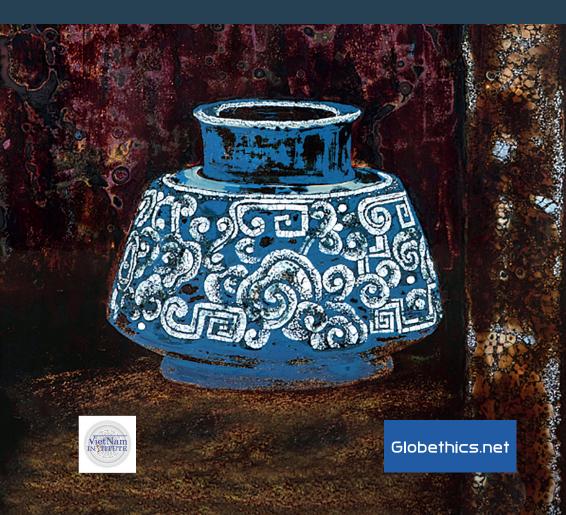# Vietnam in Transition
Education, Culture and Ethics
A Reader and Curriculum

Editor: Anh Tho Andres
Preface: Christoph Stückelberger

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Vietnam in Transition

Education, Culture and Ethics

A Reader and Curriculum

Vietnam in Transition
Education, Culture and Ethics
A Reader and Curriculum

Vietnam Hoc Institute, English Edition

Editor: Anh Tho Andres

With a Preface by Christoph Stückelberger
President and Founder of Globethics.net

Globethics.net Vietnam Ethics Series No. 1

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Section II Preserving our Vietnamese Cultural Identities

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PREFACE

Christoph Stückelberger[1]

This book is more than a book. It is a vision: A vision showing and recognizing the very rich traditional and present Vietnamese values and lively orientation.

This book is also a library: A compilation of thirty-six articles (in two volumes), covering different sectors such as business, economy, environment, culture, and education, as well as science and technology.

This book is contextual: An insight in the Vietnamese context with a special emphasis on current "Vietnam in transition". At the same time, this context reflects also global developments and globalization. It is of relevance for international readers: the Vietnamese abroad and the non-Vietnamese.

This book is also a tool: A reader and a curriculum for research, teaching and training in higher education as well as for people with leadership responsibilities in public and private sector.

Vietnam, with its old, rich cultures and religions, its fertile landscape, its lovely, intelligent and adaptive people, has a great potential. However, its history and presence is characterized by domination from foreign superpowers: French, Russian, American and Chinese geopolitical and economic interests led to endless suffering and had, and still have, a huge influence on the development of the country.

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[1] Professor of Ethics at universities on three continents, Founder and President of Globethics.net, Co-editor of Vietnam Ethics Series. Based in Geneva and Zürich, Switzerland.

This book is also an encouragement to strengthen the Vietnamese development led by themselves. It does not mean isolation, but playing an important role as a self-confident nation on the global level, as well as part of various regional cooperation networks, such as ASEAN and APEC.

The current signs of a new Cold War, now between US and China, increases the danger that countries like Vietnam once more become a target as satellite states of one of the superpowers, as it was the case in the past, with unjustifiable suffering and number of victims (without denying also some benefits). The non-aligned Movement NAM[2], in the 1950s to 1989, was an attempt of some countries to be a "third party" between the poles. In case that the current polarization continues –which I hope will be reduced and not increased– then my vision would be that Vietnam, with all its potential, can join and play an important role in a new coalition beyond the poles of USA and China.

The 19th century is often called the century of Europe, the 20th century the century of America, and the 21st, the Century of Asia. This should not only be seen in terms of economic and geopolitical dominance, but as recognition of values from the Asian context. They are diverse and not uniform, as European and American values are diverse and not uniform; however, specific values and virtues such as respect, community, and harmony, rooted in Confucianism and Buddhism, can become stronger and contribute to a balanced world, not against, but in combination with values from the other continents and religious-cultural traditions.

Education, and more specifically values-driven ethical education, is key for the economic, cultural, religious and political development of Vietnam. Only then the necessary and ambitious economic goals can be

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[2]   120   member   states.   Overview: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-Aligned_Movement

sustainable, and more than short-term profit maximisation. Only then, a balance between pride of the own context and openness to global cooperation can be achieved. Only then, the peaceful respect and cooperation between religions in Vietnam (especially Buddhist and Christians) and the non-religious part of the population can be achieved. Ethics education can essentially contribute to a harmonious, globally balanced world[3]. I recommend that ethics is offered as a basic course and is then systematically integrated in all subjects, such as economic ethics, business ethics, science and technology ethics, culture and ethics, political ethics, governance ethics, media ethics, cyber ethics, family ethics, leadership ethics, research ethics, publication ethics and so on. Integrating ethics as a core component of the Vietnam Hoc Study Program would give it a special brand.

The global network Globethics.net[4], where Anh Tho Andres served as staff, and myself as Founder/ President, offers manifold tools with the largest online ethics library, online courses, etc. We are happy that this book, as first volume in the Vietnam Ethics Series, is published by the Vietnam Hoc Institute in cooperation with Globethics.net Publishing house[5]. Also the cooperation with the Geneva Agape Foundation[6], especially on values-driven entrepreneurship, is promising.

I congratulate and wholeheartedly thank the Editor of this book, Dr. Anh Tho Andres, for her excellent work on this book, for her vision, her tireless inputs, her translation and compilation skills, her global insights and networks and her heart, deeply rooted in Vietnam, its people, culture, economic, and political well-being.

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[3] Stueckelberger, Christoph, Globalance. Ethics Handbook for a Balanced World Post-Covid, Globethics.net: Geneva 2020, free download www.globethics.net/ globalance

[4] www.globethics.net

[5] www.globethics.net/publications

[6] www.gafoundation.world

Her introduction in this volume unfolds more in detail the objectives, target groups and methodology of this compendium.

INTRODUCTION
TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

Anh Tho Andres[7]

This book reflects the process of constructing a curriculum for the studies on Vietnam, or 'Vietnam Hoc', intended for educators and researchers in the field of social studies.

The research on Vietnam Hoc aims to identify the needs of Education in the Vietnamese context of the 21st century. The intended outcome is to propose a study programme that can accompany the integration of Vietnamese learners into the international workplace.

Based on a selection of scholarly works, proceedings of seminars and conferences on Education, inside and outside Vietnam, a large set of contributions, from outstanding Vietnamese scholars, have been translated into this English edition, as an attempt to capture the learning environment of Vietnam, as a young nation, in the context of globalisation.

The texts proposed are about changes in the educational and cultural environment of Cochinchina under the French colonial period, major literary trends in the modernisation process of early 20C, policies of training primary school teachers of mid-20C, and directions for modern Education in the IR 4.0 era by early 21C. Transcripts of seminars and

[7] Since 1980, Dr Anh Tho Andres has actively participated in the different stages of development of Vietnam as an interpreter, consultant and researcher, based in Vietnam, Singapore and Switzerland. Since 2021, she initiated the Vietnam Hoc Institute and developed the editorial work with Prof. Dr Christoph Stückelberger, President and Founder of Globethics.net, and Assoc. Prof. Nguyen Manh Hung, Historian, based in Vietnam.

conferences reflect participants' visions on the future of Vietnamese Education, with the editor's footnotes and comments as takeaways at the end of each section.

Organisation of the Book

The English edition includes selected articles organised in six sections, under two main themes: (1) the changing landscape of the Vietnamese environment and (2) reflections on the Vietnamese University mission and objectives in response to the globalised context.

Section I discusses how Vietnamese culture has evolved throughout many episodes of the country's transformation, from a dependency status to a sovereign entity. The texts proposed in this section describe changes in the educational and cultural environment of Vietnam through different stages of development.

Section II discusses how the Vietnamese people cope with changing cultural values as a result of globalisation. The texts proposed in this section describe Vietnamese faith and spirituality found in Vietnamese literature through time and space.

Section III discusses Vietnamese socio-economic policies on sustainability. The texts proposed in this section describe how strategies for development interact with human development policy and education.

Section IV discusses the role of educators in the economy. The texts proposed in this section are strategies linked to the renewed mission of the University to serve economic activities.

Section V reflects how Vietnamese education can benefit from the international community by aligning with international standards. The texts proposed in this section stress the importance of norms and standards in quality education.

Section VI proposes to explore learning experiences of countries whose educational standards are worldly recognised. The texts presented

are reflections of international authors who support values-based education as part of the mission of Universities in the new context.

Key Takeaways

- Excerpts from the original texts are translated with editors' notes for educational purposes.
- References are publications, transcripts of seminars and conferences, or annotations by authors on other sources.
- Learning resources with links to Globethics.net digital library or others.
- Print-on-demand or electronic pdf version available upon request.

Challenges and Solutions in Translation

The translation of the original articles written in Vietnamese showed that without background information on the context, non-Vietnamese readers would have some problems understanding the message. For example, terms that take some meaning in the Vietnamese context cannot be translated literally without a background annotation. Therefore, we have translated and adapted them for the English edition with annotations. This ambiguity is one of the many difficulties in translating official documents, which most translators are experiencing. However, more importantly, the English equivalent, even when it is correctly translated, may lead to another misunderstanding because of the way the Vietnamese language constructs the new vocabulary to fit the needs of the modern context.

Let us consider the case of the term 'renovation'. In general, restructuring an economy implies a structural change of the economic policy that reduces State interventionism. In contrast, 'renovation' is an action to renovate or bring in some innovation, but in the early days of the Doi Moi open policy, renovation was used with the meaning

'restructuring', interchangeably in the Vietnamese management literature in the early 90s. Similarly, the term 'privatisation' implies that the law guarantees ownership of the shares on investment. For Vietnamese readers (in the country), it is specifically applied to the internal transfer of shares between State-own enterprises that belong to the same owner, the State, to private or foreign investors. So the correct translation is literally 'renovation', a reform leading to market capitalism.

This example is only one of the many development issues of the Vietnamese language to cope with the changing environment and newly imported concepts. Hence, there is a risk of misinterpretation with the interchangeable use of terms related to the privatisation process, such as 'foreign investor', 'new owner', 'minority shareholder', or even 'privatisation', or 'open economy', or 'free market economy', that can be misleading to the international readers.

Furthermore, the new Vietnamese vocabulary tends to invent new concepts that did not exist in classical Han-viet literature by adding a name to another name as a qualifier. For example, the term 'state' functions as adjective to refer to analogies such as the 'authorities' in 'state-owned enterprises', 'state ownership, 'state interventionism', 'state leadership' which should actually read 'under the leadership of the Party'. Hence, the formula 'Party and State', used as a qualifier that appears in all discourse interchangeably, brings confusion to the role of the VCP as a political party, being personified in the role of the State as a sovereign, thereby contradicting the concept of separation of powers used in a free economy context.

Another challenge is the lack of clarity of the Vietnamese syntax itself. For example, the Vietnamese grammar does not have a past tense, future tense, or conditional tense to indicate the difference between a past action that took place, a present action that is taking place, or an intended action that is part of the desired outcome. Instead, through a

juxtaposition of words in a specific way (primarily based on Sino-Vietnamese etymologies), the experienced reader can interpret the message's meaning. Unfortunately, this practice can be misleading or misunderstood by foreign scholars, especially regarding metaphysical concepts.

This lack of clarity explains the paraphrasing habit found in official Vietnamese legal documents, and our dilemma in translation. The lengthy formula, repeatedly mentioned on all documentation or paper treating this topic with a mixture of these terms, renders translation extremely difficult. Furthermore, paraphrasing occurs often to new concepts that did not exist in the Vietnamese vocabulary.

Given these issues, we have adapted the translation with annotations to make reading easier for non-Vietnamese learners to counter these difficulties.

Research, Contributors and Editorial Support

Among the editorial team are top scholars in the field of Applied Ethics, Corporate Finance, Development Studies, Education Sciences, International Business and Global Studies. All the individual authors requested to be part of the contributors are affiliates of the Vietnam Studies Institute (Hanoi), Vietnam Hoc Institute (Geneva), Globethics.net and Geneva Agape Foundation (Geneva), or Expert members of VNTU International worldwide.

Data Collection, Edition and Publication

Due to the complex process of data collection, selection and compilation for different multilingual sources, Volume I focused mainly on (1) analysing the needs in education with the special emphasis on the integration process of Vietnam and (2) the learning material needed in the (3) specific contexts that led to Vietnamese policies on development.

Volume II will be focusing on collaborative work with experts on (4) philosophies of education and applied ethics with a global perspective, (5) foreign studies and works of literature that contribute to Vietnamese philosophy of education, and last but not least, (6) a glimpse on Vietnamese perspectives on global issues of current concerns.

Editorial and Production Team

-Series-Editors: Prof. Dr. Christoph Stückelberger, Dr Anh Tho Andres
-Volume Editor and Translator: Dr. Anh Tho Andres
-Production Assistant: Kaushik S Kumar.
-Cover Graphic Designer: Thuy-Bui Howarth & Michael Cagnoni
-Globethics.net Publications Production Team: Ignace Haaz, Jakob William Bühlmann Quero
-Electronic catalogue and DRM distributor: Globethics.net Publications.

A Word of Thanks

This book would not have existed without many generations of Vietnamese scholars and researchers who have kept the spirit of Vietnamese people alive.

I hope that this contribution facilitates the exchange between educators and researchers in building up a Vietnam Hoc curriculum that is much needed for the moment.

My gratitude goes to my Co-Editor of the Vietnam Ethics Series, the Geneva Agape Foundation, VNTU International, and Globethics.net Foundation, whose support is invaluable.

