

**MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM  
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**FAMILY CULTURE  
OF TAY PEOPLE IN CAO BANG  
PROVINCE**

**Major: Culturology**

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**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS IN  
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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Rationale

#### *1.1. Scientific reasons*

The family is the basic unit of society. It is the cradle of love, where human beings are born and grow up both physically and mentally. It is the family that sows seeds, nourishes and provides human resources for the country.

The study of family culture is a topic that has been widely discussed in different aspects by scientists in the country and in the world. There are currently many scientific papers on this topic, but their main concentration is on solving theoretical issues of the importance of families in society today. These works, which are usually ministry-level research projects and dissertations, have their own approach to certain focuses. However, no in-dept research has been conducted on the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province. Thus, studying the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province is still considered an open question.

The family and the family culture always distinguish according to differences in human geography, ethnic culture... and always change to adapt to variations of natural environment as well as socio-economic changes.

The Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province is an organic part of Vietnamese family culture. However, due to natural, economic, cultural, social and historical features, the family culture here also has its own characteristics; even the ones that have been shaped in the tradition are also changing. This is actually a research issue that is useful in both scientific and practical terms.

#### *1.2. Practical reasons*

In the twenty-first century, family and family culture has changed in complexity such as family size, family type, family role, family values, divorce, out-of-wedlock birth; an increase in the labor participation rate of women outside of the family, major changes in the relationship between husband and wife, between parents and children, changes in norms related to sexual relations... Those changes have strongly attacked the traditional family background.

The Tay family in Cao Bang Province is the place of preservation of traditional cultural values and transmission of ethnic cultural values, both material culture and spiritual culture. In the current context of international integration and exchange, the family culture here has also been arising a number of complex issues, such as changes in functional structure, family size, reversibility of the living style, family order, moral decline, gender equality in the family, domestic violence.... They are issues that need to be studied now and in the future.

From the theoretical and practical issues mentioned above, the author has chosen the subject of **Family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province** for the doctoral thesis specializing in Culturology.

## **2. Objectives and tasks of the research**

### **2.1. Objectives**

- Identify traditional family culture values and their changes of Tay people in Cao Bang Province.

- Evaluate the change of family culture in the trend of integration and development of the Vietnamese family in general and the Tay family in Cao Bang Province in particular.

### **2.2. Tasks**

For the purposes of this research, the author will perform the following tasks:

1. Systematizing general theoretical issues of family culture, which is a tool to clearly distinguish research contents as the basis for identifying issues to be investigated and evaluated.

2. Surveying and evaluating fundamental elements of Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province in the tradition of correlation with the cultural and social preconditions of traditional Tay family.

3. Investigating and assessing the change of cultural elements of the Tay family in Cao Bang Province at present.

4. Forecasting the changing trends and problems of Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province, from which questions of the instruction and development of Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province during the integration period will be raised.

## **3. Subjects and scope of the research**

### **3.1. Research subjects**

The thesis concentrates on studying the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province. However, due to the broad implication of the concept of family culture, the author will limit the subject of the study to the following four elements: concept of marriage; family rituals; education in the family; and behavior in the family.

### **3.2. Research scope**

- *Spatial scope*: the Tay family in 04 areas: Cao Bang City, Thach An District, Phuc Hoa District And Bao Lac District.

- *Temporal scope*: 1986 is selected as a timeline to identify traditional family culture and family culture today for comparing and finding the variables.

## **4. Theoretical basis, research questions and scientific hypotheses**

### **4.1. Theoretical basis**

Originating from the research subjects and objectives, the author selects the approach of structural-functional theory during the implementation of the thesis.

The approach of structural-functional theory in family culture research is carried out as a social phenomenon on two dimensions: 1/ family and social relations; 2/ family relationships. These two dimensions of research correspond to

two directions of study: family study as a social institution and family study as a particular social group.

## **4.2. Research questions and scientific hypotheses**

### *4.2.1. Research questions*

- What is the structure and function of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province in traditional society?

- How is the structure and function of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province and what are the causes of that structural-functional change in the present family culture?

### *4.2.2. Scientific hypotheses*

The strong variation of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province is an inevitable consequence of the impacts of economic, cultural and social life and urbanization process on the its structure and function. The ethnic cultural factors still play an significant role in balancing these influences.

## **5. Research methods**

In carrying out the above research, the author will use the following primary methods, **based on the approach of the interdisciplinary study of Culturology - Ethnology - Sociology**: Document analysis; observation of attendance; sociological survey (quantitative research method, qualitative research method). Together with the above approaches, the methods of analysis, synthesis, statistics and comparison are also utilized during the study.

## **6. Contributions of the thesis**

- The thesis is an in-depth study of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province from a cultural perspective.

- The thesis incorporates more field data and provides a relatively detailed description of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province in the tradition and current context.

-From the research results, the author has also presented the forecast of changes in family culture of the Tay people in Cao Bang Province.

-The thesis will be a reference source for lecturers, PhD. Students and students of culturology, ethnography, anthropology and scientists who are interested in the field of family culture.

## **7. Thesis structure**

Apart from the introduction and conclusion, the thesis consists of 4 chapters:

Chapter 1: Literature review, general theoretical issues of the Tay family in Cao Bang Province

Chapter 2: Traditional family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province

Chapter 3: Changes in traditional family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province

Chapter 4: Factors affecting changes in traditional family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province, forecast of changing trend and current issues.

**Chapter 1**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW, GENERAL THEORETICAL ISSUES OF THE TAY**  
**FAMILY IN CAO BANG PROVINCE**

**1.1. Literature review**

**1.1.1. General studies on family and family culture**

*1.1.1.1. Studies by foreign authors*

In the world, the first person to study the forms of human family can be considered Morgan. Many philosophers, ethnologists and sociologists such as Marx, Engels, Jacques, Sabran, Locke... used to have interests in studying about family and family culture from different perspectives such as ethnography, philosophy, and sociology. From a *sociological perspective*, the French philosopher August Comte (1798-1857), also one of the founders of the concept Sociology, indicated that family is an individual socialization tool preparing people for social life and it is a school of the social life. Family is the most important and basic social group and family bonding in society is the result of cooperation between families in the division of labor. From an *economic aspect*, Becker, England and Farkas in the study of *Household, employment and Gender* (1986) argued that the family is architecture by axis of economic benefits. Meanwhile, *social biologists* believed that family organization is heavily regulated by childbirth and other biological differences between men and women. From an *anthropological perspective*, Firth Raymond; Hubert Jane and Anthony Forge in *Families and their relatives: Kinship in a Middle-class Sector of London: Anthropology Study* (2001) studied the family through clan and family problems, its structure and meaning in modern industrial society through the case study of the urban working class in England.

