

Characteristic community approach: The discussions and researches on the communities in Vietnam

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Abstract: *Study on the community in general and the academic researching community of Vietnam or an area in a region in particular to serve the cause of development so far has not seen a lot. The research on the community is primarily approached from psychological science and research on the community within other general issue. From discrete studies with many different approaches, the author wish to have the original sketch of the discussion on the community of the Vietnamese from the general to the particular, the overall to the specific on the culture - society in three aspects: society - history, society - culture and personality.*

Keywords: The community, social - historical approach, social - cultural approach, personality approach.

Question

Community is one of the primitive nature of human. Over many millennia, the people of Vietnam was formed and asserted themselves as a nation-state. The process of formation and development of the nation with Vietnam specific identity today is the whole process of confirming the

intrinsic nature from geographical condition to characterized anthropology, beside the continued development of selective elite of other cultures. Community is one of the elements of that own nature.

Studies on the community of Vietnamese people, we noticed, the Vietnamese community has not appeared much

in the study of social sciences. It can be seen, among the discussions, researches on the community, to take a position, that, the authors have had several viewpoints, different positions to consider. According to the approach from the general to the particular, from the overall to the specific, each works when researching community is integrated approach, multi-dimension. It is difficult to see the works only accessing the approach in one direction. Through synthesis, analysis of researches on the community in the direction of history, culture, personality, we find that there are three following approaches:

1. The community of Vietnamese under the social - historical perspective

Social - historical approach is the study of accumulation, formation, stability and sustainable development which is difficult to change of a nation - here it is how to crystallize through each people's personality of that nation.

Social - historical perspective - when studying the community of Vietnamese, the scientists are combined with the individuality. Phan Huy Lê (1987) in the article "Some key features related to ethnic sentiment in the medieval period" said that the community - individuality express in three aspects: living style (food, clothing, housing), thinking (thinking),

behaviors (people - people relationship in the community). In the history of Vietnam society, community associated with the entire life of Vietnamese farmers. According to Phan Huy Lê, along with historical periods X-XIX century, Western societies have developed extremely well in terms of production and social movement, "the birth and development of capitalism has created the great changes in the whole social life", but Vietnam still developed with the general characteristics of the feudal society in the East. In this Vietnam era, the economic relationship was still feudal system of ownership of land and rents forms of exploitation of the feudal lords to peasants; the different dependent relations of farmers for feudal landlords; community affected by the structure of the village; addresses the relationship between owners and farmers, between farmers and farmers bearing the interdependent model "land king, temple village", "village's practices are more important than the king's rules".

Most authors like Trần Đình Hượu (1986), Nguyễn Hồng Phong (1963), Phạm Minh Hạc (2001), Đỗ Long, Trần Hiệp (1993), Đỗ Long (1997), Trần Ngọc Thêm (1999, 2006)... mentioned the community of Vietnam directly or indirectly expressed the same view that the community is one of the significant features of Vietnam, Vietnam's culture.

Trần Đình Huợu (1986) in his essay “On the issue of finding unique ethnic culture”, said that the long-term stability of the village is the basis for maintaining and strengthening the village community. Along with the village community is personal sense of ownership which is not highly developed. Much of life in the village community of Vietnam people early twentieth century is the family life simulation (home). Cohesion of Vietnam with family is repeated by their engagement with the village. The bond Vietnamese people for their solid village like the ropes tying them together with the family... When the community is high, the individuality of human is blurred. “I” behinds the “we” to increase power and therefore personal responsibility, the “I” individuality isn’t expressed. Community factors in village personality dominated entirely and created principle egalitarian, “almost good things are better than just few best things”. This is a factor which limits the development capacity of individualities. Egalitarianism is growing; strengthening jealousy, pettiness of small farmers and making people cling to each other, therefore, leads to self-restraint “ego”, the individuality, capacity as well as benefit, desire so they do not expose the nature. Community of human expresses so strong that only enhances the features. “village’s practices are more important than the king’s rules”

is an expression of local nature. In the history of Vietnam, in the character of small farmers, community factor prevails over individual element in all aspects (economic life, culture, society) stunted the comprehensive development of human personality.

Community spirit, community psychology is a feature in the minds of people in Vietnam. Features are embodied in stages from the micro to the macro, from modern to contemporary history. A sense of community is a factor in forming coordination capacity. In psychology works in community and heritage village of Đỗ Long and Trần Hiệp (1993), the authors suggest that public sentiment was once the spiritual strong, credible but it also created an enormous pressure, a stagnant inertia for the personality development. Today we got to do to confirm the location and status of each of the individual liberation, must create the conditions for them so they can become independent entities, the free in the true mean on the development path.