A special thanks is dedicated to my Vietnam Hoc Team and SBI project assistants, who accompany the production of this book.

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Xin chào!
Dr. Anh Tho Andres
Vietnam Hoc Institute (Geneva)

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SECTION I

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE
OF VIETNAMESE SOCIETY
IN THE MODERNISATION PROCESS

0

THE CONTEXT

Culturally, Vietnam belongs to the East Asian tradition, which includes Taiwan, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, surrounding Mainland China. For over six thousand years of history, the countries in this society have evolved from the Han civilisation with Han scripts as the foundation and means for development in various fields. In addition, China and the countries of East Asian society share religious, cultural and social ties deeply ingrained in the subconscious of peoples of the same community. Given this long tradition, the ambition that we can change a nation's whole belief system in a few generations is unthinkable. However, we can modernise our society without losing our roots and traditions. Western technologies, scientific, logical reasoning, standards and discipline help to form an orderly community; combining Eastern wisdom and Western logical thinking is a lesson that we should learn to succeed in our modernisation efforts. The different stages of our transformation from the pre-colonial period to the post-75 reunification justify Doi Moi's renovation policy in the late 1980s.

01 The Pre-and Post-colonial Heritage

Vietnam belongs to the bloc of Asian countries that escaped the yoke of imperial colonial rule, which had two distinct characteristics that influenced the post-colonial heritage of the colonies in different ways. British colonial policy consisted of two occupation models: the

immigrant occupation and the exploitative occupation. According to the first model, conquerors settled down and founded a new nation, as in the case of North America, Australia, and South America. According to the second model, realising that sooner or later they would have to return the independence for indigenous people, the British had adopted a long-term policy by training a class of people to carry on the administration after they regained their independence. In contrast, the European colonial model did not have such clear distinctions. Indeed, French colonialists did not empower Vietnamese natives to replace French officers at leadership levels but kept them at the lower command positions. Their long-term intention was to stay in the colony, unlike the British who had another vision of how the global economy would develop.

Due to the divergence in colonial policies, all the former colonies of France (including Vietnam) experienced intense turmoil due to lacked leadership capable of governing the country. The consequences that resulted from this situation were numerous:

(1) New leaders had incomplete knowledge and were not equipped to make high-level management decisions for complex situations. Moreover, being unable to find the general principles governing the particular cases they often encountered, new leaders could not get beyond the narrow sphere they had long been accustomed to. As a result, when given responsibilities at the national level, they would naturally devalue that responsibility by delegating it to a small regional responsibility corresponding to narrow, more familiar conceptions.

(2) Due to the French's lack of empowerment policy towards local employees, the same people who later took over essential roles in the new government did not have the proper training to assume such a role. This situation was the dire consequence of a policy conceived to destroy French colonised peoples' resistance capability.

(3) Confucian sublime values and traditions had collapsed with the emergence of modern political supremacy in Vietnamese society under French imperialism. Under French colonial domination, the mandarin system components were partially maintained for political reasons but no longer had the same natural restraints as during the autocratic monarchy with the King's supreme power as a natural regulator. As a result, the weaknesses of the bureaucracy naturally increased, and the corruption and oppression of the people reached extreme heights, tolerated by the French colonisers.

(4) After independence, the lack of leadership in the industries is a huge obstacle to the national development. Indeed, the new nation's development needs leadership qualities to mobilise and awaken the masses and set them forth rapidly on the path of progress. The authors concluded that due to the ravaging consequences that the Western domination colonial period has left behind, the disintegration of Vietnamese society and the disruption in national leadership are the two most severe conditions on the national development of Vietnam as a new nation.

(5) However, one positive outcome of this period was that the modernisation process of Vietnam began with introducing the modern Vietnamese national language, the Quoc Ngu, following a thousand-year-long Confucian tradition. The literature deriving from the transcript of the traditional Vietnamese language (the Nôm) and the contribution of translated works of Western authors had opened a new era to Vietnamese scholarship during the first part of 20C, contributing to the richness of the "pre-war literature" creations.

02 The Socio-cultural and Political Context of the Period 1945-1975

Overall, the contemporary history of Vietnam is marked by the geopolitical issues of Southeast Asia, starting with the French and

American colonial policies in the region and the consequences thereof. At the end of World War II in Europe, the war continued in other parts of the globe under the Cold War period, the confrontation between the Free World and the Communist Bloc. With its strategic location at the crossroads of commercial routes for world trade exchanges, Vietnam has found itself in the front line in the East-West confrontation and struggle for economic influence. Vietnam (and Korea) became the frontline of this confrontation.

The Indochinese War consists of three stages: the nationalist struggle against the French or more commonly referred as the 'French War' (1945-1954), the American anti-imperialist struggle or 'Vietnam War' (1965-1975), and the Sino-Vietnamese confrontation or 'Third Indo-China War' (1976-1979). These are different designations by some authors but refer to the same period, and, in my opinion, is part of the same big war, the Indo-China War. In this context, the Indo-China populations had endured disruptions and changes that have affected their lives, economies and population structures for more than a century, even after the wars ended.

The Geneva Agreement of 1954 ended the French active involvement in Indochina, but the cultural mark they left perdured with French schools and French culture in the way of life and literature in Southern Vietnam until 1975, or even after, as most Northern Vietnamese who became Hanoi prominent leaders such as Ho Chi Minh, Pham Van Dong, Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap were still nostalgic with French culture. However, the new generations of leaders trained by either side of the Cold-war Divide make the post-war reconciliation process challenging to overcome due to a prolonged conflict of over a half-century.

As US engagement in the Vietnam War escalated dramatically between 1965-1975, the generation of American and Southern Vietnamese students of the sixties and seventies grew up with literature

linked to war, anti-war, existentialism, and peace literature. Thanks to the American NRC and FLAS grants, Vietnam Contemporary History has become a subject taught in many American universities. As a result, many Southern Vietnamese scholars and political analysts have benefitted from the flourishing period where education and freedom of speech were greatly encouraged. In addition, Vietnam War literature and political studies were also richly enhanced by the prolific publication of scholars and non-scholars authors, influenced mainly by the 1968 Revolution on Freedom, Peace, and Human rights started in Europe.

Meanwhile, in the new Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), all efforts were put into the anti-American propaganda following the Dien Bien Phu Victory on French colonialists in 1954, after an initial period of constructing socialism based on the Russian and Chinese models. Many students have been sent to Eastern Europe and Russia, some in China to learn on Marxist theories applied to these specific models. Between 1954-1990, the Northern Vietnamese economy had functioned as a planned economy according to the socialist model. The State controlled the entire production process from the supply of raw materials to distribution to consumers. As a result, the private sector was reduced to null, and so was the competitiveness of Northern Vietnamese entrepreneurs. In terms of culture and education, freedom of speech was banned, and creative thinking was exclusively designed to support the Marxist-Leninist idea of the "proletariat dictatorship" towards building a new society free of exploitation and social injustice. Foreign language learning –prioritising Russian, Chinese and other Eastern-european languages– was also strictly reserved for an elite who pledged allegiance to the Party's socialist vision.

03 The Socio-cultural and Ideological Divide

As a result of this long period of turmoil and disruption, the region's populations of Indo-China, mainly the Vietnamese people, had endured

sufferings in different physical, moral, economic, and social forms over three generations. In addition, the ideological confrontation sharpened by powerful propaganda from both opponents of the Cold War had left a lasting mark on the Vietnamese psyche, even after over fifty years of Peace.

From 1945 to 1975, the Communist State in the Nord had set up the general structure of a planned economy with state-owned enterprises. These entities ensured the monopoly in all strategic sectors such as transport on land, sea and air, health services, education, housing construction, public services, and the distribution of consumer products to the population. Likewise, the State-controlled research and development activities, the press, vocational training and education from primary to tertiary education, tourism activities, commercial activities in the country and abroad, investments with foreign capital, and the formation of cooperatives or other economic activities entities. Whether investment banks or commercial banks, all banks were controlled by the State for the capital market. According to the Marxist model, private property and capital accumulated in the hands of these companies are the property of the State. During the war, the sources of financing came from international aid (China, Russia mostly). This economic model was typically the case of North Vietnam until reunification with South Vietnam in 1976.

Meanwhile, the Republic of (South) Vietnam operated as a war economy under a liberal regime that allowed private ownership. Between 1954-1975, although the War was raging at the front line and in villages where both sides were fighting for every single square metre of land, the economy still recorded positive results, with electricity production increasing by fourteen times while industrial production recorded an average increase of 6.9% per year. Likewise, rice production had increased fourfold, and the number of students enrolled in the university had multiplied by fifty in the space of twenty years.

Moreover, foreign education and foreign languages allowed the exchange with Western economies led by the US, Japan, France, and the free World.

Following the withdrawal of American troops in 1973 and the cut of American financial support to the war efforts, Saigon Government lost the War to the North in 1975. After the country had reunited in 1976, the new socialist regime started nationalising all private properties and reducing the private sector. Industrial goods belonging to South Vietnamese capitalists were also confiscated and nationalised in the name of the class struggle. Together with the demise of a whole generation of Western-trained entrepreneurs and technocrats and the shortage of raw materials for production, factories remained inoperative after the War, in part because of the American embargo. As a result, the country fell into chaos and lost the chance to reconcile for peace.

From 1976 to 1990, many waves of refugees from former South Vietnam left the country to seek freedom in more liberal countries. As early as 1976, right after the end of the American war, another war (through the Cambodian Khmer Rouge proxy) had started between the two former allies, China and North Vietnam, aggravating the loss of trust in the country's leadership. So, Peace had never come to Vietnam until the early 1990s, with the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops out of Kampuchea (the new name of Cambodia). Although the reunification has officially ended the conflicts and announced the political will of post-war reconciliation among all parties to the conflicts that divided the countries for over thirty years, the ideological divide between opponents persists. Since the early 1980s, a new literature trend often referred to as "diaspora literature" has emerged as an expression of nostalgia and new expectations on the revival of the Vietnamese spirit and traditions.

04 The Post-75 Context of DOI MOI Policy

In 1989, the World witnessed the end of history with the fall of the Berlin wall. Vietnamese relations with China resumed in 1992, followed by the removal of the US Embargo on Vietnam with the visit of US President Clinton in Hanoi in 1995. Diplomatic relations allowed trade relations with the entry of Vietnam into ASEAN and WTO and the exchange of Vietnamese students in many Western universities in the World since.

The DOI MOI policy initiated in 1986, aiming at a 'renovation' of the Vietnamese economy, was the start of the transition period from a planned Marxist-oriented economy to a free-market socialist-oriented system. This new policy with fundamental changes was acclaimed by the population of the Northern part of Vietnam, who had undergone tremendous sacrifices and hardships during the Indochinese wars that plagued the country for over thirty years. For Southern Vietnamese, the changes were notable in the relaxed rules on internal passes, allowing communication and a gradual use of foreign languages serving foreign investments. However, although the changes were positive in the living standards of a few, many more preparatory steps were needed to fulfil the requirements for successfully integrating the whole Vietnamese economy into the global structure, including perfecting the institutional framework to allow sustainable development to flourish.

Looking back at the main historical phases of the development of Vietnam during the last thirty years allows us to understand better how the Vietnamese people have coped with changes – and survived.

05 Editor's Note for Section I

Section I explores challenges that remain at the grassroots levels of Vietnam in its transformation process. As information is more available through the proliferation of the web, dealing with people's trust in the

role of the State is crucial for any effort in restructuring the economy. Indeed, as the younger workforce start to enter the Vietnam working life, many have problems accepting the growing inequalities between the 'have' and the 'have not' and the excuses by the Vietnamese leadership to justify the low economic performance of the economy and the degrading living environment. In terms of professional opportunities, the lack of oversight of managers reduces young workers' creative capacity and competitiveness. Furthermore, at the level of their personal life, the absence of hope for a better future and the failing trust in the social system affect the workers' interpersonal relationships and quality of life. Indeed, there is a price to pay for progress: on the one hand, there are positive changes such as higher living standards, better infrastructure, more variety in consumer products, more job opportunities; on the other hand, the degradation of the environment, the loss of cultural identity and traditional values, the insecurity on the job market and higher costs of health and education resulting from the disengagement of the State, and the insecurity and risk linked to an unregulated open economy have created more anxiety to people who were accustomed to a more "protective State" as an employment provider.

In gathering data for this research, the authors use statistics, reports, academic research on change and change management, technical analysis by experts on the theme, articles of law and legal documents, and guidelines by relevant international agencies such as the UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank, WEF, WTO to support arguments with facts in their paper. Topics discussed include reflections on the impact of changes on Education, literary trends, socio-cultural and economic development policies in relation to the Doi Moi policy and its impact on post-war reconstruction efforts.

1

CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT (1861-1945)

Ngo Thi Minh Hang

Summary

Based on a description of the traditional educational and cultural environment at the starting point of the modernisation process, this paper analyses factors affecting the transformation of the Cochinchina educational environment during a hundred years[8]. The article explains the origin of the change, its positive impact, and the limitations of that transformation process.

Keywords : educational environment change; Cochinchina; tradition to the modern.