Throughout the published works, we find that in spite of perspectives of these studies, they all shared a thing in common in a recognition that the family is a transforming and complex social entity and could be approached from different angles. Over time, these research works are also growing and diversifying, deeper in different angles, and in whatever aspect, the content is also a wealth of issues in every aspect of family life and family culture of societies in human life.

*1.1.1.2. Studies by local authors*

**\* Approaches from a traditional perspective**

According to this approach, family culture is often viewed as one or a combination of specific elements. Accordingly, family culture is consistent with values and standards of the value system under Confucian thought. What has been defined in Confucianism is regarded as a value or a measure of family culture. The related works can be named include: *Old ways, Vietnamese People*; In his book *Vietnamese customs*, Phan Ke Binh divided Vietnamese customs into three groups: clan customs, party (village or commune) customs and social customs; Dao Duy Anh's work on *An Historical Outline of Vietnamese Culture* (1938)

explored domestic and foreign historical documents such as Hong Duc Law, Gia Long Law, L. Pinot, Tran Van Lien's documents to study the changes as well as characteristics and roles of the Vietnamese family in social life. Especially, he affirmed the values of the Vietnamese family; works of *Family Culture and Social Development* (1994); *Family Culture* (2007) by Vu Ngoc Khanh ...

\* Approaches from a socio-economic and historical perspective

According to this approach, the family is a social entity governed by various factors. It is diverse and influenced by society, economy and history, such as: Quang Dam in "*Family Culture and Social Development*" (1994; in his paper of *Vietnamese Family Culture*, (Journal of Culture and Art, July 2002), Dao Hung pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of traditional family culture, the need for family cultural renovation (starting from first colonial exploitation, the main content was the demands for the change of the patriarchal family, in line with the requirements of women's liberation, mainly the struggle on the ideological front) ... Such authors as Le Ngoc Van and Duc Tran discussed this concept in more detail. In the scientific research topic at the ministry level: Vietnamese family culture in the current period (2008), the authors identified: The factors of family culture does not exist in isolation but interconnected to form a system that implements the functions of family culture...

### ***1.1.2. Studies on the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province***

When referring to the study of the Tay people in general, it is worth mentioning a number of papers published in specialized scientific journals of many authors. However, there are references to the Tay people in Cao Bang province from different perspectives and fields, such as: *Prayer Festival (Lễ cầu mưa) of Tay people in Cao Bang* by Trieu Thi Mai (2001) and *The marriage of Tay people in Cao Bang* by Hoang Tuan Nam, Be Thanh Tuyen (2001); *The religious life of Tay people along Ha Lang border, Cao Bang* by Nguyen Thi Yen (2010). In addition, there are also works of Folk culture of Tay - Nung people in Cao Bang (Trieu Thi Mai); Ancient marriage customs of Tay people in Nguyen Binh (Hoang Thi Canh); Traditional marriage customs of Tay people in Cao Bang (Nguyen Thanh Nga), etc... Such researches on Tay people mainly stop at the stage of researching and listing the traditional culture of Tay people here on ethnographic, anthropological and folklore aspects... To sum up, it can be seen that, basically, the research on family and family culture of Tay people is very various from theory to practice, from the guidance viewpoint to concrete implementation, from the overview to each element of family culture, from different communities to the Tay people themselves in general. Those studies have approached the concept of family, family culture and its variations from different perspectives.

## **1.2. General theoretical issues on family and family culture**

### ***1.2.1. General theoretical issues on family***

#### *1.2.1.1. Family concept*

The family is a particular social form or a social group formed on the basis of marital relations, blood ties, and in connection of affection, economy, responsibilities, rights and interests and under legislative ties recognized and protected by the society and the state..

#### *1.2.1.2. Family structure*

Family is the fundamental unit of society, the most important habitat of human beings. One of the most important contributions to knowledge of the family is family structure. Although the family structure of monogamous and small families is commonplace, there are still exceptions:

+ *Polyglot family* (family of one husband, two or more wives): apart from first wife, there are also concubines.

+ *Families of four or five generations* (called "Tứ đại đồng đường" - four generations under the same roof or "Ngũ đại đồng đường" - five generations under the same roof) usually exist only in respectable families with good tutoring and bureaucratic elite.

#### *1.2.1.3. Family functions*

Family plays a crucial role in the survival and development of human beings. Sociologists have studied the family at both micro and macro levels, indicating that the family has the following fundamental functions: economic function, reproductive function and educational function.

### ***1.2.2. General theoretical issues of family culture***

#### *1.1.2.1. Concept of family culture*

Family culture is a system of specific values and standards which are governed by the culture of a given society, formed and developed through the long history of family life, closely linked to the conditions for economic development, natural and social environment and selected and acknowledged by family members to treat each other in the family and social relations.

#### *1.1.2.2. Structure of family culture*

The structure of the family culture consists of the following basic elements:

- Concept of family: These are concepts of family size, family nature and motto of the family.

- Behavioral culture in the family: Behavioral culture is expressed through family relationships.

- Family education: Education is seen as a component of culture.

- Family customs and rituals: Unlike other elements of family culture, family customs and rituals are a system of cultural stereotypes that are deeply rooted in ethnicity.