2. Community of Vietnamese under social - culture view

Cultural capital or social - cultural capital is not there from the start of shaping nations but it accumulates, gradually stabilized, exist during the construction and development. Living conditions with habitat, the natural environment regulates culture and society identity a nation.

Social and cultural approach allows subject to eliminate the division of human conception of society as an entity and as a cultural entity. This approach is increasingly recognized world wide by researchers, because it not only expands the concept of human development, but also brings the research the possibility of using the traditional methods of research into solving specific problems. In addition, this approach also helps researchers have a baseline methodology for analyzing the historical development process - from sections of society civilization (Nguyễn Kim Lai, 2004).

The whole length of the turbulent history of Vietnam has not built for the people of a great culture (no large poetry painting background, no big philosophy, no religious doctrine characteristics of ethnic...), but in every dimension of that culture have a little glimpse of the mixture between different cultures.

Trần Đình Hượu said: “The subject of the culture of Vietnam, of the national culture is Kinh”, living conditions in all three habitats: mountains, rivers and coastal areas. “That was the monsoon affected areas”,... “It is also water-rice area which people had to settled in” (Trần Đình Hượu, 1986: 112). Besides, Vietnam is also a coastal strip of land lies on the way cultural exchange fascinated by the Indian civilization, Chinese civilization, the civilization of the West; while the long history of

clashes with invasion plot, assimilated by the Han. Therefore, social community - cultural expresses clearly through solidarity to hang on before nature, painting unite to resist foreign aggression, “in order to cope with the outsiders”... And after unity to the entire nation against foreign aggression, natural disasters, returning to daily life in the community, the narrow practices split villages, subsistence, no goods, low life, therefore villagers must “fresh leaves caring torn leaves, sweet division and fleshy Share” and is ideal to live in harmony, love each other in poverty.

According to Vũ Dũng (2009) when studying community in Vietnam, may find two types of groups: communities (villages, hamlets) and family community.

Communities associated with the village, the village community, besides observing the law of the feudal state, have a separate system of standards, very tight and play an important role in regulating behavior members of the community; it was stated in the conventions of the village. In the North, the Center, the community standards are called by local laws, in the Highlands called customary law. The way to organize communities in different nations, of different areas has different views.

Community of Vietnamese residents - Kinh (often called the village community) is surrounded by bamboo

village. In the old society, that is relatively closed community. The closed by the provisions of the production nature of self-sufficiency, self-level and business is not developed. Each village has its own conventions defined rights, responsibilities, obligations and the behavior of the members of the community. A part from that, it formed the consciousness of us, our feelings - a sense of community and a sense of community for the members of their communities.

In the northern mountainous area, the way of organizing communities of ethnic minorities has distinctions. Villages of ethnic minorities in the Northwest area of the community belong to one or two lines, three ethnic same residence. Each has a distinct boundary which is specified in writing or oral. The Northwestern minorities, village communities are the places where families, clans live together, share their emotions and have the same fortune.

For Vietnamese people in the plain or ethnic minorities in the mountainous areas, the sense of community always plays an important role in the fights against invaders, natural disasters and their daily life. The sense of community gives prominence to spirit of "whole leaves wrap torn leaves", "stay together", helping each other in case of difficulties, illness, great work like weddings, funerals, house-building, death anniversaries...

In the South of Vietnam, the sense of community is a natural demand of the local people. It is glue binding village members to ensure and maintain the historical sustainable development of the Southern villages. Interaction between the sense of community and personality forms a unique style of the Southerners.

The southern village community is balanced by the personal freedom rather than the autonomy of the northern village community. The relationship of the southern villagers is relatively equal.

According to Phan An (2015), the sense of community in the Southern villages is quite clearly shown in the social and cultural activities. The Communal House of a Southern village holds an important position in the life of the village community. The first thing the villagers do when establishing a village is building a Communal House.

In addition, the sense of community in the Southern villages is shown in the habits and customs and behavior of the villagers. In their private affairs such as weddings, funerals, the families in the villages are shared by villagers' certain contribution and enthusiastic help.

In term of the family community, according to Vũ Dũng (2009), the family sentiment has become a factor adjusting personal behavior. Individuals ordinarily pay more

attention to their family members, which psychologists called favoritism. The family sentiment or blood line is an important factor to create cohesion, spirit of mutual support among the family members. In the hardest times or doing the great work of the family (weddings, funerals, house-building, sickness...), the first people called to help are the family members. This type of community has the best cohesion, sympathy and cooperation of the ethnic groups.

