

CHANGING TENDENCY IN CULTURE AND LIFE-STYLE OF VIETNAM

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Vietnam is on a deep and great changing process. Those changes appear in many fields, not only in economics, politics, society but in culture and life style with their lively and diversified manifestations.

This article focuses on clarifying changing tendency in Vietnam lifestyle and culture, as well as defining reasons of, influences on such changes.

1- Vietnam is on a great and deep change. The development under industrialization and modernization is a process that alters the origin of social structure.

The basic structure of Vietnam society is the structure in which village communities are the foundations. Those have existed in history of Vietnam and associate with agricultural production built on the foundation of public land, together with self-management of village community. To integrate in a modern society with new, outstanding development that appears for the first time in Vietnam's history, structure of Vietnam's traditional culture will be faced with many radical changes. Among them, the stagnation and conservativeness of traditional agricultural community will be broken. Social structure associated with village community will be changed. It

emancipates human being from single impact of traditional social environment, and brings them freedom to choose their way of living and cultural style that they like. Those changes are not accidental, it has social origin to which it is directly or indirectly connected.

Those changes appear in many aspects, not only in familiar economic, political and social aspects but also in culture and lifestyle with their lively and diversified manifestations. These are some common manifestations:

Firstly, that is the change in each person and it connects to the change of his family. In recent tens of years, the large family with traditional *three or four generations under the same roof* is gradually narrowed, while nuclear family

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predominates over. The second type of family is increasing in number and diversified in forms: family with husband, wife and children, spouseless family, illegitimate family, trial family of students, homosexual family, family of unmarried couple with children, etc. However, that is not the importance, the more significant things is the change in their life style. Sociological investigation data show that, in countrysides, meals remain happy time of family gathering by tradition. Meanwhile, in urban centers, the situation is different: many families only get together at dinner. Each person has breakfast at different places in their own tastes. At lunch, the younger child has meals at school, the elder child has meals at university, and the wife has lunch with colleagues at one side of street when the husband has lunch at the other side. By chance, the loose connection in family creates a large gap for people to diversify their way of living as their taste.

In addition, family with a role of a social institution has significant changes. Together with the renewal process, individuals and families are restructuring their strategies of living to ensure and develop welfare in new conditions. It is expressed through changes in work division and roles of members, in financial relationships among members in a family.

Second is the change in structure of age group in cycle of a human life. Normally, in traditional society, a teenager at the age from 14-15 has to leave school to earn money for his family. In modern life, his study will be prolonged, therefore, his period of post-teenager is longer. For

parents, because each family has one or two children, when their children become adults, most of them just enter the period of menopause. In comparison between the average ages of parents in modern life with it in the traditional society, more 15 years of freedom is added to the post-parents period of those in current time. Similarly, due to increase of life expectancy while retirement age is lower, the retirement time of those at third age group is longer. With this period of time, each age group can take part in fresh activities such as: going on holiday, going sightseeing, traveling...while, at the same age, their forebear has never done.

Next is change in neighbor relations. In general, the solidarity, attachment of neighbor relations is still remained, even reinforced by social networks with different forms. However, under the impact of market economy, and their business, they tend to live more privately than before, especially in cities where the condition to take exchanges with their neighbors is limited, they take less care of others. Because of the economic development, these relationships are affected by disagreement, contradiction related to land, debt, dispute of market, customer... Those things alter the neighbor relationship.

Thus, neighbor relationship in modern life has both good and bad tendencies. If the community association operates in positive trend, it will become the drive for the development of community as well as each individual.

Fourthly, it is change in consuming culture. It can be seen that there are important changes in food structure and

consuming habits of citizens. It changed from *feed and clothe properly* to *live luxuriously* or changed from *what to eat* to *where and with whom to eat...* Therefore, demands of consumers are not only demands of nutrition but also demands of living standards living standards, way of living, conception of health aestheticism is changing. It is not only meaningful to citizen but immediately affects suburbs and people live nearby. Demand and model of consuming change, consequently, manufacturers and suppliers have to understand the market to decide to *change structure of domestic animal and plants* or ensure requirements of food sanitation for consumers... Demand for house is the same. In the early 90s of the past century, majority of Ha noi people like to live in separated house, beside a living place, they can use it as a business place. Old collective apartment was considered not suitable while modern apartment buildings are too strange to citizens. Proportion of people who have expectation to live in modern apartment is too low. But 10 years later, in the early 21st century, new urban zones with modern, multy-storey buidlings were built and put into use. Almost immediately, demands on this type of department exceed building and supplying ability. Then, the model of living is changing. New model comes into being; and new standards, life styles, new process and new social group will be formed and developed.

The following is changing tendency of value, living philosophy of individual and social groups. The movement in concept of value begins from the change in living

philosophy of people. Previously, reverence of money means the private ownership and the means of production of capitalism. Any person who is greedy for money is immoral. All education follows the idea of condemning money. However, nowadays, together with variance in owing components, acknowledgement of private sector, these ideas are gradually changing. The appearance of money is achievement of human civilization. Thanks to it, people develop business, bring wealth, material and spiritual properties to mankind. Evaluation of money as well as other economics profit is different. It is positive driving force to human work. Personal interest is given back to its position, and it is basic to implement social welfare.

As a result, living philosophy of Vietnamese is changing to pragmatic tendency. A not-small amount of people consider pragmatism a key element of life and they ignore sublime ideals, ideological arguments.