#### *1.2.2.3. Functions of family culture*

\* Family culture for the sustainable existence of the family

Without culture, people can not be human and families can not exist. We completely agree with this argument, but it should be emphasized that "*the family still must exist*" not only "despite the variation and appearance of other forms of coexistence", but also to overcome the disintegration of the family that has been and is going on in human life. What determines the existence of the family? In addition to being the core factor as a family value system, family culture is also considered a set of cultural expressions associated with relationships and family life..

\* Family culture in the performance of family functions

The reproductive function nurtures, educates and shapes the personality of new members of the family and society. It is the very important function of the family that society cannot completely replace. In particular, family culture plays a more important role than the role of family economy. Personality formation begins with family education. Family culture plays the role of a cultural environment for family members to complete their personality. Family culture brings satisfaction to community needs, psychological and spiritual sympathy of all members of family.

\* Family culture for community culture

Family culture contributes to maintain and develop the culture of social groups (clans, villages, ethnic groups ...). It preserves traditional cultural values and norms of the community in family life because the good values of the family always attach to those of the community.

### **1.3. Overview of the Tay family in Cao Bang Province**

#### **1.3.1. Origin and history**

- *In terms of historical relations:* Tay people belongs to the Tay-Thai language group.

- *In terms of given name:* the name of the Tay ethnic group has changed a lot. In ancient times, the Tay-Thai group had the same ancestors as Lac-Viet, it experienced many different names since then. It was called Lieu in The Duong dynasty, and Tho from the Song Dynasty to the early twentieth century. Tay is also a long-standing name used to refer to the various Thai - Choang ethnic groups in China and Southeast Asia. After 1945, especially after the Viet Bac autonomous region was established in 1956, Tay became the official name of Tay people in Vietnam.

- *In term of origin:* Tay people are generally the result of race combination from different sources and over a relatively long period of time. The Tay people now include the ancient Tay, the Kinh and the foreigners (mainly the Nung and the Chang from China).

In Cao Bang Province, there are 207,805 Tay people, accounting for 41% of the province's population and 25.2% of total Tay population in Vietnam (According to the 2009 Viet Nam Population Census).

According to the Pu Luong Quan legend of the Tay people, the ancestors named Pu Luong and Gia Cai long lived in Nguom Nga area (Cao Bang province). In the

16th century, the Mac Dynasty once occupied Cao Bang province to fight the Trinh Lords in Thang Long. After the Mac dynasty failed, most of the officials and soldiers stayed here and became Tay people. Throughout nearly ten centuries of independence, many remaining officials of the Kinh tribe moved to Viet Bac area and became Tay people.

### ***1.3.2. Culture, family, lineage and social organization of Tay people in Cao Bang province***

#### ***1.3.2.1. Tay people's culture***

The cultural characteristics of Tay people in Cao Bang province are manifested through the material spiritual culture which is very rich and diverse.

***1.3.2.2. Tay family:*** is the patriarchal family in which the homeowner is the father or the husband and the owner of the property in the house with great authority in production, worship and social relations with the outside.

***1.3.2.3. Tay lineage:*** Tay people in Cao Bang province have many last names such as Nong, Ma, Hoang, Chu, La, Vi, Be, Lanh, Phung, Nguyen... Most of them have a record of the background and genealogy of their lineage. In the family line relationship, one of the principles is to perform the exogamy, ie not to get married to people among the same family called "lượt lại" or "đúc lượt" (having blood relations).

***1.3.2.4. Social organization of the Tay:*** Tay ethnic groups have long lived in villages, where water sources are convenient for farming and daily activities. Previously, land was sparse with low population so each village had only 20-30 houses. Each village has its own name, usually starting with the prefix "Bản" (hamlet, village), "Nà" (field), "Khuổi" (stream) such as Khuoc Khon ...; "Lũng" (valleys), "Bó" (source well); "Cốc" (root)..

### **Summary**

The thesis presents the literature review, general theoretical issues on family and family culture, etc., to be applied in the research process. The overview of the Tay family in Cao Bang Province shows unique and varied cultural features of the Tay culture in general, including the Tay family in Cao Bang.

## **Chapter 2**

### **TRADITIONAL FAMILY CULTURE OF TAY PEOPLE IN CAO BANG PROVINCE**

#### **2.1. Expressions of traditional Tay family culture**

##### ***2.1.1. Traditional conception of the family***

###### ***2.1.1.1. Traditional family structure***

The Tay family supposes that a house with many children will be fortunate and have a solid family background. The social base of this concept is that Tay people need a large number of productive labor force, they need help and support

to respond to agricultural life which mainly depends on nature, or to respond to other families in the same community.

Although the Tay family structure is monogamous, there are traditionally polygamy families, or ones with four or five generations living together...

The Tay family shall abide by the rules of exogamy: people of the same lineage within at least five generations are not allowed to get married to each other.

#### *2.1.1.2. Traditional family functions*

The Tay family traditionally performs the function as a labor manufacturing and reproducing unit, a worshipping unit, an educational unit and a spiritual unit.

#### **2.1.2. Marriage in the traditional family**

- When being about to get married, Tay people often take step by step with each ritual in accordance with traditional customs in a respectful way.

- In a traditional wedding ceremony for the children, Tay people usually organize the process as follows: engagement ceremony (xo bản lúc mình); marriage proposal (pây xam); betrothal ceremony (kin háp); Lễ sêu tết (dầu lùa - thanksgiving to maternal parents-in-law); wedding date notification ceremony (páo vãn); Wedding ceremony (kin lầu); Lễ lại mặt (hòì ròì hay tẻo slam nâu - On the following day after the wedding date, the couple brings ritual offerings to the family of the bride).

#### **2.1.3. Traditional family rituals**

##### *2.1.3.1. Ceremonies performed by the family*

Worshipping ancestors is the most important form of worship in the Tay family. According to popular opinion, after death, the grandparents and parents' soul still exists in heaven, so children have to set up altars to worship in the house, showing the gratitude to the ancestors and praying for peace and wealth. In addition, the Tay family also has other altars for worship of Midwife or Mother Godness, Mother Hoa (Mê Bjoóc), Kitchen God and God of Three Stone (Phi cùr fày)...

