. His Majestys merit will bring prosperity to the country and the Royal House of Chakri.

Chapter Two, on the beauty of the Royal Barge Procession, gives a description to highlight the beauty and features of the barges participating in the procession. The barges float like Gems of Heaven in the sky. They are exquisitely ornamented and designed with superb craftsmanship. Second to none, the Thai naval architecture should be protected and preserved for the future. Thai people should take pride in their national heritage and let Thai art be known as one of the worlds gems.

Chapter Three, on the beauty of Bangkok, describes the Chao Phraya River as the lifeline of the Thai people and Bangkok as the city of Dhamma, which is rich in the generosity of the people. There are differences, but without division lines. Thai people have been loyal to all Chakri kings, who have united Thai hearts. Thailand is the country of gold, and the Thai people will live happily, if they do not abandon Dhamma.