Introduction

In 1859, the French colonists invaded Cochinchina and needed human resources to administrate the local government. From 1861 to 1945, the French education system imposed on Cochinchina changed

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[8] Ngô Thị Minh Hằng, Sự biến đổi môi trường văn hóa giáo dục nam kỳ từ truyền thống đến hiện đại giai đoạn 1861-1945, Ho Chi Minh City University of Education Journal, ISSN: 1859-3100. English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

this region's educational and cultural environment from a traditional Confucian setting to a western-style education framework in less than a century. In 1861, the Ba Da Loc School of Interpretation started this process. The new teaching concepts included external factors such as school facilities, location and environment, learning and living conditions in the school campus, and internal factors such as students' learning interests, teaching methods, learning behaviour, and extra-curricular activities. These factors formed a standard pedagogical landscape that promoted learning and teaching.

The change from the Confucian value-based teaching method to modernism and liberal values of the West occurred at several levels. At the operational level, the new model introduced physical, technical and psychosocial conditions to ensure an effective teaching and learning environment. At the political level, the shift of Confucian thinking to French or European culture in Vietnam was part of the modernisation process applied throughout all countries of Chinese culture of that period. At the social level, the historical context of that period had facilitated the assimilation of Western philosophies in Vietnamese society, making the modernisation process almost identical with Westernisation. In this article, we will explore the pre-colonial period education as practiced by the last dynasty of Vietnam, the Nguyen.

1.1 Confucian Learning Traditions under the Nguyen Dynasty

Like other educational structures during the pre-colonial period, the Confucian educational environment included the physical, social, and psychological environment, which still manifests its characteristics until our present time.

Infrastructure for learning

The Nguyen Dynasty was very active in building school facilities in the new Southern territory, conquered after their move from the North. Upon his enthronisation, King Gia Long started the first public schools in the Capital of Hue. His son Minh Mang issued a decree regulating the architectural settings of the schools with specific details. Thanks to this policy, more public schools were open down to the district level in the plains and the mountains. Furthermore, private owners or teachers built many private and communal schools in communes, hamlets, and facilities with their own funds. The schools were mainly in the centre to facilitate access for students from the villages. Families and localities who had means could find land to build schools to open classes and invite passers-by to teach. Schools in the Capital had uniforms for students. In contrast, most public schools at the government and district levels and private schools did not have uniforms, nameplates, and students could dress freely according to traditional culture.

Social purpose of learning

The Nguyen Dynasty had the merit of honouring scholars with privileges and rewards. The candidates who passed the Huong Cong and Sanh Do exams were exempted from personal tax and appointed to positions in the royal court. Teachers' selection functioned on criteria of respectability and seniority. Those who had excellent records could join the Kingdom's capital to work. According to a royal decree in 1805, a doctor's salary was equal to that of a provincial official, and the assistant's salary was comparable to that of a district official.

In the Confucian society, the Teacher got high respect from the community and the family. His social rank as a teacher came second after the King and above that of the parents. He remained a life-long mentor to his students, who respected him as a senior community member. The Teacher taught literature and educated his students with Confucian values. Respected for his knowledge of feng-shui elements,

astrology, and the Confucian code of conduct, he performed Lunar Year rituals, marriage or ground-breaking ceremonies, and other social events in the village.

The Teacher in a traditional school taught students with his heart and responsibility and was an example for students who revered him. The teacher-student relationship relied on respect to seniority and social hierarchy. As a Teacher, he was very committed to his students' learning progress and supported his students materially and mentally. Early teachers of this tradition, such as Vo Truong Toan, Dang Duc Thuat, Nguyen Dinh Chieu, are examples of this generation.

Students in Confucian schools were very well-educated; they were passionate and dedicated to their studies. However, as entry exams only occurred every three years and admissions were challenging, students had to overcome years of economic and intellectual challenges to sustain themselves while waiting for the exam centre opening sessions. As a result, many worked as labourers while studying to prepare for their exams. Those who could not afford to pay school fees learned through sitting outside the Teacher's classroom. Among such examples are Truong Dinh, Nguyen Trung Truc, Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Phan Van Tri, Nguyen Thong, Au Duong Lan, who entered history with their patriotic actions during the Cochinchina history of resistance.

Confucian schools mainly taught ethics, etiquette, literature and humanities. There was no laboratory or practice for natural sciences in the curricula, nor facilities to serve the needs of entertainment and recreation, such as clubs, gymnasium and sports areas at school. However, students and candidates for the future administration were eager to study and were motivated to learn and keep good etiquette and manners.

Academic purpose of learning

In the feudal society, the supreme social success was to become a mandarin to honour the family, the clan and the country. Moreover,

being a mandarin fulfils the ideals of "militancy and patriotism" in times of turmoil to defend the kingdom and help its prosperity in a time of peace. In this respect, outlaws, art performers, or women were not welcome for academic competition. However, Confucian schools did not discriminate against candidates' age or social origin. Therefore, many graduated at a very young age while other candidates still took exams at an advanced age. Social respect and rewards attracted talents, and consequently, a spirit of studiousness was widespread among Vietnamese society in general and Cochinchina in particular.

- o In 1632, Lord Nguyen Phuc organised many exam contests to recruit talented officials for the Southern province (Dang Trong), a new territory conquered after the Nguyen left the Northern kingdom (Dang Ngoai).
- o In 1646, Exam centres in the Southern kingdom followed the same procedure as the North, organised every nine years to recruit mandarins for the Politics and Protocols positions.
- o Graduates who ranked at the top three Awards were appointed Head of the province.
- o In 1812, King Gia Long issued a Decree to set up Huong Exam Centres.
- o Between 1813 and 1864, the Nguyen Dynasty had opened 20 Huong exams and graduated 274 Bachelors. Doctor graduates in the kingdom Capital would get the rank of Chanh Ngu, while assistant teachers would receive the status of Chanh Bat.

1.2 Socio-cultural Changes under Colonial French period

In 1859, the French invaded Cochinchina. The Nham Tuat Treaty ceded to the French three provinces in the East (Gia Dinh, Dinh Tuong, Bien Hoa), followed by another three regions in the West (Vinh Long,

An Giang, Ha Tien) ten years later. The new administration opened schools and vocational schools to train in many different professions and occupations for its human resources needs. These new schools marked the start of education development in Cochinchina.

Changes at the administrative level

In 1863, the Governor of Cochinchina announced the establishment of the central school of Cochinchina Directorship. The director of education' tasks were "to organize and focus all matters related to the curriculum in the provinces, districts and communes in the province, exams, evaluation of Confucian scholars and students, recruitment for provincial administrators." These officials were under the management of the school governors and under the direction of district officials, government officials, and sub-district inspectors. These officers have the same powers as provincial governors in the affiliated subdivisions.

In 1867, a French-style exam was organised according to the new governance, with schools of interpretation and deliberation to train staff for the French Administration. In addition, more public schools with French curriculum were opened by the colonial government or the Church, thus radically changing the educational face of the feudal Vietnamese State. Therefore, Cochinchina was the first French colony and a pilot case to apply colonial educational reforms for a western modern educational system.

In 1869, the romanised alphabet of the Annam language (Quoc Ngu) was mandatory as the national administrative language. Quoc Ngu studies replaced Han-Viet studies, thus, reducing the influence of Chinese culture in Vietnam. Quoc Ngu was officially taught in "new schools" in Cochinchina. The Gia Định newspaper, founded by Truong Vinh Ky (1865-1897), was the earliest national language newspaper in Vietnam that helped popularise Quoc Ngu.

Before 1874, the Cochinchina Main Education Regulation divided the education of Cochinchina into two levels, primary and secondary. In

1879, the organization structure of the main school of Cochinchina was changed into 3 levels, grade I, grade II and grade III (or High school). Accordingly, the management apparatus at each school would have at level I: a French principal; at level II: two French teachers and one Vietnamese teacher; at High school level: four French teachers and one Vietnamese teacher.

In the early 20th Century, France applied a dual education system, including the old reformed traditional education and the new French-Vietnamese education. With time, the French-Vietnamese education system has been instrumental in transforming the educational and cultural environment of Vietnam from a Han-Nho based learning philosophy to a modern education system that has lasted until our present time.

Cultural changes occurred in the organization of the educational management system between the province level and the school system at all levels in teachers, students and society towards learning.

Changes in the learning environment

The French policy on culture and education in Vietnam aimed primarily to establish a long-term influence of French culture on the Vietnamese people.

To train local civil servants and officials for this mission, the Governor-General of Indochina had established the Indochina School of Education in 1905. On March 8, 1906, the Council for the Improvement of Indigenous Education was formed and included representatives of rulers, representatives of schools and localities. The Council's task was "to study all issues related to the establishment or reform of indigenous education, cooperation with publishers for textbooks, recruitment and training of teachers, research, collect, and preserve literary, philosophical and historical works." In addition, the Governor of Cochinchina regulated matters related to finance and budget.

To advise, monitor and supervise the operation of the educational management apparatus at all levels, the Governor had established the Inspectorate or Principal Academic Advisor. The tasks of the Inspector were to "organize public and private educational activities at all levels, prepare training material for the organization of the main School Districts, establish program statistics reports, textbooks, petitions to improve the supervision of all public and private schools."

To cater for the privileged class that included children of France, those who served France, the children of the wealthy bourgeois and feudal landlords, French schools to train interpreters, primary school teachers, vocational schools and public schools were also part of the new structure.

In this way, France had carried out reforms on the old educational content and ideology, replacing it with colonial education ideas, and at the same time promoted academic and literary reform in the Cochinchina learning environment.

Changes in the schooling infrastructure

In 1925, the Governor of Cochinchina decided to build a French-native high school that could house 500 boarding students and 600 external students. The Petrus Ky school design was a famous architect's work and was made according to its glorious status. The school had three distinct zones: the school area, the boarding area, the sports area. In the school compound, the middle corridor gave access to all the classrooms. Two protruding wings housed the administrative offices, while classrooms in two one-story blocks surrounded the central courtyard. In the centre were special classrooms for Drawing, History and Geography lessons. Finally, the boarding area consisted of a canteen and other buildings arranged in the shape of crocodile fangs. Playgrounds that surrounded the buildings separated students of different departments.

The design of French colonial schools was scientific and user-friendly. The schools were centrally located in cities or localities, with easy access to study and live nearby. School campuses were designed and built in a separate area, with fences, school gates, and school nameplates and partitioned into zones with different facilities for teaching and learning activities. As a result, these new schools could accommodate more students than traditional schools. Classroom tables and chairs fit the stature of students, with the teacher's desk and writing board designed to facilitate the teaching and learning of activities. Classrooms were airy, well-lit and safe for students, with libraries, laboratories, gymnasiums and sports facilities. Similarly, vocational schools housed laboratories corresponding to each training profession. The office area housed the principal's office and the administrative department for easy access. Many schools had separate boarding facilities for students on campus.

Other examples of French-style schools were the Lasan Taberd School for boys, founded in 1873 by the Lasan Brothers. The school mission was on developing intellectual, moral and physical education. There were volleyball and basketball courts and ping-pong tables in the sports room for students to practice in the school.

The Indigenous Girls' High School (Collège des jeunes filles indigènes), also known as the Purple Girls' School, was spaciously built in 1913. In 1918, the school was added a second building parallel to the old one to accommodate more students. The new building had many functions: The lower floor was a dormitory for boarding students, in its back was a clinic, a laundry room and a kitchen on the ground floor. This place was also the area for learning lady housework subjects and embroidery for schoolgirls.

Changes in the school organizational structure

In addition to the principal and teachers, there was a superintendent, an accountant and a payroll officer in each school. The governing boards

of the schools included government representatives as presidents. The members included the principal, the financial manager, a professor with a high rank, and a representative of the parents of the students. The Board of Trustees would discuss and decide on issues related to the operations and development of the schools.

Teachers at high schools were European and Vietnamese, but the majority were Vietnamese. As they are secretaries of the Department of Home Affairs, and did not have pedagogical training, the teaching and planning of training programs had many shortcomings. The provincial owners paid little attention to education, so the school facilities were poor, with insufficient textbooks and programs, affecting the effectiveness of teaching. During this same period, professional schools were also opened for vocational training. The schools were equipped with production workshops and professional internships. A vocational school also functioned as a workshop with products made by students for sale. The diversity of schools, teachers and the teaching environment had enriched the educational environment as compared to the traditional education.

Teachers during this period received professional training according to their teaching mission and were paid accordingly, so they worked with all the responsibility of the teacher. Many teachers were patriots and contributed to the education on nationalist and patriotic spirit of their students. Among French teachers, with the exception of a very few who are colonialists and despise the Vietnamese, the majority are intellectuals who respected freedom and the spirit of democracy. As for students, the relationship in schools is a relationship of friends and classmates. Students in the same class are students of the same age, the same mental, physiological, the same level, enjoy the same educational program, they are equal in the process of absorbing education, activities in school and other activities related to education.

Changes in teacher-student relations and mind settings

Learning at French schools such as Chasseloup Laubat, Petrus Ky, Pélerin, and primary and secondary schools in other localities in Cochinchina remains a good experience in the memory of students of that period. Teachers were rigorous, and students respected and feared their authority. Students were introduced a new way of learning that was different from the Confucian traditional education and were encouraged to explore their knowledge in humanities according to the Western method of critical thinking. The generation of pre-August Revolution students studied hard and well, with the spirit of autonomy and self-respect. Most students did not use tricks to cheat in exams or bribe their teachers to pass.

Unlike the tradition in Confucian schools, schools during the French colonial period did not discriminate based on the gender of students who applied to the school. Male and female students alike were treated equally in receiving knowledge; they had the right to study and enjoy the benefits of learning. The educational program had comprehensive content in social sciences and natural sciences, engineering, and foreign languages. In social sciences, students learned history, world culture, ethics, and philosophy of the East and the West. In natural sciences, students studied mathematics, geography, and economics. Study orientation was divided into three main streams: Natural Science, Math and Philosophy. With Quoc Ngu and French language as mandatory subjects, French-Vietnamese schools had equipped local students with a valuable tool to expand their communication and understanding of the world.