##### *2.1.3.2. Rituals performed by the priest*

In addition to worshipping ancestors according to the calendar cycle, every family here annually invites priests to the house to perform the ritual. These are religious activities bearing ethnic cultural factors that take place throughout the year. The implementation of these rituals depends on the needs of each family. It is possible that in the same time different families organize different ceremonies such as ceremony of relieving bad luck for medical treatment, marriages for children, praying for childbirth, full months, children raising or funeral for parents, etc.

Family rituals of Tay people in Cao Bang Province are also shown through rituals in a year: the Lunar New Year (1<sup>st</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> January); Ancestors Day (3/3 lunar calendar); Mid-year Festival (5/5 lunar calendar); Field God Festival, Buffalo God Festival (6/6 lunar calendar); Ghost Festival (14/7); Mid-Autumn

Festival (15/8 lunar calendar); New Harvest Festival (September and October lunar calendar); Winter Solstice Festival - stuffed sticky rice balls (November and December lunar calendar); Lunar New Year (chiêng, Kin chiêng).

#### ***2.1.4. Education in the traditional family***

Traditional Tay family education in Cao Bang province is reflected in many aspects of life such as labor, production, culture, customs, language, ethics or lifestyle as a system that shapes the character of the community, which is basic characteristics of Tay culture in Cao Bang province.

#### ***2.1.5. Behavior in the traditional family***

##### ***2.1.5.1. Behavior between husband and wife***

In Tay families, it is a moral principle of the traditional wives to determine their role to keep the house warm and happy and to be the fulcrum of their husbands and children. Husbands and wives all show their care and sharing in all family affairs, but the patriarchal nature is still heavy in the relationship between wife and husband.

##### ***2.1.5.2. Behavior between parents and children***

In the traditional Tay family, all children's matters are decided by parents, even their marriages. The rules of behavior between parents and children of the ancient Tay people here are still preserved in the family relations today. The main difference is that the severity of the rules is reduced and the ego of each individual is more valued.

##### ***2.1.5.3. Behavior between brothers and sisters in the family***

In the Tay family in Cao Bang province, in addition to living in filial paternity with their parents, everyone must have love and respect with their brothers and sisters. In Tay families in Cao Bang Province, this kind of relationship is very harmonious, they love and respect each other and live together with gratitude.

##### ***2.1.5.4. Behavior between family and community***

Tay families in Cao Bang province have a close relationship in the villages. Residents see neighbors as relatives, the spirit of mutual support is promoted during weekdays, working days and in production.

## **2.2. Conditions forming the traditional family culture of Tay people**

### ***2.2.1. Natural environment***

The topography of Cao Bang Province is complexly and sharply divided into four ecological economic zones: the northern and northeastern limestone mountain area account for 32%, the western and southwestern mountainous areas accounting for 18% and mountainous areas in the upstream of the Hien river accounting for 38%, the basin in Cao Bang town and Hoa An district along the Bang river accounting for 12% of the province's natural area.

The climate of Cao Bang province is characterized by tropical monsoon of high mountainous continental areas which is very unique in comparison with

other mountainous provinces in the Northeast. There are sub-zones with sub-tropical climate.

### **2.2.2. Economic environment**

Like other ethnic groups, Tay people in Cao Bang Province are agricultural dwellers who mainly live on wet rice cultivation. However, besides, they still make more fields to grow rice, maize and other crops, and garden to grow vegetables and fruit trees....

### **2.2.3. Social environment**

The habitat of Tay people in Cao Bang province is usually located near low hills or on mounds, between fields, where water sources are located or near rivers and streams.

### **Summary**

Traditional family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang province is imbued with national identity, expressed in: marriage, family rituals and education and behavior in the family.

Based on the inheritance of previous studies on the Tay family culture, the author has tried to analyze the structure of family culture with 4 contents: marriage relations; rituals in the family; behavior and education in the family. The thesis has also provided an overview of the most comprehensive features of the Tay family culture before discussing changes in the family culture in Chapter 3.

## **Chapter 3**

### **CHANGES IN TRADITIONAL FAMILY CULTURE OF TAY PEOPLE IN CAO BANG PROVINCE**

#### **3.1. Expressions of changes**

##### **3.1.1. Changes in concept of the family**

###### *3.1.1.1. Changes in family structure, size and type*

Family structure is the element that creates a family and interrelates with one another. In other words, the family structure is the number, composition and relationships between members and generations in the family. Thus, the family structure can be considered in many aspects such as family types (nuclear family, extended family, lone-parent family), size (families of one, two or three persons; family of one, two or three generations); the nature of the relationships among the members.

Results of the questionnaire data processing on the changes of the Tay family structure in Cao Bang province show that the nuclear family model is basically still maintained while four-generation type witnesses a downward trend.

###### *3.1.1.2. Changes in family functions*

The Tay family function is changing. The change in both sides can be more visible in the city and town areas. Families living in remote areas are also affected by this change. The change may be slower but it still considerably contributes to

the fact that the Vietnamese family is experiencing significant changes in all aspects.

### **3.1.2. Changes in marriage practices**

#### *3.1.2.1. Changes in marriage concept*

Nowadays, the marriage here is based on the love and mutual understanding of the couple. It is possible to assess that fact by exploring the role of parents in their children's marriage. In general, young people are the decisive factor in marriage. Parents now pay close attention to the opinions of their children and respect the love of their children as well. It is rare cases where parents actively interfere their children's choice of partner or act against their wishes.

#### *3.1.2.2. Changes in principles and forms of marriage*

At present, the issue of marriage and family of the Tay people in Cao Bang province is implemented according to the State regulations with the following basic principles: voluntary and progressive marriage; monogamy; equality between husband and wife; protection of parents and children's interests; Protection of mothers and children.

#### *3.1.2.3. Changes in wedding customs and rituals*

\* Changes of rituals: Basically, the ritual order for a Tay wedding in Cao Bang province now consists of 3 ceremonies only: marriage proposal, betrothal ceremony and wedding ceremony. However, for each ceremonies, there are many rituals and rules which are quite complex and diverse depending on each region.