2- For its reason, we can see that such changes appear from the following factors:

Firstly, it is due to the impact of market economy. The renewal starts from renew in thinking, includes thinking of value- that means re-perceiving the elvaluation of society towards content of value in some aspects such as: thought, politics, economics, culture... in the face of basic changes of our country. Market economy attacks method of evaluating people in traditional cultural standards. Small-scale peasant thinking has been existing for thousands of years, thought of material economy is replaced by dynamic, clear

thought of fierce economic battlefield. Economic and moral effectiveness that bring wealth and properties to society and individuals are not economic criterion but also criterion to evaluate people towards the aspects of society, morality and aesthetism.

Meanwhile, models of families are under the danger of homogenization, weakening the private system of cultural standards of community. Pragmatically living or giving prominence to enjoying, supporting opinion of self-development... are the dangers that bury, erode good traditional moral values. Previously with economic foundation mainly based on agricultural production, common model of family was large family with many generations living together under a roof. United relationship in family contributes to the long stability of "farming family". Recently, diversification of professions as well as independence of individual in their job makes the tie among members in a family looser. Time for couples, parents and children getting together is less and less. Life in family as a cultural environment, especially spiritual, moral culture as well as place to forming personality seems to be degrading. In family in particular and society in general, differences in generations especially in thought, life style, choosing value of life tend to increase and be critical. It may become generation's disputes.

Then, that is the impact of industrial civilization. Industrial civilization itself creates a newer, quicker and more modern life style together with countless conveniences. People become more open-minded and flexible for acquiring new

value, meanwhile, many charms will be lost. By latest products of industrial civilization- the Internet and mobile phone simplify and shorten communication, conversation... Previously, in agricultural civilization if two people felt in love with each other, for example Thúy Kiều and Kim Trọng, from the date of their first meet in a spring afternoon when they went to clean and decorate their ancestral grave, until the date they expressed their sentiment, they had to experience a very long time with many love and letters. However, nowadays, they will not have to experience such feelings for such a long time like that. They do not need any one to introduce or match them to the other. They do not have to wait any spring...

Thirdly, impact of globalization. As we know, due to worldwide association which forming a united global market, global trading and popularizing information... connects cultures all over the world together. In addition, the flows of immigrants and emigrants lead to multi-lateral exchanges, acceptance and changes in culture. Birjukova philosopher and her *Integrating and dividing culture* in recent issuance of Russian Philosophic magazine give example of this matter. It is a case of a Cozad man who speaks English, works for an American company located in Australia. He gets marriage to a Japanese woman and due to requirement of work; he always goes to different countries". Then, he can be called a "global citizen" or a "person of diversified cultures". However, there is not only that Cozad man who has chance to work abroad and marry a foreigner can diversify his life style.

In globalization, by public communication and using different type of goods, people can take in and equate new cultural elements to enrich their live though they live and marry villager.

Fourth, the environment that unites individuals has changed. In the past, in the condition of self-supporting and closed economy when everybody lived on cultural basis inherited from their ancestors, not only the society acculturates people but each individual with or without his own awareness would acculturates his feeling and consciousness towards his social group, his village. The fundamental ties in culture that were defined from the beginning were usually stable during one's life, however, when it comes to industrial age, work division in depth creates more new social groups and social organizations than in traditional village community. In this circumstance, nothing but each person has to continuously communicate, contact and acquire other cultural elements. Obviously, an entire new aspect for life-style diversification was formed. Automatically, human still exists as a member of family and village, but during social interaction, people have more chance to acquire new cultural feature that suit him in a new social structure.

Finally, traditional social structure was changed to a more modern and diversified society. Together with innovation, opened market people are free from the limitation on their positions to assert themselves in the society. In previous days, social classes mostly connected to political conditions like: poor peasants,

prosperous peasants, officials, cadres. People with different political conditions will receive different policies, treatments in all aspects such as: welfare, salary, right to enter university, working place, etc. After carrying out open policy, social structure that depends on those criteria is shaky, and replaced by economic criteria. Special benefits based on political condition of officials, cadres, workers and peasants were decreased. Farmers escapes from the strict ties of household regime to do their business or find jobs in cities. Many of them get success and become owners. Political conditions are gradually free from strict model, people confirm their position and value through free and equal activities. Changes in social structure encourage people to strive for mastery and raise their position and role in society.

3- Therefore, changes in cultural and life-style are the transition from traditional culture to modern culture, characterized by the transiting logic from single-style culture to multi-style culture. Diversified and individualized tendencies are not only specific characteristics of Vietnam but also common phenomena in all countries which are industrializing and modernizing. In general, this evenful process is occurring quickly and changing continuously. It is not only in appearance but in role, position in society. Such diversified manifestations make the boundary between social groups less clear as in traditional society. In social sciences, they call it as surprising leap of mobile society and it creates much difficulty for indentifying individual.

Those changes are results of social justice that has been contributing to the development of self-motivation in each person, each social group, encouraging them to exploit opportunity for improvement. As an inevitable result of social development, they speed up this process and also they have both positive and negative effects.

Since they are parts of social structure, such changes will be the mirror reflecting macro social changes. Their plentiful and diversified characteristics contributed to the identification of social changes of each country in recent time. In the situation of renewal, life-style diversification is necessary and it would be considered as rule in any society. The problem is defining the level and evaluating political-social results, because this process has positive factors beside its negative ones.

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