

**Vietnamese Transcript:**

**Em:** Thì thường mừng một, thì người ta lại thăm nhà nhau, còn mừng hai thì người ta làm sao chị? Người ta có cái gì đó “mừng một Tết cha, mừng ba Tết thầy,...”<sup>1</sup> hay cái gì đó? Mừng hai, mừng ba thì người ta làm... thường [thì] người ta làm cái gì chị?

**Chị:** Ah... theo... những gia đình khác thì mình không biết cái sinh hoạt của... tùy theo gia đình, nhưng gia đình của chị đó, thì là mừng một á, là thăm những cái người thân gần nhất, chẳng hạn như anh chị em trong gia đình, cha mẹ, những người đó cần phải được viếng thăm đầu tiên. Rồi ngày mừng hai á, là sẽ đi thăm bà con ở xa, chẳng hạn như ở những cái vùng khác, những cái thành phố khác. Thì...

**Em:** Đi về quê...

**Chị:** Về dưới quê hay là lên trên thành, trên tỉnh, thay phiên nhau đi xa hơn. Rồi ngày mừng ba á là có thể là người ta sẽ về nhà, nhà ai nấy về, để người ta nghỉ ngơi, người ta... tổ chức lại nhà cửa sạch sẽ, dọn dẹp những cái phần tết nhất đó người ta dẹp qua một bên để ngày mừng bốn họ bắt đầu đi làm trở lại.

**Em:** Dạ dạ... Rồi ah... khi mà Tết á, thì giống như... ngoài cái việc mà tổ chức ăn uống xong rồi đi thăm người này người kia thì người ta có những cái trò chơi hay những cái gì đó để mà khi mà mọi người tập hợp lại ở trong nhà thì người ta tổ chức ra người ta chơi, giống như chơi đánh bài hay là... chơi bầu cua đồ đồ này nọ. Ở nhà chị có hay chơi mấy cái đó hông?

**Chị:** Nhà chị bây giờ thì hông có chơi nữa, tại nhà có công việc làm ăn, rồi ai cũng có công việc làm hết cho nên không có ai có dư thời gian để làm những chuyện đó. Nhưng mà ngày xưa lúc mà chị còn nhỏ, còn ở dưới quê á, ở dưới làng quê đó, thì dòng họ thì đông, cả một cái làng khoảng mấy chục nhà vậy đó, ở gần gần gần nhau, mà những nhà đó toàn là bà con dòng họ với nhau không hà. Thì Tết đó, họ gom lại hết một cái nhà nào lớn đó, thì một cái nhà nào đó thì họ sẽ “host”, họ tổ chức, có người đứng ra tổ chức. Rồi dòng họ tới, tới rồi ăn uống, rồi có khi người ta uống rượu rồi người ta... chơi đánh bài, chơi bầu cua, chơi... những cái trò chơi dân gian của Việt Nam. Thì chơi chủ yếu là cho vui là nhiều chứ không có ăn... hông có tiền bạc gì hết. Cũng có, nhưng mà cái số nó rất là ít, để cho vui thôi, rồi họ có thể chơi với nhau khoảng ba ngày ba đêm như vậy, rồi nhà ai nấy về để làm việc.

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<sup>1</sup> A complete version of this would be “*Mừng Một tết cha, Mừng Hai tết mẹ, Mừng Ba tết thầy.*” Here *Tết* may serve as either a noun or a verb. If *Tết* is understood as a noun, the whole saying can be translated as “the first day of New Year is fathers’ *Tết* (or *Tết* for fathers), the second day is mothers’ *Tết*, the third day is teachers’ *Tết*.” On the other hand, *Tết* as a verb includes the distinctive activities of *Tết* as the Vietnamese New Year celebration such as visiting and offering wishes to family, relatives, and friends. In that context, the saying can be understood as “On the first day of New Year, [we] visit and offer New Year greetings to [our] fathers; on the second day, to [our] mothers; on the third day, to [our] teachers.”

## English Translation:

**Younger cousin (Yc):** On the first day of the new year, people usually go to visit each other's homes. Then on the second day, what do people do, *chị hai*?<sup>2</sup> People say something like “[the] first day [is] fathers’ *Tết*<sup>3</sup>, third day [is] teachers’ *Tết*...”<sup>4</sup> or something like that. On the second and third days, what do people usually do?