\* Change in wedding offerings: Offerings in betrothal ceremony and wedding ceremony have also changed a lot, if in the past, two pairs of capons, four rice pipes, two bottles of wine, some round sticky rice cakes and steamed sticky rice were required, they now include capons, two bottles of wine, some candies, cigarettes and envelopes as required by each family.

\* Changes in wedding costumes: The costumes at the wedding now change quite a lot, especially the bride and groom's costumes. The survey results show that the number of respondents choosing modern dresses is very high.

\* Changes in eating: On the wedding day, guests only have a main meal (for welcoming the bride or welcoming the groom).

### **3.1.3. Changes in family rituals**

#### *3.1.3.1. Changes in rituals performed by the family*

In recent years, the socio-economic development has significantly affected the spiritual life of Tay people, the ancestor worship in each Tay family has become more common and frequent. Whenever the Lunar New Year comes, people all prepare purification ceremonies to their ancestors, going to the grave to invite their ancestors to celebrate Tet together with their descendants. After a year of hard work, on New Year's Eve, every house makes offerings of the best things to commemorate the ancestors.

Previously, the most important holidays of the Tay people in Cao Bang are: Lunar New Year, Ancestors Day and Ghost Festival. Currently, they are still held

in the Tay family. Additionally, people here also have a tendency to hold other festivals regularly, such as: Mid-year Festival, New Harvest Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival or worship of Kitchen guardians.

#### *3.1.3.2. Changes in rituals performed by the priest*

Changes in production-related rituals: Due to the change in mode of production and the influence of external cultural factors, religious activities have also changed accordingly. The proportion of organized families and organizational forms has also changed.

Changes in childbirth and parenting: It can be seen that all major changes occur in the pattern of childbirth practices, ie, the transition from giving birth at private home to the state health care facility. In addition, there is a great change in the concept of childbirth and some ways of caring for infants such as cutting off the umbilical cord, burying the placenta ... However, basically, most of rituals related to childbirth are still conducted as they were before.

Changes in funeral rituals: Basically, the funeral of Tay people now still maintains the organization in a traditional way. However, some factors have changed to suit the new life. Currently, time for funeral organization of Tay people tend to be shortened; funeral rituals are also gradually reduced, so the sequence of funeral orations of traditions customs also changed significantly. Moreover, with the growing cultural interference as it is today, the content and lyrics are partly mixed. Even the way to visit and pay the last respects to the dead has also changed. It is simpler and more modern. Nowadays, funeral is not a family affair but the work of the whole community, in which the role of local government and mass organizations such as the Veterans Association, the Women's Union, the Youth Union... is very important. When there is someone passing away in the village, such above organizations will actively cooperate with the family to divide and help in some certain tasks.

#### **3.1.4. Changes in education**

*3.1.4.1. Biến Changes in educational contents:* The educational content in families is mainly focused on the issues of educating the sense of learning, business setup and behavioral manner in life.

*3.1.4.2. Changes in forms of education:* Today, the form of education is changing, reflected in the form of family education which is not strict and tough as before.

*3.1.4.3. Changes in the role of family members in education:* Due to the influence of the market economy, the role of women is enhanced, women are involved in all aspects of the family, as well as society. The fact that the mother not only maintains an influence on her children through close contacts in daily activities but also directly teaches her children is the best manifestation of change in the role of family members in education. This comes from the fact that women are now more advanced and able to tutor their children.

### ***3.1.5. Changes in family behavior***

*3.1.5.1. Changes in conjugal behavior:* Nowadays, especially in the context of the market economy, conjugal relationships among Tay families in Cao Bang province have certain changes. If the husband previously played the role of a major economic contributor to the household, the wife was responsible for housework, today these two roles are shared. Women are more involved in social activities, family economic contribution and get more access to social resources but not limited in family space and household chores.

*3.1.5.2. Changes in behavior between parents and children:* Changes in behavior between parents and children are primarily manifested in following aspects: Parents ask for their children's opinions in important matters, teenagers now tend to be more responsive to parents and independent of decision-making, mothers' role influencing children is more assertive, there are less frequent family meals and traditional values in the family tends to decrease sharply.

*3.1.5.3. Changes in behavior between brothers and sisters in the family:* If the sibling relationship is getting less responsible, the relationship between daughters-in-law and sisters-in-law turns out to have less conflicts. This is partly due to the progressive awareness of many sisters, but more importantly, independence from one another in terms of economic interests as well as not living together. Actual behavior in the family has demonstrated the harmony and equality between brothers and sisters in the family.

*3.1.5.4. Changes in family behavior with the community:* Family behavior with the community here is maintained in good relationships, but in the heart has it also changed. Because of working conditions with different jobs and living standards, the relationship is not as closely linked as it used to be.

## **3.2. Evaluation of changes**

### ***3.2.1. Positive changes***

\* Positive changes in the concept of marriage: In marriage, the age of marriage of a man and a woman is governed by the Law on Marriage and Family. The concept of choosing Tay's partner has also changed. The important criterion is that the person has a stable job and good morals.

\* Positive changes in the wedding rituals: Rituals at the Tay wedding in Cao Bang province now have positive changes, consistent with the development and progress of the society.

\* Positive changes in family rituals: At present, when the economic life is better, the worship of ancestors during the holidays, wedding, new home... are paid more attention to with larger organization scale. Ancestors' altars are more beautifully decorated with more formal worshippers, instead of the simplicity as they were before.

- Rituals related to production and time cycles also show positively expressions. Today, due to raised economic and cognitive conditions, people are more interested in these rituals.

- Funeral practices: Nowadays, it is simpler in accordance with the new life style, while still keeping solemn, it is now more hygienic, time and effort saving, helping avoid material waste and mental fatigue. The way to visit the funeral and pay the last respects has also changed.

\* Positive changes in family education:

The content and form of education in the family today is more diverse and richer, parents can choose for their children the most suitable one.

The role of family members in the education of children also has many positive changes, the responsibility is divided for both fathers, mothers and grandparents, in which the mother's role has been promoted over the past.