Schools following the French model were managed by the same administration with unified goals and programs; therefore, the relationships in the school between the administrative staff, teaching body and students followed the same rules and standards. In this framework, everyone performed their responsibilities and duties

professionally and voluntarily. In addition, the psychological environment in schools during this period was a suitable educational environment. The school was operated in a scientific and systematic way, following specific processes and standards, thereby creating a stable and stimulating mental environment for the teaching and learning process of teachers and students.

1.3 Editor's Notes

Before the French applied their education system in Vietnam, the Han-Viet Confucian learning method prevailed. French colonial education has changed the Vietnamese educational landscape for the past century, but Confucian values are still ingrained in the Vietnamese spirit. This combination of both philosophies is the most vital asset for the new human development policies to rely on.

With the new French system, Vietnamese students experienced a new way of learning that never existed before. The changes occurred not only in the language used for teaching but also in areas ranging from the organisational culture of the school system, the culture of educational operation, to the culture of building educational content. This new culture reflects the school's physical, social, and psychological and spiritual environment. In addition to the changes in infrastructure, the school's organisational culture has also changed. It systematically organises schools, grades, and classes with a centralised teaching organisation. Students are classified according to age, physiology, and study the same program, form a diverse education in different schools nationwide.

The French educational program was comprehensive and included social sciences and natural sciences, engineering, and foreign languages. Bilingual studies helped students broaden their communication skills and understanding of world cultures. Students could study Science, Mathematics and Philosophy as separate subjects, which was not the

case in the Han-Viet education system. French and Quoc Ngu were taught in bilingual programs in French-Vietnamese schools.

Although this education system served only a few and not the broad masses, education brought objective and positive consequences during the French colonial period. It opened up a new educational and cultural environment, unprecedented in the academic culture in Vietnam from the traditional structure in terms of organisational and operational process and educational content. This new educational culture has contributed significantly to changing from a stagnant Han-Viet education of feudal society to a new stage of development for Vietnamese education.

While working on our collection on Faith, Spirituality and Ethics in Vietnamese Literature, we have had the privilege to discover many distinguished scholars and pioneers in education during this transition period of Nho-Viet to French colonial, then from French-Vietnamese to modern Vietnam. Truong Vinh Ky, Tran Trong Kim, Dao Duy Anh, Nguyen Hien Le are authors whose works on philosophy, education and culture have dramatically shaped the Vietnamese literature playground for the past 100 years.

Thanks to their relentless efforts and essential input, the Vietnamese generation of intellectuals who contribute to the legacy of the Vietnamese spirit still prevail in the work of Ngo Bao Chau, Nguyen Xuan Nghia, Nguyen Tien Hung, Nguyen van Tho, Duong Nguyet Anh, and many more in modern times.

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2

LITERARY TRENDS
AND MODERNIZATION
IN SOUTH VIETNAM DURING 1954-1975

Huynh Nhu Phuong

Summary

The period 1954-1975 is considered the golden age of Vietnamese civic education for the new free South Vietnam under President Diem's leadership, following the country's separation into two distinct blocs with distinct ideologies and consequently opposite philosophies of education[9]. A literature review of the Southern literature indicates the liberal spirit, which includes five major literature trends, from nationalist and nation-building, realist and political philosophy, to faith and spiritual, existentialist and feminist, or romantic and commercial styles. However, this literature is also the reflection of a society in motion. Both sides of the conflict are victims of the modern war of ideologies that affected their lives in a definite way.

Keywords: Southern literature, literary trends, society in motion, war, conflict, realist, romantic, existentialist, modernisation

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[9] Huỳnh Như Phương, "Văn học miền Nam Việt Nam 1954-1975: những khuynh hướng chủ yếu và thành tựu hiện đại hoá", *HCMC National University Workshop Report on Vietnamese language teaching and Vietnamese Studies in modern times,* pp. 710-723 (2019). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Introduction

The Geneva Agreement of July 20, 1954 was the threshold of a new political rapport de force between two governing parties in Vietnam with opposing ideologies and separated by the 17th parallel as a physical boundary of their territorial control. In the North, Hochiminh led the DRV government with a socialist orientation; in the South, Ngo Dinh Diem led the RVN based on liberal ideas and values. The Geneva Agreement stipulated that Viet Minh and the French forces cease fighting until the Referendum of 1956 on a new unified government be organised accordingly.

The outcome of the Geneva Agreement caused great social upheaval and insecurity among the partisans on both sides, including intellectuals, writers and artists. As a result, there was a great migration movement in two directions: 140,000 former resistants against the French went to the North, while over million refugees fleeing the communist ideology went to the South. This migration wave was the start of significant disruption in the population structure and socio-economic activities, including cultural, artistic and religious practices.

While the settings for a socialist society were quickly put in place by Ho Chi Minh, who acted as President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and Chair of the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP), the formation of the Southern regime went through a more diverse and complex democratic process. Indeed, a democratic government requires the full set of institutions to function according to the rule of law and separation of powers, according to the Constitution. In particular, in education, the new government had an unambiguous policy on an orientation that favoured cultural and artistic activities, freedom of religion and freedom of commerce.

Since its inception, the First Republic of Vietnam had established institutions accordingly to the youth-oriented politics in culture and education. The Secretary of State in charge of culture, the Ministry of

National Education, the Saigon University and many universities in big cities, the Centre for Literature, the National Library were part of these institutions. The civil society included many cultural and artistic associations, publishing houses and private press that have significantly contributed to the enrichment and diversity of the spiritual life in Southern Vietnam, despite the atmosphere and social context of a young nation at war.

During 1954-1975, the literary trends were a mixture of nation-building with socialist orientation in the North. In contrast, the Southern government allowed all trends of literature to co-exist, form the nation-building and nationalist literature to existentialism, anti-war, realism, or spiritual and faith literature.

In this context, where freedom of speech and freedom of the press flourished, all these trends were encouraged and integrated into the school readings and publications. Foreign literature by international authors with progressive ideas such as Rousseau, Jean-Paul Sartre, Krishnamurti, Hemingway, etc., were widely used. Likewise, foreign authors publications in the original language were also freely distributed and used at school. To a lesser extent, the liberation or revolutionary literature that reflects the view of resistance writers, or literature of socialist writers from the North that was openly provocative to the Southern regime, were heavily censored. Nonetheless, after the post-1975 reunification of the country, with the destruction of the whole pre-war literature and the introduction of the new education system according to the socialist model, with restricted views on personal and religious freedom, the entire intellectual and cultural framework has changed drastically.

From a historical point of view, we will restrict this study to the literary trends during the period 1954-1975 in South Vietnam.

2.1 Major Literary Trends

The complex ideological and political trends influenced the artistic and literary activities in the Southern part of Vietnam during this period. Five literary trends emerged from this complexity.

Nationalistic and Nation-building Literature

The term "nationalism" is associated with the emergence of the National Government of Vietnam in opposition to communism and internationalism. This nationalistic trend corresponds to the ideals of pro-democratic writers to build the Southern Region into "an outpost of the free world", preventing the spread of communism in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. The authors strongly disagreed with the revolutionary ideas of the Viet Minh or Vietnamese communists. In opposition to the prototype of emotion-less communist partisanship, the prospect of a free South with family values, individual freedom, perpetuating humanistic and spiritual traditions of Vietnam was the theme of this trend. The anti-communist propaganda relates the voices of discontent on the atrocities of land reform and the harsh treatment of Northern artists of the Nhan Van Giai Pham, the Hundred Flowers in Blossom, and the Van Vong literary trends. News of anti-Soviet movements such as the uprising of Hungary and Czechoslovakia that the Soviet Union suppressed, or the Gulf of Pigs Crisis in Cuba, and works of anti-communist writers (such as André Gide) enforced nationalist sentiments. Nguyen Manh Con's Bringing the Heart To Write History, Peach Blossom Love, Doan Quoc Sy's Forest of Reeds, River of Fate, Vo Phien's Prisoner, The Year-end Night Rains, Waterfalls Behind The House, Nghiem Xuan Hong's The Tenth Passenger belonged to this trend.

On the other hand, anti-war literature, and specifically anti-war lyrics enhanced strong anti-war feelings that remained a long time in the heart of war victims. Trinh Cong Son's famous songs remained the reference on this trend for decades, long after the war ended.

By the end of the Second Republic (1968-1975), many nationalist writers of the second generation no longer spoke out as harshly against the communist regime as before. While several writers still related their battlefield experiences with their enemies in the North, these were not many anti-communist messages as compared to the preceding period. The young writers of this period were no longer interested in politics or idealism, whether nationalism or humanism, but seemed to adopt a more existenttialist philosophy. Even among the partisans whose roles have decreased and blurred with the development and outcomes of the war, the spirit of the First Republic had faded away.

Realist and Political Literature

Religious anti-war movements began with anti-Buddhist measures that sparked the spirit of protest in a different direction. It was both a non-violence manifestation of the Buddhist community on the one hand, and a "non-communist social revolution" of a part of Catholic intellectuals on the other. Thich Nhat Hanh's poems and social writings and Vo Dinh Cuong's spiritual novels were part of the Buddhist literature that did not directly criticize society but evoked feelings of discontent with the reality of the brutal warfare.

During the last ten years of the war, the anti-war spirit in literature rose sharply. Short stories, novels and essays by Vu Hanh, Luu Nghi, Nguyen Van Xuan, Phan Du, Nguyen Nguyen, Lu Phuong, Le Nguyen Trung, Luong Son, exposed a politically troubled and morally corrupt society. Leftist writers such as Nguyen Van Trung, Ly Chanh Trung, Chan Tin, Nguyen Ngoc Lan, The Nguyen, Diem Chau went to the streets to protest, calling for reconciliation and national harmony with anti-war messages.

With allied troops pouring into Vietnamese cities and villages, the World discovered directly on television images of war refugees fleeing the countryside, and the social transformation of a country at war, with conscripted young men barely out of schools, and young girls forced

into prostitution. The new trend of realism literature is apparent in The Nguyen's For a dream tomorrow, depicting that "the reality of that society has smacked the face of the artist with bloody stripes".

A new generation of young Peace writers joined their voices of protest with the Vietnamese Consciousness with Wei Ngu, The Vu, Tran Duy Phien, Tran Huu Luc, Tran Hong Quang, Huynh Ngoc Son, Vo Truong Chinh. In poetry, Tran Quang Long, Phan Duy Nhan, Ngo Kha, Tran Vang Sao, Nguyen Quoc Thai, Thai Ngoc San, Le Van Ngan, Chinh Van, Dong Trinh, Do Nghe, Tan Hoai Da Vu, Vo Que, Le Ky Thuong, Huu Dao, Tran Dinh Son Cuoc, Le Ganh, Nguyen Dong Nhat, Trieu Tu Truyen, Tran Van Gia, Cao Quang Van, Le Nhuoc Thuy, Tran Pha Nhac, etc.

Among these, we can recognise famous critical essayists such as The Nguyen, Tran Trong Phu, Nguyen Trong Van, Tran Trieu Luat, Hong Huu, Tran Hong Quang, and Tran Huu Luc.

Anti-war literature also attracted talented writers serving in the Southern Vietnamese Army such as Thai Lang, Chu Vuong Mien, Nguyen Quang Tuyen, Thai Luan, Phan Truoc Vien, Tran Hoai Thu, Ngo. The Vinh, Luan Hoan, Nguyen Bac Son, Muong Man, Hoang Khoi Phong, Nguyen Le Uyen, adding to the previous generation of writers such as Nguyen Sa, The Phong.

In short, we can see that the spirit of anti-war and resistance in Southern urban literature has increased in breadth and depth between 1954 and 1975. That spirit first appeared in the press, then spread to political writing, poetry, short stories, and novels. The critical realist trend described the realities of war victims who fled to the cities for refuge, only to witness the adverse effects of the pragmatic American lifestyle that had eroded Vietnamese traditional culture.

Urban realist literature testified to the crisis of the Vietnamese society, especially the trouble and anxiety of young people facing unknown future. The Uyen's Thinking In A Disintegrating Society,

Nguyen Quang Tuyen's Loss Of My Homeland, Tran Hoai Thu's Helplessness of The Wild Horses, Disabled Beast, Vo Truong Chinh's The Life of a Carpet, etc. were witnesses of this trend.

Faith, Religion and Spiritual Literature

Another aspect of social and spiritual life in Vietnam was the spiritual literature based on patriotic and national pride, faith and religion. Academics consider that the quintessence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism has formed the ideological foundation of the Vietnamese national culture that blends in with the East-meet-West spirit. This happy marriage is associated with spiritual authors such as Nguyen Hien Le, Gian Chi, Thich Minh Chau, Nhat Hanh, Buu Cam, Kim Dinh, Thu Giang Nguyen Duy Can, Nguyen Dang Thuc, Tran Trong San, Tue Sy, etc. In addition, the establishment of the Buddhist and Oriental philosophy faculties in universities has increased the need to deepen this research.