**Older cousin (Oc):** Oh... according to... I don't know about other families' activities... [it depends] on the families, but in my family, we go and visit the closest relatives on the first day of New Year; for example, siblings in the family and parents, those are the people who need to be visited first. Then on the second day, [we] will go and visit relatives who live far away, such as in other regions or other cities...

**Yc:** People go to the countryside<sup>5</sup>...

**Oc:** People go to the countryside or to the city; each takes turn and goes further.<sup>6</sup> Then on the third day, people will stay home, return to their own homes, to rest...to organize, tidy up their houses, [and] clean up the celebration stuff. They put them away so that on the fourth day, they will start going to work again.

**Yc:** Yes, yes... Then... during *Tết*, like... besides having feasts and visiting others, people also have games or something like that, so that when everybody gathers together in the house, they will set up the games, like playing cards or... playing *bầu cua*<sup>7</sup> and such. In your family, do you play those games?

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<sup>2</sup> *Chị hai*: literally means “second sister.” However, the pronoun *chị* (translated as “sister” in English) is often used to refer to almost all females who are one to about 10 years older than the speaker. *Chị* is also used to address a female relative who is older than the speaker but in the same generation in the family. For example, a younger sibling usually addresses his/her older sister as *chị*, and the same for a younger cousin to an older cousin. In this conversation, *chị* means cousin. *Hai* (two or second) reveals the cousin's order in her family. In southern Vietnam, family order usually starts with *hai* (second) instead of *cả* (first, literally means “all” – the first or the oldest of all), which is often used in the north. Therefore, *hai* in this context indicates that the cousin is the oldest child in her family.

<sup>3</sup> *Tết*: New Year's Day or New Year's festival; *Tết* can refer to either *Tết tây* (lit. Western *Tết*, January 1<sup>st</sup> or New Year's Day according to the Western solar calendar) or *Tết ta* (lit. our *Tết*, New Year's Day in the Vietnamese lunar calendar). *Tết* can also be used to refer to holiday or festival in general, for example: *Tết Thiếu Nhi* (International Children's Day), *Tết Nguyên Tiêu* (Lantern Festival), *Tết Trung Thu* (Mid-Autumn Festival), ect.

<sup>4</sup> *Mùng một Tết cha, mừng ba Tết thầy*,...: a complete version of this would be “*Mùng Một tết cha, Mừng Hai tết mẹ, Mừng Ba tết thầy*.” Here *Tết* may serve as either a noun or a verb. If *Tết* is understood as a noun, the whole saying can be translated as “the first day of New Year is fathers’ *Tết* (or *Tết* for fathers), the second day is mothers’ *Tết*, the third day is teachers’ *Tết*.” On the other hand, *Tết* as a verb includes the distinctive activities of *Tết* as the Vietnamese New Year celebration such as visiting and offering wishes to family, relatives, and friends. In that context, the saying can be understood as “On the first day of New Year, [we] visit and offer New Year greetings to [our] fathers; on the second day, to [our] mothers; on the third day, to [our] teachers.”

<sup>5</sup> Or go back to one's hometown.

<sup>6</sup> In this conversation, the speaker's relatives take turns visiting one another on the second day of the new year, and they also travel further as compared to the first day.

<sup>7</sup> *Bầu cua, bầu cua tôm cá* (North) or *bầu cua cá cộp* (South) is a Vietnamese gambling game using three dice, similar to a dice game played by British sailors. The six sides of the dice, instead of showing one to six dots, have pictures of a winegourd (*bầu*), a crab (*cua*), a shrimp or prawn (*tôm*), a fish (*cá*), a rooster (*gà*) and, a stag or a deer (*hươu* or *nai*). During the game, players place wagers on a board, betting on which pictures will appear.

**Oc:** My family does not play them anymore because we have our business, everyone has their own work; therefore, we don't have much spare time to do such things. However, in the past, when I was young and still living in the countryside, in the village, we had a lot of relatives. The whole village had about several tens of families living close to each other, and those families are all related to one another. During *Tết*, they gather in a certain big house, a certain family will host, they will set things up, one will step up and organize. Then the relatives come, eat and drink – sometimes they will drink alcohol – then they will... play cards, play *bầu cua*, play... Vietnamese folk games. [They] play primarily for entertainment purposes, not for monetary gain. Yes, there are [a few people who play for money], but the amount [of money] is very little; [the money is] just for fun. They can play among themselves like that for three days and three nights, then everyone will return to his/her own house to go to work.

**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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