### **3.2.2. Negative changes**

Apart from positive values preserved, some negative manifestations in the current family culture of the Tay people in Cao Bang province unavoidably exist as follows:

Wedding rituals: The wedding dress of the bride and groom follows the latest trend. Modern music, new dances and new songs with the help of karaoke system are now used instead of traditional ones.

Today, most guests coming to the wedding party are not directly welcomed by the hosts, many guests do not know each other, losing the naturalness, friendliness and fun at the wedding.

Funeral rituals: The funeral is carried out according to new lifestyle, not letting the dead in the house more than 24 hours. It is scientifically valid but leads to a cultural paradox, which is that the vows in the funeral have hardly had the opportunity to fully realize their values in community life. This means that the transmission to the next generation will gradually go away, it will only remain in the book, for studying more than being reproduced vividly in its cultural environment.

Behavior in the family: At present, in Cao Bang province, there is an appearance of multi-dimensional relations of behavior. In some families, parents show their over-strictness on caring and educating their children. They force the kids to follow their wishes and limit some of the natural rights and development of the children. Meanwhile, some parents overindulge their children, allowing them to decide on their own all personal issues without necessary instruction and orientation. Relationships among family members become lax, children are less likely to receive sufficient attention from parents and grandparents receive less care from descendants, so they always feel lonely and empty. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate the relationship in the direction of ensuring democracy, equality and promoting the traditional good cultural values, receiving new values in order to build a family culture with practical significance.

### **Summary**

The family culture of the Tay people is reflected in the concept of marriage, family rituals, behavior and education in the family... Despite several

struggles with nature and society, its own identity is still kept. It is the pride of the Tay people in Cao Bang province in particular and also the contribution of the Tay people in general to the treasure of cultural heritage of the whole nation of Vietnam.

The Tay family culture in Cao Bang province is facing strong changes, from morphology, structure, model to basic functions. Traditional family culture of Tay people has been expressing the most strongly its distribution in the multi-structure direction. In the interplay with traditional family culture, this does not immediately create a response with completely positive effects. Therefore, the forecast of the changing trend of the Tay family in the current period will be an important basis for the adjustment in the right direction. The nature of adjustment is towards the highest goal that is to build a Tay family culture which is modern and civilized but still keeps its own identity of the traditional culture at the same time.

## **Chapter 4**

### **FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGES IN TRADITIONAL FAMILY CULTURE OF TAY PEOPLE IN CAO BANG PROVINCE, FORECAST OF CHANGING TREND AND CURRENT ISSUES**

#### **4.1. Factors affecting changes in traditional family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang Province**

##### ***4.1.1. Social-political factors***

During the comprehensive innovation in Cao Bang province in general and Tay people in Cao Bang province in particular, these changes are resulted from the impact of socio-political factors which directly influence the family culture. Despite a great number of challenges faced by families in this region, a series of policies and measures to show the Party and State's concern with the family have been oriented the family culture to more sustainable development.

##### ***4.1.2. Economic factors***

Socio-economic development policies of the State in general and Cao Bang province in particular are the second factor affecting the cultural change of the Tay family in Cao Bang province. Way of thinking, lifestyle, living standards and quality of life... have changed and the demand for enrichment and enjoyment has also significantly increased (both materially and spiritually). The family culture environment here also witnesses several modifications. For instance, interior architecture, home construction, home furnishings has become better in quality and more modern.

##### ***4.1.3. Cultural factors***

Due to the attention of the Party and the State, activities in the field of culture have been flourished. At present, when cultural exchanges are promoted, the mass media and audiovisual media has been always innovated with modern technology... making the cultural life of each Tay family in Cao Bang province

richer and more diversified. The cultural enjoyment level of the families has also highly increased.

#### ***4.1.4. International factors***

In the context of international integration in socio-economic and cultural terms, the exchange of goods through trade and services between the main and small border gates in Cao Bang province has become quite extensive. The commodity element in agricultural production has currently become the target of production, livestock and handicrafts. Besides, in the trend of integration, due to economic and cultural exchanges, that the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang province is influenced by new cultural factors is getting clearer. However, it must be affirmed that these new cultural elements do not lose traditional beauty in the traditional culture in general and the Tay family culture in Cao Bang province in particular.

#### **4.2. Forecast of changing trend**

The changes in society in general and of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang province in particular are indispensable trend of urbanization and industrialization and modernization. Economic integration and international cultural exchanges along with the socio-cultural-social development policies of Cao Bang province have had a great impact on the process of changing the family culture here.

##### ***4.2.1. Family structure and family culture***

###### **\* Family size**

Household size will decrease due to good implementation of population and family planning policies. The campaign is quite successful, each couple has only two children.

###### **\* Type of family**

There are some new types of family such as single family and lone-parent family where there is only father or mother living with children after divorce, separated or widowed. Families of one generation are growing up in young couples who do not want to have children immediately or do not want to have children, they take happiness of the couple as the main purpose of marriage.

##### ***4.2.2. Family functions and family culture***

The fundamental functions of the family will continue to be maintained. However, with the Tay people in Cao Bang province, there are clear signs of change. Many people accept families without children, the birth of sons or daughters are accordingly not really compulsory. Care for children's education will be paid more attention. However, the issue of education is supported by many other forces, not limited to the family as it was before. Among which, teaching will be the focus of education. The economic function of the family will gradually respect the independence of the participants. The production function of the family is also declining or losing and the function of the consumer is enhanced. The function of satisfying the psychological and emotional needs of the

family will be more prioritized to create a balance in human life, on the one hand is the economic turn and the other is the need for static of the soul.

#### ***4.2.3. Marriage related issues***

Due to the custom, psychology and support of the Law on Marriage and Family, the people here will choose the form of form of marriage with husbands and wives. The proportion of single people will increase but not become a broadly influential lifestyle. The rate of divorce and separation will increase from the fact of high expectation on marriage.

Children's marriage now does not depend much on the parents, the clan, but they become more liberal and more active for their own lives.