At a more popular level, research and publication works on ethnology, history, linguistics, traditional literature, customs and practices of the ethnic groups in Vietnam are also positively accepted by readers. These are works by Dong Ho, Vuong Hong Sen, Le Van Sieu, Toan Anh, Quach Tan, Thieu Son, Binh Nguyen Loc, Son Nam, Nguyen Van Xuan, Le Ngoc Tru, Thanh Lang, Phan Khoang, and Nguyen The Anh. , Nghiem Toan, Pham Dinh Khiem, Pham Viet Tuyen, Pham Van Dieu, Nguyen Khue, Nguyen Van Hau, Nghiem Tham, Buu Lich, Pham The Ngu, Nguyen Khac Ngu, Pham Cao Duong, Le Van Hao, Thai Van Kiem, Bui Bui Duc Tinh, Tran Ngoc Ninh, Bang Giang, Tham The Ha, Hoang Sy Quy, Nguyen Van Tho, Nguyen Van Sam, Huynh Van Tong, Nguyen Dinh Tu, Huynh Minh, Pham Trung Viet.

The trend on patriotic literature was also visible among artists and poets such as An Nam, Tran Tuan Khai, Dong Ho, Mong Tuyet, Quach Tan, Vu Hoang Chuong, Khai Khai, Phuong Dai, Bang Ba Lan, Tran Thi Tue Mai, Pham Thien Thu, Tru Vu, Tuong Linh, Thi Vu, etc. who

promoted to keep the soul calling of traditional poetry with a passionate love of the people and the country.

The prose of this period reflected the customs, practices and activities, with, in the North: Vu Bang, Mai Thao, Nhat Tien, The Nguyen, Phan Van Tao, Nguyen Van Xuan, Vo Hong, Vu Hanh, Phan Du, Tran Huien An, Nguyen Mong Giac; and in the South: Binh Nguyen Loc, Son Nam, Trang The Hy, Nguyen Thi Thuy Vu.

The main characteristics of this genre are stories on nature, the people, and their lifestyle in rural areas through descriptions of remote villages in rural areas of the South. In addition, prose reflects the external lifestyle and spiritual strength through the representations of farmers that symbolise respect for nature, the spirit of resilience and their resistance to the corrupting power of money. Writing about the heroic examples of female martyrs in history, Nguyen Van Xuan's short stories in Forest Storm, Blood Perfume and Dich Sand want to impart strength from tradition to modern Vietnamese people. Writing about the resistance against the French, Vo Hong's novels Flowers and Butterflies and Like the Wings of a Bird show that resistance was an excellent tool for creating national unity. Writing about the nature and people of the Mui Land through short stories in Huong Forest of Ca Mau, Son Nam shows the persistent and creative vitality of the nation on the way to exploring new lands.

Preserving traditions while adapting to the changes is a literature trend that gradually overcomes conservative and closed worldviews about the rural idealisation based on patriarchal or poetic traditions of the prose of the late 1950s. This is the sign that the patriotic consciousness is constantly on the move and developing positively towards integrating World literature.

Existentialist and Feminist Literature

Twenty years of war have devastated many villages, fields and towns across the country, killed millions of Vietnamese in both regions, left

profound tragedies in the nation's hearts, and caused division in many families and personal lives. The social change in the turmoil entailed conflicts in the soul, and the most moving place of literature is still the continuous lamentations on the human condition during war times. Moreover, wounds inflicted by war are still open in each Vietnamese family and soul. Consequently, war was a central and cross-cutting topic in Southern newspapers and literature during those years.

With Northern authors who lived with the nostalgia of their far North homeland, the literature also shows an unrelenting inspiration of migrant writers in beautiful expressions on love and language: Vu Bang's Miss Number Twelve, Mai Thao's The Train Ride on the Red River, The Uyen's Mom's house, Phan Van Tao's Pig Bubble, Duyen Anh's Autumn Clouds and My Sister's Starling are masterpieces of this kind.

In the furnace of war, the human condition is like that of a worm or an ant drifting in the violent machine, leading to a tragic death with all the absurdity. Nguyen Sa' A few days at The General Affairs, describes the tragedy of soldiers and their families through unjust deaths and disastrous mistakes. In Vo Hong's Dong Chay, Lua's fate was also the fate of millions of rural women during the war. Nguyen Mong Giac's The Sound Of Old Garden Birds, Thao Truong's Pregnant Women in Dong Thap are about tragic fates of country people at war. Stories on tragedies of life with Nhat Tien, Le Tat Dieu, Thanh Tam Tuyen, Duong Nghiem Mau, Phan Nhat Nam. Y Uyen, Nguyen Duc Son describe human torments and worries facing death and destruction.

Love in the war has another meaning than in the Tu Luc Van Doan peacetime style, but a love compatible with every moment of life, with a cruel death. Southern urban novels depict love and question the essence and existence of love as human endless loneliness and sexual demands. The world of female characters is no more about virtuous women like Mai in Khai Hung's Halfway Through Spring, or conflicts with extended families like Loan in Nhat Linh's Ending Relationship. It is

about women who rebel against their own lives, resentful with their fate and sometimes let themselves go with the currents of life. This remarkable phenomenon reflects the voice of world female writers on the theme of gender such as Tuy Hong, Nha Ca, Nguyen Thi Hoang, Nguyen Thi Thuy Vu, Trung Duong, Ba Tung Long, Minh Duc Hoai Trinh, and Le Hang, Tran Thi, etc. Reading these writers, one can feel the tragedy and aspirations of women during the war introducing the trend of feminist consciousness in literature.

Entertainment and Commercial Literature

Consumer literature appeared in the South during the 1954-1975 period, targeting middle-class bourgeois. Although serving only a portion of the urban population, the consumer society reflected the inequalities of a consumer society that resulted from the American way of life that encourages material enjoyment. Daily newspapers, periodical newspapers, radio stations, television stations, movies, posters are full with publicity ads for consumer goods. Updates on new products such as television sets, motorcycles, cars, refrigerators, clothing, footwears, tobacco, alcohol, cosmetics were widely communicated. Thanks to their good wages and extra income from the war economy, part of the civil servants and the middle class were able to spend money on luxury articles apart their daily necessities. This development was the premise to forming an art market in the South during the period between 1954-1975.

As the Southern regime allowed private ownership of the press, most press and literary publishing establishments were privately-owned. The number of state-owned newspapers and publishers was negligible. State intervention in the media and publishing activities were manifest through the subsidy policy for printing paper and censorship with edicts. The government could also confiscate and prosecute the newspaper or publisher in court if they found extremism or pro-communist literature harmful to the regime.

The tendency of commercial literature is reflected in the works in the press mainly to satisfy the public's entertainment needs. Most daily newspapers dedicated a page to publish about 5-6 serial novels, in which there are a few swordplay Chinese novels. Some authors such as An Khe, Duong Ha, Nguyen Thuy Long, Le Xuyen, Hoai Diep Tu specialised in producing love stories published as a feuilleton in daily newspapers. The commercialisation of journalism and publishing products has resulted in literary trivialisation, such as the rush to write feuilleton, translate books on sex, and promote Kim Dung and Quynh Dao. Still, in the context of the market, it is understandable when literature becomes a consumable commodity to meet the diverse spiritual meals of readers.

The above five literary did not exist by themselves as separate trends but were mostly intertwined with each other. We can find here the elements of humanity and democracy, the desire for peace and unity in writers with different political and artistic worldviews.

However, each trend and each writer did not stick to a particular positioning or political agenda, but changed their style depending on the changing environment, market demand or historical events.

2.2 Appreciation of Pre-75 Southern Modern

Literature

Southern literature has made several significant contributions on the road to literary modernisation during 20 years of political and social transformation and in a suffocating war context. Compared with literature in 1932-1945, Southern literary compositions have remarkable innovations in genres such as poetry, short stories, novels, and essays.

Regarding prose, artistic innovation is present in the following:

1) short stories include elements of psychoanalysis, existentialism, phenomenology, stream of consciousness techniques to describe the world and people. Hoang Ngoc Bien's Night sleep in the Province and

Thanh Tam Tuyen's The Night of Lach Hamlet is Dark are typical examples of this genre.

2) Formation of philosophical prose such as Nhat Hanh's Return from Italy; Pham Cong Thien's The Sun Is Never Real; Thai Lang's A Day of a Person; Ngo The Vinh's Green Belt or Vo Phien's Essay form such as Home, Mai Thao's Salt Water House, and Vu Bang's Miss No. Twelve are typical of this genre.

The literary language of this period also changed: the refined language of Northern prose exists in parallel and interacts with Southern prose's direct and vivid language. Diverse artistic styles are present in a literary area that is always vibrant with new creativity. The impact of the press on literature also makes the language evolution more flexible and, at the same time, more permissive. Short dialogue sentences, associations with folk images, typical Southern speaking styles are integrated into novels and appreciated. Some writers even tried to create language in poetry and prose, targeting a more privileged audience.

Literary scripts have less success than poetry and prose achievements in the South. There are not many plays, and even fewer have been on stage. Playwrights such as Vu Khac Khoan, Tran Le Nguyen, Duong Kien, Vu Lang (Nguyen Khac Ngu), Lu Kieu (Than Trong Minh) did not focus on long-term scriptwriting. Meanwhile, the renovated theatre style (cai luong) was more popular with Southerners' audience.

In the academic sphere and publications, composition, philosophy, aesthetics, research and literary criticism are regularly updated with good material. This is partly in reaction to the needs of the public, partly due to the formation of liberal arts and literature aiming at improving cultural exchange. Books on psychoanalysis, existentialism, phenomenology, structuralism, new novels, etc., have been translated and applied to research and composition. Many research works on Western philosophy and literature by Nguyen Van Trung, Tran Thai

Dinh, Le Ton Nghiem, Tran Van Toan, Tran Van Hien Minh, Le Thanh Tri, Bui Xuan Bao, Bui Giang, Nguyen Sa, Vu Dinh Luu, Buu Y, Thach Chuong, The Phong, Tran Do Dung, Dang Phung Quan.

Western modern literary and artistic thoughts were analysed and introduced thoroughly on magazines before being published into books, which influenced writers, along with the translation and promotion of foreign classical and modern literary works. Regardless of the writing style, being refined or crude, each author had certainly changed the way they viewed the world and the human condition through their technique of description and the writing style.

The press of this period was a stage that promoted young writers with talents. The press was also the judges of almost all famous writers who wrote poems and short stories, especially literary magazines.

The translation is an activity that has made significant contributions to the modernisation of literature and is the field where writers in the South previously had the most apparent achievements. Works of authors of cultures with a long tradition of exchange with Vietnam include Chinese literature and French literature such as H. de Balzac, A. France, A. Gide, JP Sartre, A. Camus, Saint-Exupéry, A. Malraux, A. Maurois, N. Kazantzakis, E. Hemingway, W. Faulkner, P. Buck, J. Steinbeck, S. Beckett, J. Baldwin, EM Remarque, T. Mann, H. Boll, F. Duerrenmatt, M. West, H. Hesse, S. Mrozek, Ch. Y. Agnon, E. Ionesco, I. Andrich, A. Paton, Ch. Achebe, J. Amado, S. Maugham, E. Caldwell, R. Tagore, K. Gibran, Y. Kawabata, Oe Kenzaburo, Lu Xun, Lam Ngu Duong, etc. were translated and published. Interestingly, through the medium of English and French, many Russian literary works from different trends were translated and published: L. Tolstoi, F. Dostoievski, I. Turgenev, A. Tshekhov; M. Gorki, V. Maiakovski, M. Sholokhov, E. Evtushenkov; B. Pasternak, A. Solzhenitsyn, A. Hertz, V. Dudintsev, etc.

However, the constant changes of Southern Vietnamese society scattered the focus of literary modernisation efforts. As a result, many young talents stood at the boundary of survival or death in a community where scholarly journals and publishers had to work hard to maintain their existence.

2.3 Conclusion

Southern Vietnamese literature has made several significant contributions on the road to literary modernisation during twenty years of political and social transformation and in a tremendous challenging period of a young democracy.

During 1954-1975, we can affirm that South Vietnamese authors produced many works with national dignity, humanitarian spirit, democratic and artistic values supporting innovation and modernity. These works were the manifestation of a vibrant, diverse and complex composition and publishing activity of many different ideological and artistic trends. The intellectuals were true representatives of the human spirit, the cultural quintessence and the national language deeply rooted in every Vietnamese soul. Creative talents associated with nationalistic sentiments, compassion for others, respect of traditions, love of the Vietnamese language had contributed to creating artistic values in Southern literature.

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3

LEARNING FROM PRE-1975 SOUTH VIETNAM TRAINING POLICIES

Nguyen Kim Dung

Summary

The policy of training teachers of primary schools in Southern Vietnam in 1954-1965 only inherited and continued the foundation that had been in existence from the previous period[10]. The success of the period was in the formation of an educational philosophy, which is the critical foundation for any educational system. From 1965 to 1975, aware of the crucial role of teachers in educational reform, the Saigon Ministry of Education carried out a thorough and specific policy, controlling more strictly the training of teachers of primary schools. Although there were many limitations, the policy of training the teachers in Southern Vietnam made specific achievements from 1954 to 1975, which serve as references for the training of teachers of primary schools in Vietnam today.

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[10] Nguyen Kim Dung, *Chính sách đào tạo giáo chức tiểu học ở miền Nam Việt Nam giai đoạn 1954-1975*, Vietnam Journal of Social Sciences, No. 11 (2019). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Introduction

Within twenty-one years (1954-1975), the primary education sector in the South has undergone two phases with a fundamental transformation in the educational model. During 1954-1965, the French educational model functioned as the foundation to primary Education; 1965-1975 emphasized two main elements, namely general education and vocational training. In addition, the Saigon Ministry of Education also applied the American elementary education model to the Vietnamese context, based on the experience and the progressive elements of other educational systems such as that of Japan. The training of primary school teachers must adhere to the basic principles of Education, which are the three principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam in 1967, including nationalism, humanism, and liberalism.

