

1. HO NGOC DAI: TRIANGLE OF FAMILY

In contrast to the crude concept considering society as a great family, the author looks at family as a concept which is formed from three components, consists of the “elements of different names” as Father, Mother and Children, called as triangle of family. The concept of triangle of family is analysed in relation with the Triangle of social life in which its angles are categories, one can not be drawn from another.

The author comes to conclusion: “study of family is a study of existence of triangle of family in relation with triangle of social life”. The article suggests an approach to the problems of family in current sociological study.

2. TRAN DINH HUU: UNDERSTANDING TRADITIONAL FAMILY – FOR RENOVATION, NOT FOR RESTORATION OF THE OLD

Highlighting historical, societal aspects of the transformation and development of family in Vietnamese and elsewhere, the author attempts to affirm: it is necessary to understand Vietnamese traditional family and to make use selectively of the useful experience accumulated up to now in the organization and the construction of family in order to make it fit for current renovation process. The restoration of traditional family without taking into consideration its backward illness may cause serious and long-lasting trouble for development.

3. DO THAI DONG: TRADITIONAL FAMILY AND ITS VARIETIES IN THE SOUTH OF VIETNAM.

Vietnamese traditional family is a nuclear unit of the social organization of the “small-scale agricultural commune” which has existed everywhere in rural areas in the North. This kind of commune has not been reproduced completely in the South of Vietnam. Therefore, the family of Viet ethnic group in the South differs a great deal from the family in the North. The Confucian influence considered to be dominant ideology of the traditional family in the North has faded away in family life in the South though symbolically it seems to remain strong enough. The self – sufficient agricultural production family unit in the North is still powerful, meanwhile in the South the family has been transforming toward commodity production to the considerable extent.

In cultural aspect, the family in the South has been affected by non-chinesation (desinisation) cultures. This is a challenge which proves the survival ability of national tradition – to adapt to the process of opening and further development in coming time.

4. PHI VAN BA: CHANGES OF TRADITIONS OF RURAL FAMILY IN THE PROCESS OF MODERNIZATION: A SKETCH MADE FROM RESULTS OF RECENT SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEYS.

Based on data of large-scale sociological investigation carried out in several phases in all three regions of Vietnam (the North, the Middle and the South), the author gives preliminary remarks on changes of traditions of rural family in modernization. These changes are examined in four aspects: in the formation of family; in the organization of family; in the family culture and in the relationship between family-kinship-village. The comparison of family norms of different times and the skillful analysis of empirical data have helped to imagine the objective situation of family life in rural areas: the selectively tradition-inherited process is very complex, new trend is to be clarified.

5. PHAN DAI DOAN AND NGUYEN QUANG NGO: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VILLAGE, KINSHIP AND TRADITIONAL FAMILY.

From view-point which considers traditional family life of the Viet ethnic group not in isolation, but in close connection with village life and kinship system, the authors have described the inter-relationship between these three factors in one village in the North (Xuan Cau village, Nghia Tru commune, My Van district, Hai Hung province) using sociological and ethnographical methods. The authors have shown some main features of traditional family in the village in the Red River Delta. This is a village with a community structure of very close and complex strata, but the frequent economic and cultural exchanges make it look more open. In this village the network of very complicated inter-relations between families as well as their associations with kinships and the village are moralized, ethicalized and partly institutionalized to the degree which makes it very difficult for individual to have self – confirmation, self – expression of any kind.

6. VU MANH LOI: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN RURAL FAMILY IN RED RIVER DELTA

Based on data of numerous sociological surveys since 1983 up to now, an attempt has been made to analyse systematically the problems of gender differences in rural family in

Red River Delta. These differences are examined in various aspects: labour division; income contribution; family extra-productive activities, communication, education of children etc. The important conclusion of the author is: though legally women have secured an equal status, in reality Vietnamese rural family has been going its own way, still follows such social norms which for generations emphasize the dominance of male. This old system of values is no more suitable with the development of the society and needs to be changed.

7. A GROUP OF SCHOLARS: SOCIOLOGICAL FORUM

Day after day, there is increasing consciousness about the meaning and importance of family in renovation in Vietnam. This is why the family issue is repeatedly discussed enthusiastically in many workshops of Institute of Sociology. This time, writers and scholars raise many interesting issues: the urgent needs of study of family from sociological angle (prof. Tuong Lai); the role and the position of family in socio – economic as well as in educational – cultural renovation (writer Ma Van Khang, writer Nguyen Kien, Prof. Nguyen Dinh Chu, Prof. Dang Nghiem Van, Prof. Dang Thanh Le, Prof. Dang Xuan Hoai); biological achievement and its requirements for sociology of family (prof – doctor Ngoc Toan, Hoang Thieu Khang); traditional family and the problem of inheritance of the historical vestiges of Vietnamese family in current time (prof. Van Tao, prof. Dang Duc Sieu).

8. A GROUP OF AUTHORS: “VIETNAMESE TRADITIONAL FAMILY UNDER INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIANISM AND BUDDHISM AND ITS CHANGES IN NEW SITUATION”

This is a title of the research project of Institute of Sociology with financial assistance of the Toyota Foundation. This issue of Sociological Review presents several research papers on Gia Huan (Family Teaching Book); family issue from Vietnamese newspapers, literature in the past and some of the Gia Huan as well as inscriptions from memorial stelae.

Professor Tuong Lai, the project leader, in his article “Gia Huan A Kind of Book for Education of Family Members” (p.63) had highlighted the and emphasized the importance of this kind of documents in research of Vietnamese traditional family. Being verses, songs and teachings written by predecessors for education of children, younger generations

and family members in the form of sincere advice, Gia Huan has great education effects on each family member. Studying Gia Huan we may partly have an imagination of the family education and interrelationship between family members, members of village and kinship in rural Vietnam in the past.

Professor Tran Dinh Huu had analysed one specific Gia Huan “Bao Kinh Canh Gioi” (Most Valuable things to be kept in Mind) of Nguyen Trai (p.66). Through the verses in the Gia Huan, the author had shown very clearly the changes of Vietnamese personality along with other family relations, relations in kinships, in society in the period of transformation from Buddhism-dominant society to Confucianism-dominant society.

In the article “How family becomes a problem?” (p.85), Nguyen Duc Mau had shown different view-points concerning family issues and the problem of female right from Vietnamese newspapers of the period 1915 – 1930. The article provides valuable materials for studying changes of social consciousness about family issues in the time when in Vietnam appeared clearly the tendency of association with modern world.

The appendix (p.70) presents from “Gia Huan of Xuan Dinh”, they are teachings of filial piety and brotherhood relations. There are also inscriptions from “stelae of Temple Tho Ong” (translated and presented by Nguyen Thinh and Pham Duc Huan) discussing about customs and habits to respect old – aged people in Vietnamese traditions.