#### ***4.2.4. Behavior in the family***

Equality will continue to be more pronounced in spousal relationships. This comes from the increasing improvement of women's working conditions and education level, especially the support of the Party and state policies on enhancing the women's role and position.

#### ***4.2.5. Education in the family***

Families will increasingly have a closer relationship with cultural, educational and health institutions. This is in line with the rising demand on enhancing quality of life. Families are becoming increasingly aware of the role of education as well as health care activities. In the future, the need of families to participate in health and educational activities will strongly increase, which will be a favorable condition for the State to further promote the implementation of the policy of socialization of these activities.

#### ***4.2.6. Family rituals***

Ritual activities in the family such as funeral, Tet festival, worship ... will be adjusted in order to reduce superstitious colors, towards the values attached directly to human life. The element of faith will continue to be maintained in each family's spiritual life. Thanks to this belief, people can adjust to balance their behaviors. Thus, the tendency to restore more and more spiritual activities and rituals is a normative manifestation.

### **4.3. Current issues**

#### ***4.3.1. Issues raised by the change of structure and functions of the Tay family***

##### ***4.3.1.1. Change of family structure in the direction of miniaturization and diversification***

According to research results, the family structure of the Tay people in Cao Bang Province consists of the nuclear family (2 generations) accounting for 41.0% and the extended family (3, 4 generations) accounting for 59.0% (see Table 1). Among the extended family, the primary type includes parents living with their married sons.

The number of households has increased rapidly in most areas of the province and the rate of fertility decline has influenced the household size since

the 1980s when the Population and Family Planning Program was active. In contrast, in the previous period, despite the high fertility level, the average family size was not significantly higher than the later stages indicating that divorce was the main cause of the small household size. With the change in the meaning of marriage and family under the tendency to pay attention to individuals, the family structure also changes significantly. The family size is getting smaller and there is an appearance of many types of families (nuclear families, extended families, and lone-parent families).

#### *4.3.1.2. Change in meaning of marriage and family in the direction of personal attention*

The transformation of the meaning of marriage manifests itself in reducing the role of parents, relatives and increasing the role of the individual in understanding and deciding marriage. Reducing family and social control of marriage means more self-control by the youth than before and in marriage. The downside of this trend is that the phenomenon of premarital sex, domestic violence and divorce tends to grow up. To which level are these phenomena increasing and what are their consequences are of interest to study in order to see the impacts of modernization.

With the development of market economy, the trend of economicization in rituals related to family culture tends to increase. Only a very small proportion of couples does not hold weddings and tends to fall in the recent marriage group. The wedding organization in restaurants or hotels in the marriage group after renovation has increased compared to the previous period, especially for weddings in the city or town. Wedding gifts has shifted mainly from artifacts to gifts in cash, especially in the period after the renovation when moving to market economy. Through the comparison between the cost and value of the wedding gifts, it is shown that the tendency for the economicization of weddings has also been occurring in all the family rituals of Tay people in Cao Bang province.

#### *4.3.1.3. Behavioral issues (violence, divorce ...) in the family*

Economic development and urbanization have more or less affected the Tay family's life recently, and the possibility of conflict between husband and wife can occur in almost all fields of the family life. However, the issues of behavior between husband and wife, parenting and family economy are the most potential areas of conflict between husband and wife (occupational and parenting conflicts..).

#### *4.3.1.4. Ethical education is not valued, many norms are no longer appreciated*

As analyzed in the change of educational function of the family, education is now being misunderstood as going to school so many families tend to focus only on learning without actually undertaking comprehensive education. This is also due to the idea of democratic equality, desiring to make children free and more comfortable. As a result, many of the children's behaviors are simplified by the

parents, leading to more inexact expressions by children over their parents. Many kids are not fully prepared both psychology and knowledge to have appropriate behaviors in different communication situations.

#### *4.3.1.5. Rituals within the family appear to be abusive*

Rituals, religious beliefs in the traditional Tay family are tending to be strongly restored to create a spiritual support for the family members. However, the excesses of many families are causing this activity to affect the life. Too many rituals hold at the beginning of the year cause material waste, affects production which is one of the main reasons for family conflicts...

#### *4.3.1.6. Issues raised by the transformation of the Tay family functions*

- From the change of economic function: due to impacts of industrialization and modernization, the division of a few families with land, property, and production expansion... has become better while others become employed with no property and capability to expand their production.

As a consumer unit, families here are primarily using their own products instead of consuming products made by others.

- From the change in childbirth function of the family: the couples are proactive in the number of children and the time of childbirth ... besides, there is an increase in premarital and extramarital sex.

- From the change in the socialization function of the family: Today, many people have the idea of taking social education as a substitute for family education, which reduces the educational function of the family, creates a space, affects children's personalities and creates a gap in the transition from tradition to the present.

- From the change of psychological and emotional function of the family: changes of Tay family structure are challenging, difficult to perform this function of the family, especially the young one, from the development of love after marriage, the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, the behavior between parents and children...

With such above issues, the Tay family in Cao Bang should be better oriented to develop firmly in the current period.

### ***4.3.2. Orientation for building and developing Tay family culture in Cao Bang province in the integration period***

#### *\* Economy*

Continuing to implement national target programs on economy and social security, and poverty reduction ... These programs have brought positive effects for improving people's lives and creating more favorable conditions for families in daily activities.

Focusing resources on supporting the household economy. Household economic support should be paid attention to by specific activities such as improving facilities for agricultural production, especially for women's production activities in order to improve economic efficiency while

reducing the heavy burden on women workers who play a key role in maintaining family well-being and harmony, as well as the education and care of children.

In addition to improving production tools, the household economic support also needs to be addressed to guide mixed economic models, so that family members can participate and support each other and can take advantage of all human resources in the family to participate in production activities, reducing the proportion of children or adults who are separated from their families and participate in seasonal production activities outside the family.

\*Culture - society

- It is necessary to promote scientific research on the values of traditional Tay family culture. Every stage of family culture construction should be carried out on the basis of accurate assessment of the values that have shaped from the tradition. This assessment must be conducted over time, in many respects, as at different study periods traditional values may be exploited inconsistently.