Primary school teacher training must meet the objective of primary Education: "Particular emphasis should focus on helping children develop physically as well as mentally, and instil the basics of morality and civics, acquiring elementary knowledge and skills essential for personal development, the family's daily life, and the normal activities of the community and society. Ability to continue to study further or pursue a secondary school, or attend professional schools or self-study".

For the Saigon Ministry of Education, training primary teachers in both quality and quantity was an urgent requirement for the present and future of the whole education system of Vietnam. Therefore, primary school teacher training was a prominent feature in the Education of South Vietnam under the Saigon government (1954-1975).

3.1 Training Primary School Teachers 1954-1965

In the early days of the new Education system of Southern Vietnam, educators paid priority to solving several core issues of the national

Education such as educational philosophy, educational goals, curriculum, learning materials, textbooks and learning facilities, the role of teachers, school facilities and equipment, assessment of learning outcomes, and administrative organization. Among the core issues mentioned above, educational philosophy probably plays the most critical role.

The first National Education Congress in 1958 brought together many parents, students, dignitaries, scholars, representatives of the army, government and mass organizations, representatives of the cultural and educational sectors of the world. The outcomes of the 1958 Congress included that three principles would be applied to all levels from primary to high schools, these are:

- Principle of Humanity: Vietnamese Education must be a humanist education, respecting sacred humanistic values, taking the person as the centre, and aiming for the comprehensive development of the learners.
- Principle of Ethnicity : Vietnamese Education must be a national education, respecting values in the family, at work, and at the country level, to ensure the survival and development of the nation.
- Principle of Liberty: Vietnamese Education must allow academic freedom, respect scientific spirit, promote democratic and societal values, and embrace the quintessence of world cultures.

These three principles served as the basis for the educational philosophy of the South Vietnamese government, as detailed in the Basic Principles published by the Ministry of National Education (1959). These principles were also embedded into primary education principles, criteria for professional ethics and professional qualities, and the Teacher's Role in Primary Education.

The 1964 National Education Congress continued to reaffirm the three basic guiding principles that were revised into the Principles of Humanity, Ethnicity, and Science.

The Scientific Principles emphasized that "Vietnamese Education must respect the spirit of science, be based on science, and for the progress of mankind. It is inseparable from the influence of world civilization. Because of science's precise and universal nature, we do not hesitate to open our doors to the world's best thought trends, the cultural quintessence of humanity. The spirit of exact science has brought liberalism to our Education. It is it that has made us absorb the broad democratic mind of the West."

However, despite offering progressive educational philosophies, the Saigon Ministry of Education did not provide any specific and comprehensive policy for the training of primary school teachers. The number of primary pedagogical schools was very limited because they were opened sporadically over the years with a minimal number of trained teachers.

By 1965, the whole South had only 5 Pedagogical Schools, namely, Saigon Pedagogical School (1955), Long An Pedagogical School (1956), Banmethuot Pedagogical School (1957), Vinh Long Pedagogical School (1961), and Quy Nhon Pedagogical School (1963).

According to Minister of Education Nguyen Luu Vien: "With the above number of pedagogical schools, the Ministry of Education cannot train enough teachers to teach the increasing number of primary school students, especially implementing the regulations of the Primary education guidelines".

By 1965, most primary school teachers were not trained at the School of Pedagogy. To be eligible to teach primary school, they only needed to graduate from Middle School or equivalent diploma or Baccalaureate I, and underwent a short pedagogy course, or had Primary School teaching experience for 18 months. A large number of primary

teachers never received training courses in pedagogy. Foreign primary school teachers and provincial teachers accounted for nearly half of the number of teachers who only graduated from primary school; "Sometimes doing a multiplication or division problem is a problem for some of these teachers".

Indeed, the government was busy with tasks related to war, pacification, government building, and neglected the training of primary school teachers. Moreover, during the first period (1945-1960), 1662 schools of all kinds in the South were burned down by war.

3.2 Training Primary School Teachers 1965-1975

Since 1965, all primary schools in the South were converted into community primary schools, inaugurating the real education reform. Recognizing the critical role of teachers, the Ministry of Education has a systematic and specific policy in the training of primary school teachers. Based on the achievements during the two National Education Congresses (1958 and 1964), Article 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam 1967 clearly stated:

"The Vietnamese educational culture must be placed in the national agenda based on ethnicity, scientific and humanistic values". In addition, the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam also clearly stated that "the focus is on private Education and that there is an adequate budget devoted to the development of educational culture".

The Education and Culture Policy (1972) emphasized that

"…a compulsory and free basic Education must be provided to ensure the right to minimum Education of all citizens". Basic Education included level I of the General Education and in the subsequent ten years was planned to have at least level II of the General Education. The State was to take all practical measures to end childhood illiteracy and adult illiteracy."

To improve the Primary Education and Teacher training system, the Saigon Ministry of Education established the Department of Pedagogy, Vocational Training and Adult Education. This office was organized under Decree No. 1692-GD/PC/ND dated December 6, 1965, and started operating on February 3, 1966.

In 1970, the Department of Pedagogy, Vocational Training and Adult Education consisted of 15 pedagogical schools providing supplementary Education to train primary teachers in many provinces and cities: Saigon, Long An, Vinh Long, Quy Nhon, Hue, Long Xuyen, My Tho, Nha Trang, Dalat, Soc Trang, Can Tho, Phuoc Tuy, Tay Ninh, Da Nang, Banmethuot. These schools are classified as Secondary Professional Schools.

In 1975, the Saigon Ministry of Education established a National Institute of Primary Pedagogy to replace the Pedagogical Department, which was abolished after education reform.

In 1974, National Primary Pedagogical Universities trained primary teachers, teachers of pedagogy, and laid the basic foundation for the success of teachers of the National Institute of Pedagogy in the future.

In 1965, the Ministry of Culture and Education promulgated the Regulations of Pedagogical Schools, regulating the organization, programs, contents, methods and quality of training and unifying the training activities of primary school teachers in the whole region.

As of 1968, except for Ban Me Thuot Highland Pedagogical School, which has a professional intermediate level, all other Pedagogical Colleges have an experienced college level, accepting teachers with Baccalaureate Diploma I and Baccalaureate II, for a term study of 2 years.

In 1973, although there was always a severe shortage of primary school teachers, the Ministry of Education did not lower the standard and increase the number of teachers to compensate while raising the entry-level to Pedagogical Schools to Baccalaureate II. It is to note that

at that time, it was tough to get the Baccalaureate II, and holders of Baccalaureate II were fully qualified to work as a professional in the offices.

3.3 Conclusion

In general, due to the context of a war-torn society, the training of primary school teachers had not achieved the desired effect. Primary schools in general and primary school teacher training schools, in particular, were still in an incomplete state. During the 21 years of building the national education system, the Saigon Ministry of Education has repeatedly advocated educational reform. By playing a role model on the podium, primary school teachers strived to compensate for their academic deficiencies. This work was more effective than a reform that only existed on paperwork. Despite many limitations, the educational policies of this period had contributed to improving the quality of primary school teachers and implementing the goals and philosophies set by the government.

As a matter of fact, the Saigon Educational Reform had made a huge progress with making the national education system at secondary and primary levels throughout the territory of the Republic of Vietnam be revised into a single and continuous system of 12 classes in 12 years, including community primary and secondary school. From 1970 to 1972, the number of candidates who passed Baccalaureate I was 37.76%, 36.26%, and 47.2%, respectively. The pass rate of Baccalaureate II (1970-1972) is 62.04%, 53.43%, 87%. Although this proportion corresponds to only about one-third of high school students succeeded the Baccalaureate II exams, the Southern system of Education was the premise for entry to many students in the re-unified Vietnamese universities in the post-75 period and to many international universities in the World with high score.

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4

DOI MOI POLICY AND GLOBALISATION

Anh Tho Andres

Summary

The privatization of state-owned enterprises in Vietnam has been high on the political agenda of the Vietnamese government since the announcement of the Doi-moi policy in 1986[11]. The article examines the Vietnamese macroeconomic framework in which privatization took place. The objective is to describe how a change strategy is conceived, defined and implemented in a context of change with the State as main actor.

Keywords:

Vietnam, restructuring, public enterprises, corporate social responsibility, responsible leadership, transition, privatization, developing countries (DCs), theory of change

Introduction

In the early nineties, the Vietnamese economy included eight main sectors: agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas, industries, construction and tourism. At the national level, the General Directorates administered the respective sector of activity. Like other state-owned

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[11] Anh Tho Andres, Restructuration des Enteprises au Vietnam, Doctoral Thesis (2019). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

enterprises of the socialist system, central planning controlled the entire production process, from sourcing raw materials to distribution to consumers. The companies had access to automatically renewed credits according to the Five-Year Plan. Outside its duty to deliver the output according to the quota fixed by the Plan, these companies could sell the surplus products at the market price outside the distribution network. Part of the income thus generated went to the company and its employees. However, at the level of price-fixing, the heads of state enterprises did not have decision-making powers. It was the Central government that decided the price and production quota. The evaluation criteria on the company's performance were not based on the economic performance but instead on the political standard. Therefore, state-owned enterprises did not perform economically. In 1986, public enterprises used about 80% of national resources but produced only 20-25% of national income. With the disappearance of the export market of Eastern European countries and Russia and the high unemployment rate caused by the return of workers from these countries, the Vietnamese government had to cut subsidies to state-owned enterprises. Doi Moi policy was the new policy to revive the economy after thirty years of conflict that exhausted all resources of the country.

Overall, the contemporary history of Vietnam is marked by the geopolitical issues of Southeast Asia, starting with the French and American colonial policies and their consequences. At the end of World War II in Europe, the war continued in other parts of the globe in another form. For thirty years, Vietnam has found itself in the front line in the East-West confrontation, the socialist regimes on the one hand and the liberal regimes on the other. The year 1992 marked an essential step for the destiny of the entire Vietnamese economy with the normalisation of Sino-Vietnamese relations, followed by the normalisation of American-Vietnamese relations. These events had

socio-economic consequences on the whole socialist orientation of the market economy practised today in Vietnam.

In the North, the general structure of public enterprises ensured the monopoly in all strategic sectors such as transport on land, sea and air, health services, education, housing construction, public services, and the distribution of consumer products to the population. Likewise, it controlled research and development activities, the press, vocational training and education from primary to tertiary education, tourism activities, commercial activities in the country and abroad, investments with foreign capital, all such as the formation of cooperatives or other economic entities. In addition, private property was nationalised, and the money accumulated in the hands of these companies is the property of the State. During the war, the sources of financing came from international aid from the communist bloc. This was essentially the economic model of North Vietnam until reunification with South Vietnam in 1976.

In the South, the war and the economy, largely financed from American aid, functioned under a liberal regime that allowed freedom of trade and where private property rights were respected. During 1954-1973, electricity production multiplied fourteen times while industrial production recorded an average increase of 6.9% per year. Likewise, rice production had increased fourfold, and the number of students enrolled in the university had multiplied by fifty in the space of twenty years. In 1975, the country was reunified and operated under the socialist regime. Industrial properties belonging to South Vietnamese capitalists were also confiscated and nationalised. So, with the demise of a whole generation of Western-trained entrepreneurs and technocrats and the shortage of raw materials for production, factories remained inoperative after the war, in part because of the American embargo.

4.1 The Doi-moi for "Renewal"

Launched at the end of the 6th Congress in 1986, Doi-moi advocated the market economy and encouraged private initiatives through the free creation of businesses and the free movement of goods and, above all, by opening up the economy to foreign investors. This new orientation aimed to give the private sector access to the market, until then reserved for public enterprises which enjoyed monopoly status. As a result, the first step towards privatisation was set in motion.

A priori, according to economists, certain key aspects of management should be in place: first, the reform of internal and external companies should run in parallel because these two actions complement the process of change. Internal measures would consist of restructuring the company to focus on its skills according to the sector assigned by the state. The outsourcing of specific functions that are not essential to the operation and the separation of tasks between governance and operations would help the company refocus on its production activities. Competition between the various subsidiaries which operate with independent funding from the parent company would stimulate the sector. Implementing financial management measures by competent and honest staff would be essential.

Furthermore, price liberalisation would allow competitive access to the market and improve performance according to the law of supply and demand. Consequently, the company's restructuring would allow a reduction in the administrative apparatus and a more efficient flow of communication thanks to well-defined internal procedures. In addition, it would enable transparency towards the public and shareholders.

In 2001, the 9th Party Congress recommended the reform of the public sector and the restructuring of state-owned enterprises to attract foreign investors. The political agenda adopted at this Congress was a deepening of the reforms and an in-depth overhaul of the behaviour and know-how of the state apparatus. Like for all other developing countries,

the primary goal of opening up to the international market was to seek foreign funds, either through foreign direct investment (FDI) projects or through official development assistance. In addition, the internationalisation of foreign policy was also to strengthen diplomatic alliances and find international commercial partners. Between 1998-2007, Vietnam became a member of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and regional organisations such as ASEAN, APEC, ASEM. During this period, Vietnam had established diplomatic relations with 182 countries and signed trade agreements with 224 countries.

Competing for foreign direct investment

According to UNCTAD Report on FDI flows during the period 2014-2015, the top twenty recipient countries of FDI inflows were, in descending order: the United States, Hong Kong, China, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Singapore, Brazil, Canada, India, France, United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Australia, Italy, Chile, and Turkey. Conversely, the top 20 countries for FDI outflows were the United States, followed by Japan, China, the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Hong Kong, Luxembourg, Belgium, Singapore, France, Spain, South Korea, Italy, Russia, Sweden, Norway and Chile. The 2015 figures compared to those of 2012 showed that FDI flows to developing Asia increased by 16%, reaching a new record of $541,000M.

