

Minoru Teramoto, Nguyen Duc Chien, Misaki Iwai, Bui The Cuong. *The Vietnamese Family During the Period of Promoting Industrialization, Modernization and International Integration*. Chiba: IDE-JETRO, 2017.

Introduction to this Interim Report

The Vietnamese Family During the Period of Industrialization, Modernization and International Integration

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Abstract

This is a brief introduction of our research project which focuses on the present situation and the transformation of the Vietnamese families during the period of promoting industrialization, modernization and international integration.

Key Words: Vietnamese family, society, transformation, industrialization, modernization, international integration

1. Background

No one can live alone. Even a man or a woman facing solitude and feeling alone still depends on somebody to survive even if unknowingly; such is the nature of humane existence. In light of this need, the family which can be called the basic unit of society, forms one of the crucial bases for people's lives.

In Vietnam, a unification process commenced after the Vietnam War. The Vietnamese government basically intended to implement the same policy with the North in the South Vietnam. However, conditions that had supported the war-time North Vietnam system (rationing system, among other things) had already changed. Assistance from the Soviet Union and the East European countries changed from grant aid to paid aid. Furthermore, during the war, people made an effort to share and could withstand hard, difficult economic situations without complaining.

After the Vietnam War, these conditions disappeared. The “invasion” of Cambodia in

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Minoru Teramoto, Nguyen Duc Chien, Misaki Iwai, Bui The Cuong. *The Vietnamese Family During the Period of Promoting Industrialization, Modernization and International Integration*. Chiba: IDE-JETRO, 2017.

December 1978 isolated Vietnam in the international community, even though Vietnam considered their actions valid. The government's deficit had been increasing due to its attempts to maintain the old system.

The 6th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam was held in December 1986, adopted a “Đổi Mới” policy (renewal policy) to resolve these problems. “Đổi Mới” is a comprehensive policy; however, a central task of “Đổi mới” was transformation from a state controlled planned economy into a state-controlled market economy. And also, Vietnam withdrew from Cambodia in December 1989.

Thereafter, Vietnam's economy and society started to open. With support from international organizations and communities, Vietnam entered a new stage of development.

Border trades with China restarted in 1989. The trade embargo imposed on Vietnam by the U.S. was lifted in February 1994. In 1995, Vietnam became a member of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and established diplomatic relations with the United States of America(USA). From the middle of the 1990s, Vietnam promoted industrialization and modernization as a national policy directed at becoming an industrial country basically by 2020. In July 2000, Vietnam signed a Bilateral Trade Agreement with the USA. This trade agreement came into force from December 11, 2001. Vietnam also became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on January 11, 2007 after more than 10 years of negotiations.

2. Purpose of this research project

As outlined above, Vietnam has entered a stage where it promotes industrialization, modernization and international integration. Experiences of other countries such as Japan, demonstrate that countries that promote industrialization and modernization would experience a declining birthrate, with changes in the relationships between family members, among other related things, thus becoming an aging society (Teramoto, 2015). If these outcomes occur in Vietnam, they would influence the country's future welfare.

For this reason, this research project focuses on the present situation and the transformation of the Vietnamese family during the period of promoting industrialization, modernization and international integration.

Our approaches are based on field research and analyses of local materials.

Minoru Teramoto, Nguyen Duc Chien, Misaki Iwai, Bui The Cuong. *The Vietnamese Family During the Period of Promoting Industrialization, Modernization and International Integration*. Chiba: IDE-JETRO, 2017.

Finally, the history of our earlier activities can be briefly summarized as follows.

In fiscal year 2015, we produced a report named “Gia đình Việt Nam trong thời kỳ công nghiệp hóa, hiện đại hóa, hội nhập quốc tế (Teramoto, Bùi Thế Cường, Phạm Văn Bích, Iwai, 2016)”. But in fiscal year 2015/2016, our research group worked without financial support because of the type of study group authorized by IDE-JETRO².

After the application process, this research project received permission from IDE-JETRO in 2015 to start activities with a budget for two years. Therefore, fiscal year 2016 /2017 is the first year of our new research project.

3. Introduction of this interim report

This interim report is organized as follows. Each paper in this interim report is an independent paper and the value of each manuscript is the result of each author's efforts.

Chapter 1 (Impact of Modernization on the Basic Functions of Traditional Vietnamese Family) by Nguyen Duc Chien is a commissioned manuscript. Based on analyses of local materials, this paper reveals us how modernization influences the Vietnamese traditional family in the period of interest.

Chapter 2 (Changing Residence Patterns and Ancestor Worship in a Northern Vietnamese Village) is a paper of Ms. Misaki Iwai. Based on the field research in a village which is about 100 km far from Hanoi, the author examines some aspects of changing residence patterns and ancestral ritual performances in “Đổi Mới” era.

Chapter 3 (Roles and Functions of Vietnamese Families in Caring for a Member with Disabilities: Case Studies from the Red River Delta Region) by Minoru Teramoto is a paper based on field research in a commune in one province of Red River Delta region. This paper tries to clarify the roles and functions of the Vietnamese families caring for a member with disabilities.

Chapter 4 is a paper by Bui The Cuong (Intentions of Vietnamese Families for Future: Findings from a Survey in the Southern Key Economic Zones of Vietnam). Based on the data set of a survey conducted in 2015, the paper analyzes the intentions of families living in the Southern Key Economic Zone of Vietnam.

² There is a type of research group without a budget to prepare for next stage in IDE-JETRO. When I sent a proposal to establish a study group to the IDE-JETRO in 2014, I was staying long term in Ho Chi Minh City. At that time, obtaining permission to establish a study group about the Vietnamese family was the most crucial issue.

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Finally, even though this report is an interim one, we hope that each paper contributes to the better understanding of the situations of Vietnamese families living in the period of the promotion of industrialization, modernization and international integration³.

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