- Strengthening the setting examples of the typical family on the mass media not only creates the orientation effect, as standard for other families, replicates the model in the community but also works in the family itself.

- It is also important to renovate the process of mobilizing the construction of cultural families. This is a matter of immediate adjustment. The above analysis has still limited in effectiveness, is just the form of the movement. Therefore, the renovation of the process of the movement is urgent, contributing to avoid waste of effort, money and attention of all levels because the efficiency has not come into essence.

- In addition, it is a need to promoting family culture clubs, non-violent family clubs, progressive family clubs... in the local area.

- Strengthening arts and cultural activities on family topics, promoting family also plays an significant role. Activities aimed at strengthening and building family culture should be determined to be people-oriented, aware of the need to protect and preserve traditional cultural values in the modern Vietnamese family.

- It is also required to actively renovate the implementation of programs to prevent domestic violence and gender equality.

\*Education and training

- Strengthening family law education: Modern society is increasingly promoting the role of law. All relationships are governed by a legal relationship that creates a consensus, order, and a basis for a civilized society.

- Focusing on the content of educationg culture, behavior and responsibilities of the family in schools.

- Training behavior skills in families for individuals of marriage preparation. Although the age of marriage has increased, that time is mainly spent on learning to improve professional knowledge and basic knowledge of the organization of life and family behavior.

- Strengthening family knowledge for grassroots cadres. These are issues related to: 1) basic knowledge of traditional family customs, especially family rituals, 2) legal knowledge related to family 3) guidelines for family economic development.

### **Summary**

Under the impact of economic, political, social and cultural factors... the Tay family culture in Cao Bang province has many disturbances in need of adjustment. The adjustment, consolidation and building of family culture in Vietnam in the present period is indispensable when new human values of the era are constantly affecting the concept of traditional values. The adjustment should be based on the principle of the Party and State's viewpoints on the family; in accordance with the multi-model and multi-structure trend of the modern family; the goal of comprehensive human development; and a matter of preserving the traditional culture of Vietnamese identity.

The problem posed by the current situation of studying Tay family culture in Cao Bang province is that there should be timely adjustment of positive factors, active prevention of negative factors, based on forecasts on future trend of family culture change. Based on the research results, it can be confirmed that the research hypothesis is initially correct and quite appropriate to the reality, the change of the Tay family culture in Cao Bang province is an objective necessity. These influences will cause changes in the family culture of Tay people in the direction of the modern family in both positive and negative aspects.

It is necessary to carry out a series of synchronous measures, which require the appropriate attention of the authorities from central to local levels, in order to bring into play good traditional values of the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang province..

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the study on the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang province, we have drawn the following conclusions:

1. On the basis of survey and investigation in the field of research and collection of published works of scientists, the thesis focuses on describing, analyzing and clarifying the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang province from tradition to the present, in order to affirm the good values which have a great influence on the culture of the region. The thesis also identifies the characteristics of the Tay family culture; contributing to the preservation and promotion of good elements for the construction of new rural areas in the period of industrialization and modernization. The results of the study answer the research questions and research hypotheses set forth in the introduction of the thesis.

2. To study the components of the Tay family culture, we used the structural-functional theory as the basis for the study. The approach to the structural-

functional theory helps the author to discover and explain the uncertainties, thereby trying to come up with solutions to ensure balance and orderly operation for the whole system.

3. Theoretically, family culture is understood as a *system of values and norms that specifically regulate the relationship between family members and the relationship between the family and the society, reflecting the nature of family forms that characterize communities, ethnic groups, and different areas formed and developed through the long history of family life in close association with the conditions of economic development, natural and social environment.*

4. Traditional family culture of the Tay people in Cao Bang Province has its own identity, expressed through: the concept of marriage, family rituals, education and behavior in the family ... Over time of endosmosis and development, the traditional family culture of the Tay people has created a value system contributing to shape the character and cultural identity of the Vietnamese family.

In the context of international economic exchange and integration strongly affecting each Tay family in Cao Bang Province at present, the enhancement of cultural exchange between regions and ethnic groups, the family culture of Tay people in Cao Bang province is now showing a profound intersection with a lot of changes compared to the tradition such as: such as variations in family size, behaviors among family members, roles of members in family education and in family rituals. Relationships between generations in the family are no longer one-sided, so is the transmission of cultural values and cultural knowledge... Family size has changed, nuclear family is increasingly dominant, large families, or three to four generation ones are declining. Family structure is more volatile, less sustainable due to changes in the concept of marriage, happiness, and family responsibilities of the members as well as in the value norms...

6. The change of values in traditional Tay family culture in Cao Bang Province is influenced by a number of subjective and objective causes. One of the main reasons is from the socio-economic development policies of the Party and the State, the strong impact of the market economy, the exchange of economic integration between cultures. This has significantly improved the material and spiritual life of the people, but has also indirectly altered cultural values and led to complex issues that need to be addressed by the whole of society. .

7. Cultural transformation is also a cultural development from tradition to modern. In the process of transformation, there are many developments in accordance with the general law of society, however, there are also inconsistencies, which damage traditional culture. The family culture of the Tay people in Cao Bang province is not beyond that rule, in addition to positive cultural factors in the process of transformation, there are many limited issues set out today, such as: social evils that threaten families; changes in the roles and functions of members in the family culture; traditional family education;

relationships and behavior with the clan, the village and community ... these are issues that need to be addressed and suggested for future researches.

Due to that fact, the development of a value-oriented system that promotes a sense of initiative in regulating families in the direction of reconciling traditional and modern views, renovating the contents and methods of carrying out the campaign to build cultural families and raise the effectiveness of propaganda and training of cadres as well as continuing implementation of projects supporting the development of family economy... are key issues to focus on. The orientation of building Vietnamese family culture in general in the renovation period is very necessary and it is possible to do well if there is consensus of participation of many forces, especially when the Party and the State is determined to focus on implementing the family strategy of Vietnam.

**LIST OF THE AUTHOR'S PUBLICATIONS  
RELATED TO THE THESIS**

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