In this trend, Vietnam seems to have a good potential of attractiveness in terms of cheap labour resources and development opportunities by opening its market to foreign capital.

Furthermore, let's analyze the attractiveness of Vietnam compared to those of other ASEAN member countries to learn which characteristics should a country have to keep the interest of trading partners and investors in the region. Overall, compared to other ASEAN countries, Vietnam is overcome by Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines in terms of competitiveness. Regarding financial risks, its debt ratio is relatively

high compared to countries that have less growth, such as Thailand, Myanmar and Brunei, except for Laos and Cambodia. The Philippines seem to have similar demographic conditions as Vietnam, but the Economic Freedom Index ranks them higher in terms of attractiveness to FDI compared to Vietnam. Among the investors ranked first on the list of inward FDI for Vietnam are China, Japan and South Korea, and Vietnamese abroad.

On the other hand, investors from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia consider Vietnam a good partner for production and a good market for their products and services, especially in hospitality, education, management services, IT, etc. During 1997-2014, the Vietnamese economy has made substantial progress thanks to the Chinese communities' contribution and trade partners. The Vietnamese diaspora has also contributed significantly to this success.

The Vietnamese diaspora and historical ties

According to a study by the Diplomacy Academy of Vietnam (DAV), about 98% of the four million Vietnamese living abroad are in OECD countries, including the United States (2,200,000), Australia (300,000) , France (300,000), Canada (250,000), Eastern European countries and Russia (150,000), Germany (140,000), Great Britain (55,000), Nordic countries (50,000). In Asia, the most considerable portion is in Taiwan (200,000), Malaysia (100,000), South Korea (126,000) and Japan (41,000). A small minority lives in Angola, Nigeria (40,000) and Arab countries (30,000).

However, readers should note that the accuracy of the census figures remains uncertain because Vietnamese living abroad are not counted as Vietnamese if they carry another citizenship, depending on the country where they reside. The important thing here is to point out that most of them continue to provide regular financial assistance through remittances, considered one of the most important sources of the inflow of foreign currency into Vietnam. By extension, the circle of friends in

their countries of residence are also interested in investing in the country. Those are mainly from countries with a significant population of second-generation Vietnamese immigrants, such as the case of France, the United States, Australia, the Scandinavian countries, the countries of Central Europe, and Russia. Above all, the Vietnamese communities in the United States and Europe play a very active role in economic, cultural, and political terms for the country's future.

4.2 Policy Formulation

In the literature on economic renewal, the search for FDI funds remains the priority, as demonstrated by the principles, strategy, plan of action and implementation of the policy privatisation. As early as 1986, the Vietnamese authorities announced the new economic policy allowing the privatisation of public enterprises. The main objective was to attract private capital (especially from abroad) to revitalise the public sector. The legal instrument used was the "Law on Enterprises" and its annexes. According to article 2 of Decree 059/2011 / ND-CP of October 14, 2011, all state-owned enterprises, in which the State owns one hundred per cent of the shares, including banks, meet the conditions for privatisation. In addition, limited liability companies with state ownership up to a hundred per cent of the shares at all levels and public enterprises with state ownership of a hundred per cent but were not yet converted into limited liability companies can also be privatised.

Article 3 of the same Decree added that companies with limited liability classified as non-strategic and still holding shares in State shares after their reorganisation were also eligible for privatisation.

The restructuring of state-owned enterprises was the stage that prepared for the privatisation process. According to the definition of the United Nations Commission for Europe, the term privatisation means "the disengagement of the State which gives up its direct influence on the allocation of capital resources. By transforming it into a company, it

allows the contribution of private funds using marketing, the transfer by a contract of management to private persons or the sale of assets to new buyers or holders of capital."

In Western countries, the privatisation of public enterprises makes it possible to transfer the right of ownership to the purchaser, who can dispose and market the entity according to his resources. The State and institutions are responsible for executing the terms stipulated by the Law on Companies. In planned economies, SDC experts identified that the absence of the principle of separation of powers as the missing link in privatisation in these economies. Therefore, administrative reform and decentralisation of powers allowing the transfer of decision-making powers from the central State to regional or local entities is necessary. The Swiss Agency for Development (SDC) considers privatisation a form of economic decentralisation. The monopoly competition theory stresses the importance of product differentiation as the central strategy of the approach to monopolistic competition, according to the principle of the USP (Unique selling proposition), which is part of the business strategy in marketing. The differentiation strategy makes it possible to have a unique (or almost) commercial position that resembles the status of a monopoly. Therefore, firms tend to maximise their output in terms of quality vs price to reduce competition. By partnering with their suppliers or competitors, production costs create a synergistic effect resulting from this association. This synergistic effect results from several factors producing an overall effect more significant than anything that could have happened if they had operated in isolation, either individually or all together but working independently. Thus, the capital brought in by external investors would help to reduce the financial risk linked to indebtedness while making it possible to acquire the technical or technological means necessary for the rationalisation of the company; the global distribution network provided by the partnership with a multinational or transnational company would reduce

marketing and promotion costs, the outsourcing of specific administrative tasks freed up internal resources to refocus on production.

In addition, sound business management on a global scale would help reduce operational costs and the risks associated with the agent problem, which arises from conflicts of interest at the company's management level and affects the investor's interests. In other words, the exploitation of synergies relies on the idea of creative cooperation that makes it possible to reduce costs by concentrating specific tasks at the resource management level. The validity of the theoretical work on the synergistic effect on firms' productivity in transition economies has proved its validity through empirical studies on cases of group performance in different contexts of privatization. Success stories of the business models of transnational corporations like Nestlé, Samsung, Unilever, etc. demonstrated that the synergistic effect within economic groups on a global scale is an essential factor in the company's value chain.

In the case of Vietnam, the exceptional results of economic groups (such as VinGroup, Vietnam Airlines, Vinamilk) demonstrated that vertical or horizontal integration through the grouping of companies produced very positive synergistic effects. Although, in terms of geographic expansion and economic profitability, these companies still operate in an imperfect competition environment linked to the Vietnamese context.

According to Généreux, the privatization policy should include:

o   A phase of analysis of the public sector.
o   Microeconomic studies at the enterprise level.
o   Institutions facilitating the transfer of state ownership into the hands of new owners.

According to IMF experts, the four phases of the privatization process should be:

- o   Starting with the financial restructuring of the state-owned enterprise.
- o   Selling of shares to private investors.
- o   Price liberation.
- o   Apply measures of budgetary austerity and consolidation of state enterprises.

4.3 Strategies

In the eyes of Vietnamese leaders, the priority is above all the search for FDI partners who, through the contribution of capital and expertise, will be beneficial for the country's economic development as strategic partners or commercial partners. The policy of "market economy with a socialist orientation" means that while remaining faithful to the political line of the Party, the State remains the majority shareholder of the restructured companies. The strategies developed aim to achieve the objectives at three levels: political, economic, and social.

Politically, the privatisation strategy aims to preserve state ownership as the majority shareholder in the restructured companies. Using party members at the leadership of these companies, the State retains political control through legal instruments created for this purpose. The Enterprise Law dictates that the new privatised entity – although free to decide on its business activities orientation– remains under the Party's control through the State's ex officio appointment of directors. It is helpful to note that the director and all top executives must be Party members.

At the economic level, funds are a key imperative to make the economy work. With the contribution of know-how and foreign capital, the country could use the natural resources and human capital available to develop export-oriented economic activities to acquire new markets. The restructuring of state-owned enterprises into economic groups would allow the synergistic effect within the public sector to boost the

Vietnamese economy while ensuring that the gains of independence and sovereignty be preserved face to the challenges of globalisation. In addition, the new Foreign Direct Investment Law (2000) will allow foreign direct partnerships with Vietnamese companies to benefit from their monopoly before the opening. For the Vietnamese company, financial independence and the internationalisation of the economy would encourage a spirit of innovation and creativity at the level of the personnel for a better economic return. A t the social level, privatization allows the transfer of social responsibility from the state to the new owners and shareholders of the company. The newly formed or reconstituted company could forge alliances made necessary by the evolution of the sector. With a population of 80 million (in 1990) at an annual growth rate of 2.2%, of which 50% are under 30, the burden is heavy to bear and the need to create jobs is urgent.

4.4 Implementation Process

According to the Enterprise Law, the implementation aims to establish the infrastructure for the restructuring of state-owned enterprises. The Prime Minister's Office ensures responsibility for the deployment of the policy, assisted by committees created for this purpose such as the Commission for Foreign Investment in Vietnam (SCCI), the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), the Foreign Investment Agency (FIA). These bodies have the tasks to assist foreign companies in finding the Vietnamese partners and complete other administrative formalities in their operation in Vietnam with local institutions such as the Customs, banks, immigration services, local police, etc. Vietnam's entry into the WTO in 2006 made it possible to integrate good commercial practices at the international level and benefit from customs tariffs according to the most-favoured-nation (MFN) Clause. Vietnam's membership in the Association of ASEAN Countries allows for the abolition of entry visas and the free movement

of citizens between member countries in the region. Membership of the IMF made it possible to benefit from IMF assistance for development assistance programs. Banking reform allows access to international payment services and foreign funds by boosting the financial sector. In addition, the reform in vocational training has made it possible to improve working methods through the introduction of computers and English.

The implementation phase consists of three essential stages:

1) The first step is considered the most important: it begins with the administrative reform of the public sector to prepare companies for privatization. It allows the consolidation of companies and their regrouping in the form of state economic groups to benefit from the synergistic effect at the level of productivity;

2) The second step consists of the restructuring of state-owned enterprises. It allows these groups to operate as companies with capital to raise the necessary funds and develop the commercial activity. The concentration of wealth within groups would allow better capacity in the financial management of investment projects;

3) The third step includes market release, allowing selling shares to market price according to the principles of supply and demand. Listing companies on the stock exchange would provide better transparency on companies and their financial performance in the eyes of investors.

The Legal framework

International agencies have helped put up the legal framework to support the privatisation process through the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other development agencies. Among these are the United Nations Development Agency (UNDP), Canada (CIDA), Sweden (SIDA), Norway (NORAD), United States

(USAID). The new legal framework made it possible to create the legal tools necessary for the implementation of privatisation:

- o The Law on Enterprises was promulgated in 1999 and updated in 2005, accompanied by directives, decrees, and decisions.
- o The Law on Public Enterprises was promulgated in 1995 and updated in 2005, accompanied by regulations, directives and decrees.
- o The Foreign Capital Investment Law was promulgated in 1987 and updated in 1997, 1998 and 2005.

About a hundred legal texts have resulted in this process. The legal instruments that govern the privatisation process of state-owned enterprises also include directives on the continuous training of managers, anti-corruption measures, and corrective measures in the event of fraud.

The Institutional framework

Directives 91 / TTg of March 7, 1994, and 09/2004/CT-BCN of March 31, 2004, provide guidelines for registering the (restructured) company in the Trade Registry as an incorporated company. The main legislative instruments include:

- o Decree 101/2006 / ND-CP of September 21, 2006, which governs the procedure for registration, transformation or re-registration in the Register of Foreign Capital Enterprises (IDE) according to the regulations of the Enterprise Law;
- o Decree 111/2007 / ND-CP of June 26, 2007, which governs the process of restructuring companies according to the model of parent companies and subsidiary companies according to the regulations of the Law on Companies;
- o Decree 139/2007 / ND-CP of September 5, 2007, lays down the guidelines for the implementation of the Company Law;

o   Decree 101/2009/ND-CP of November 5, 2009, recommends experimental methods for managing economic groups in which the State is the main shareholder.

Thanks to the Companies Act amendments in 2005, the legal framework is more explicit. It confirms the legal status of the state economic group, which is the result of this restructuring process. The reorganisation of state-owned companies and their incorporation into key sectors has enabled the restructured company to benefit from the financial and operational synergies to compete with newcomers from the private sector.

The Formation of economic groups

The Companies Law allows the merger of state-owned companies, resulting in the grouping of companies at the national level (Corporations 90-91) into economic groups (Tập đoàn Kinh tế nhà nước or TDKTNN).

Following Resolution 91 / TTg dated March 7, 1994, the first PTT (Post, Telegraph and Telephone) group was restructured in 2005, starting a series of restructurings of other national state enterprises into State economic groups.

Between 2000-2007, around 6,400 state-owned enterprises were liquidated, refinanced or restructured. Restructured companies are incorporated as limited liability companies with a sole partner (MTV) or a public limited company (SA).

State economic groups cover the ten main sectors of the Vietnamese economy. Each group comprises subsidiaries with State ownership between 50% -100% of the capital. These groups form the heart of the Vietnamese economy and top the list of Top 500 companies between 2008-2013, done by the national ranking agency of Vietnamese companies (VNR).

All economic groups represent about two-thirds of the national economy, while the private sector occupies one third. The typical features of these groups are that they represent one of the strategic sectors of the economy and enjoy a monopolistic privilege. Until 2018, they remain state-owned enterprises (with 100% state capital) and function as parent companies of subsidiaries or partner companies holding up to 100 per cent of shares. These subsidiaries and partner companies operate in limited liability companies or public limited companies. They can sell shares on the stock exchange or in a commercial or strategic partnership.