The fine family tradition is motivation for the family members to strive and has a great influence on their personality development. It drives the family members to think and take action with the aim of preserving reputation and making their family more honorable.

The sense of community of Vietnamese people (in the broad sense - sense of community of the Vietnamese nation, patriotism) is a feature of the national identity. The study of oversea Vietnamese community by Hữu Ngọc (2016) includes some sensible points that could help us to have better knowledge of Vietnamese nation in general. In the sense of community of the Vietnamese nation, the sense of family community seems to be the most important. It is particularly evident in the Vietnamese families in the US. Typically, in the first 5-6 years, parents work hard to invest in their children' education; the

children also try to study with the aim to repaying their parents and their family becoming wealthier. This sense of community favors family, then countryman. According to a research by Y. Higuchi, the sequence preference in the social relations of Vietnamese people is: 1/ family, 2/ friends, 3/ in the labor; that of Japanese is: 1/ friends, 2/ family, 3/ in the labor.

According to the researchers, the sense of community can generate great strength, however, its likely restrictions are: first, giving high prominence to collectiveness could lead to personality extermination, Vietnamese people are rarely personalized, otherwise always dissolve into the social relationships like fellowships; second, the sense of community leads to the habit of dependence, "floating water, floating water-fern", "drifting water, drifting water-fern", "a public hall is never swept"; third, the sense of community could cause leveling practice, envy, "no one is allowed to be better"... Fourth, when the threat of stability is over, the privatization, localization appear (Vũ Dũng, 2009); Nguyễn Đình Thiện, 2007; Phan An, 2015).

3. The sense of community of Vietnamese people through personality approach

The study of human psychology through personality approach requires considering every specific individual as a product of social, historic and cultural conditions, education, training

and self-training. In the psychology, personality approach means to get in touch with specific individuals in reality.

Personality is formed from social-historical conditions, the measure of people's spiritual and cultural level. Personality is taken form in the long process of people's growth and development through education, practical activities and human interaction. The activities and communication help people realize their dignity and worth in the system of social relations. Up to then, they become the subject of social relations.

The studies of personality approach primarily come from to social structures to analyze, assess personality of Vietnamese people. In the work of Vietnamese Villages by Nguyễn Hồng Phong (1959), in the analysis of economic basis, social structure like families, clans, communities and communal activities, beside criticizing the negative characteristics in Vietnamese villages (private-mined, disorderly, illiberal, conservative, divisive, lavish feasts, superstition), the author also points out the positive characteristics (solidarity, mutual assistance, community spirit, grateful to ancestors, grateful to benefactors...). Being published later, the work of Study of National Characters by Nguyễn Hồng Phong (1963) indicates the Vietnamese particularity such as "collective",

"thinking high of morality", "industrious, thrifty, simple, realistic", indomitable spirit of patriotism, peace-loving, humanitarian and optimistic.

A rather special research by Phạm Minh Hạc (study of people and human resources in industrialization, modernization) specializes the complex social relations: relationships between natural man and social man; citizenly man and family man, individual man; action man and spiritual man; class-man and national man; human-man; traditional man and modern man; ideal man and ordinary man; natural man and universal man... the author believed that a person's personality is relevance between his scale of values, measures and the scale of values and measures of the society and community (Phạm Minh Hạc, 2001: 157).

In the research on sense of community through personality approach, author Hữu Ngọc (2016) analyzed meticulously personality. He believed that the personality affirms every individual's independence in the community but it is important they have to serve the community because of their individual values, not because of being a part of the community.

In the work of sense of community - personality and the "self" of Vietnamese people) by Đỗ Long and Phan Thị Mai Hương, in the case study of Vietnamese youth groups, the authors found that although their sense of community is outstanding,

their “self” is still seen. The personality here is not only narrow-minded, selfish, acquisition of special benefits but personal roles and responsibilities also (Đỗ Long, Phan Thị Mai Hương, 2002: 297).

In short, one of the most prominent characteristics in the Vietnamese culture is sense of community, formed and stabilized in the historical process. Nevertheless, the sense of community is not vague collectivism as before (period of subsidized regime before the innovation). The sense of community is not inseparable from the personality because both of them attach to a specific person. However, the sense of community is often associated with environment, historical conditions, culture and more “variable” than the personality in terms of the diachronic. The culture of Vietnam is fundamentally a community culture; however, it creates personalities expressed in specific acts □

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