According to the performance observed on the stock exchange, we can see the synergistic effect created by these groups in terms of market expansion, especially in the field of real estate and construction projects. Some are among Top-10 Vietnamese companies in terms of turnover and economic size. However, others have caused significant financial losses that affected the group's income. Almost all the losses benefitted State funds to recover, such as in the case of Vinashin.

At the administrative level, appointed directors and management members of the state enterprises must be Party members of the VCP. Some figure top-30 most powerful individuals nationwide. However, even at this rank, several have been forced to leave their posts or end up in prison. Between 2017-2018, the anti-corruption measures served as a pretext to internal purges launched in 2012.

Between 2005-2012, the restructuring of eleven of the thirteen groups produced the following results:

- o The PVN Group or Tập đoàn Dầu khí Quốc gia Việt Nam (Vietnam Oil and Gas Group or Petro Vietnam PVN), www.pvn.vn,, restructured in 2006;
- o The VRG Group or Tập đoàn Công nghiệp Cao su Việt Nam (Vietnam Rubber Group VRG), www.rubbergroup.vn, founded in 1975, restructured in 2006;

- o The VNPT Group or Tập đoàn Bưu chính Viễn thông Việt Nam (Vietnam Posts and Telecommunication Group VNPT), www.vnpt.vn, founded in 1995, and restructured in April 2005;

- o The PETROLIMEX Group or Tập đoàn Xăng dầu Việt Nam (Vietnam National Petroleum Group PLX), www.petrolimex.com.vn, founded in 1956, restructured between 1996-2012;

- o The VIETTEL Group or Tập đoàn Viễn thông Quân đội (VIETTEL Group), www.viettel.com.vn, founded in 2009;

- o The VINACOMIN Group or Tập đoàn Công nghiệp Than - Khoáng sản Việt Nam (Vietnam National Coal & Mineral Industries Holding Corporation TKV), founded in 1995, restructured in 2005;

- o The BAO VIET Group or Tập đoàn Tài chính Bảo hiểm Bảo Việt (Baoviet Holdings BVH), www.baoviet.com.vn, founded in 1965, restructured in 2005;

- o The VINATEX Group or Tập đoàn Dệt May Việt Nam ((Vietnam National Textile and Garment Group VGT), www.vinatex.com, founded in 1995, restructured in 2005;

- o The VINASHIN Groupor Tập đoàn Công nghiệp Tàu thủy Việt Nam (Shipbuilding Industry Corporation SBIC), www.sbic.com.vn, founded in 1996, restructured in 2006;

- o The EVN Groupor Tập đoàn Điện lực Việt Nam (Vietnam Electricity EVN), www.evn.com.vn, founded in 1994, restructured in 2006;

- o The VINACHEM Group or Tập đoàn Công nghiệp Hóa chất Việt Nam (National Vietnam Chemical Group VINACHEM), vinachem.com.vn, restructured in 2010;

Examples of restructured companies

As an illustration, we present essential characteristics of how PetroVietnam (PVN), a state-owned enterprise in the Gas and Oil sector, has been transformed through the privatisation process.

In essence, after the restructuring, the Group is made up of the parent company that manages the subsidiaries' activities and collaborates with strategic or commercial partners according to the financial structure indicated in Table G-1 (PVN).

At the level of the parent company, PVN controls 11 operational entities and manages the Group's logistics activities such as electricity production, oil refining, research and development activities, training of oil specialists, administration of Group personnel, etc.

In terms of research and development, PVN works with the Petroleum Research Institute, the University of Petrochemical Studies (PVU) and the Petroleum Trades Training Institute (PVTC). Likewise, it is active in the drilling and extraction of petroleum, the transportation and refining of petroleum products, the marketing, distribution and insurance activities of petroleum activities.

PVN is a 100% shareholder of 6 entities and majority shareholder of 13 other production subsidiaries at the subsidiary level, including JV Vietsopetro (VSP). In addition, it works in partnership with business partners like Nghi Son, Ocean Bank, Long Son.

In terms of funding: During the period between 2005-2013, PVN launched several call offers (IPO) on its subsidiaries (PVD, PTSC, PVTrans, PVI, PVFCC). In 2006, 4 IPOs were launched with PET, PTSC, PVTrans and PVI. The proceeds allowed an income of 26 times more than the initial offering, or VND303M shares at VND160'000 per unit in the space of 6 months. The number of shares sold is 220,000 million. In 2010, PVF's last IPO brought together VND2'000Md. Between 2013 and 2016, the Group's fortune increased from VND 709,531 billion (2013) to VND 770,089 billion (2016).

The Group is present in Russia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Algeria, Venezuela, and Iraq in terms of internationalisation.

However, a financial scandal causing a loss of around $ 5.5 billion in 2016 was made public by Tuoi Tre in May 2018.

Table G-1 (PVN) below gives details of the Group's subsidiaries and partners, as well as the organisation of general management.

I. General management

- General administration of project Cụm Khí Điện Đạm Cà Mau
- General administration of Dung Quất Refinery
- General administration of JV Nghi Sơn Refinery
- General administration of Đại học Dầu khí Việt Nam University
- General Administration of the Long Phú-Sông Hậu Power Plant
- General administration of Vũng Áng-Quảng Trạch Power Station
- General administration Khí Đông Nam Bộ
- Southern Technical Incident Coordination Center (NASOS)
- General administration of the construction project of the new Platform
- Administration of the subsidiary for oil operations in the China Sea
- Subsidiary of the Group Company NK và PP Than DK

II. Subsidiaries and Partners

- Shareholder at 100%
- General company for oil exploration and drilling (PVEP SA)
- General company Petro Vietnam Gas (PV GAS SA)
- Société Générale Petro Vietnam Oil (PV Oil SA)
- Société Générale Petro Vietnam Electricity (PV Power SA) Company à SARL Raffinerie Bình Sơn (BSR SARL)
- SA Trade and technical investment (Petec SA)

III. Majority shareholders

- General company Petro Vietnam Forage (PV Drilling SA)

- General company Petro-Techniques Services (PTSC SA)
- General company Petro Vietnam Transport (PV Trans SA)
- General company Petro Vietnam Finance (PVFC SA)
- General company Petro Vietnam Asurances (PVI SA)
- General company Petro Vietnam Services (Petrosetco SA)
- Société Générale Petro Vietnam Contructions (PVC SA)
- Société Générale Petro Vietnam Raffinerie (PVFCCo SA)
- Société Générale Petro Chimie Vietnam (DMC SA)
- Société générale Technologie Petro Vietnam Energy (PV EIC SA)
  Joint-Venture SA Vietsopetro (VSP)
- SARL Petro Vietnam Textiles (PVTex SARL)
- SARL Investissement et Contruction Port Phước An (SARL)

IV Partnership - Joint-venture and R&D

- Nghi Sơn Refinery Nghi Son SARL Long Sơn Refinery Long Son
- Commercial Bank Ltd (Oceanbank)
- Petro Vietnam Research Institute Petro Vietnam University (PVU)
- Petro Vietnam Vocational Training School (PVMTC)

4.5 Conclusion

By the term "State", we can understand everything that refers to the government or the Office of the Prime Minister, to the leadership of the Communist Party, the Politburo, the National Assembly and the Corps legislative. Similarly, "privatisation" does not mean liberalisation of the total market but rather a restructuring of the state-owned company into a capital company whose shares belong to the same owner –the State. As the majority shareholder, the State retains the decision-making power of the firm. Consequently, it interferes in implementing the Commercial Strategy, thus creating a conflict of interest that discourages FDI flows from foreign investors.

However, the overall conclusion of this period is that Vietnam's economic success since the launch of the new policy is probably because of the Vietnamese trading tradition and trading spirit of small traders in the average Vietnamese. In the southern part of the country, the market economy was in full swing amid the war. Moreover, after the war, the informal sector still existed with a sizeable minority of two million Chinese who were the driving economic force at home, along with private contributions from the overseas Vietnamese communities worldwide.

Official Statistics of the period 2006-2016 published by the National Bank of Vietnam revealed that the inflows from this community amounted to around 10% GDP. But, sadly, the Viet-Kieu –including academia or former politicians and overseas workers– do not seem to benefit from special treatment, as is the case of Filipino overseas workers, for instance. On the contrary, some litigation cases have proven that many Vietkieus have been the target of unfair treatment despite their significant contribution to the country's economic revival for reasons linked to political divergence of opinions.

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5

FACTORS THAT AFFECT LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN VIETNAM

Kim Ngọc, Trần Ngọc Sơn

Summary

The 'Doi Moi' policy facilitated foreign investors' participation in the Vietnamese economy in many ways, such as the creation or incorporation of joint-ventures companies with private capital, new management know-how and new technologies[12]. In terms of labour productivity, workers' output has improved significantly and steadily, especially since the introduction of training with media technologies and the broader use of social media and modern tools for management. Still, the labour productivity in Vietnam lags behind neighbouring economies such as Cambodia, Malaysia and the Philippines. In the excerpt below, the author analyses possible causes of 'barriers to labour productivity in Vietnam', as part of a comparative study with other transition economies, from an economist's viewpoint.

Keywords: Vietnam in transition, development policies, socio-economic studies, globalisation, HDI Index, comparative studies, labour productivity, barriers

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[12] Kim Ngọc, Trần Ngọc Sơn, Rào cản tăng năng suất lao động của Việt Nam, Vietnam Journal of Social Sciences, no. 1 (2019). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Introduction

According to the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, labour productivity has improved significantly during period 2007-2016, by an average of 4.2% per year. As a result, Vietnam GDP of 2017 reached the level of $4,100 per capita, an increase of 5.9% compared to 2016. The total factor productivity (TFP) to economic growth in 2016-2017 showed an augmentation of 2.26%, contributing to 35.4% of the economic growth. However, Vietnam's labour productivity growth rate is not superior to other East Asian and Southeast Asian countries and is still far behind China (9.07%). Even compared to Cambodia, Vietnam's labour productivity ranks behind this economy in processing and manufacturing, construction, transportation, and warehousing.

One reason that explains the low Vietnamese labour productivity is that it is shifting from an agriculture-based to industrial and service sectors without the training of workers in this new area. Another reason is, according to Professor Kenichi Ohno for the Japanese National Institute for Policy Studies, "Vietnam's growth in the past was due to quantity (capital and labour) rather than quality (labour productivity). Therefore, Vietnam must remove institutions, human resources, and infrastructure barriers to change labour productivity."

5.1 Barriers at the Institutional Level

The Vietnamese economy relies on three critical economic pillars: the public sector contributing 28.9% to GDP, the private sector 43% to GDP, and the foreign direct investment 18% to GDP.

State-owned enterprises (SOEs) currently hold a significant part of the country's assets, capital and resources. From 2010 to 2014, the value of fixed assets and long-term financial investments of SOEs has increased from 52% to 85.3% of GDP. Furthermore, despite the new policy on the divestment of State-owned enterprises, the economy's

resource allocation remains unchanged. In fact, among 96.5% of restructured state-owned enterprises, only 8% of state capital has been transferred to the private sector. In reality, although SOEs benefit a lot from the production resources of the economy and enjoy many incentives from economic policies, many big SOEs have even incurred significant financial losses. Although the cause of losses was due to the incompetence of SOE managers chosen solely based on their political background rather than professional merit, there were no sanctions applied to redress the failures or make these managers accountable. Furthermore, it was clear that these companies did not fulfil their mission assigned by the socialist-oriented State.

The institutional flaws identified here are the Law's loopholes on state-owned enterprises that do not sanction mismanagement and corruption practices and render SOE managers accountable for the losses. In contrast, natural resources continue to be depleted in the name of community welfare.

5.2 Barriers at the Structural Level

The policy on economic restructuring focuses on three main areas: (1) public investment, (2) SOEs and (3) the commercial banking system to transform Vietnam's economic growth model from broad-based development to investment-based development. Vietnam's economic restructuring process is currently facing some challenges according to the following three scenarios:

Scenario (1): The economic restructuring policy still keeps the old thinking reactive to changes. As a result, the results will be limited even if the results are positive.

Scenario (2): The economic restructuring policy still prioritises the funding pattern favouring SOEs instead of private enterprises. As a result, the competitiveness level of Vietnam compared to other free-economy countries will be limited.

Scenario (3): The new economic policy introduces institutions that strengthen the check-and-balance principle, such as public investment law, commercial banking system, decentralisation and privatisation of economic sectors. As a result, there will be a free competition that boosts productivity.

At present, the fundamental principles of the free-market mechanism are not complete. More importantly, the halfway 'privatisation' has facilitated a transfer of wealth to proxies of the real owners who are line ministries and holding the State equity in SOEs without bringing any capital on their own to the company.

Therefore, the check-and-balance principles must function through institutions that are empowered to do so.

5.3 Barriers at the Corporate Level

Vietnamese enterprises have low competitiveness compared to the region and the world due to their low financial autonomy and inefficient governance, and despite being highly intensive in terms of capital, they are not associated with technological innovation. SOEs are powerful because their line ministry is both a representative of the owner (the State) and controls state management functions of the business, with little supervision by the State Audit and tax authorities that relies heavily to relevant ministries and branches. SOE mobilise up to 85% of national resources, but contribute to less than 30% of the GDP.

On the other hand, private enterprises are denied the opportunity to compete equally with foreign-invested enterprises (FDI enterprises) due to "unclear" policies in terms of equal treatment and fair competition. In many industries and localities, excessive incentives to attract FDI include tax exemption, free land for production bases, low interest on loans, etc., that have caused unfair competition to local private enterprises in accessing resources to start their operations on an equal basis.

The low productivity can be explained by many factors:

1) The high operating costs are the main factors that render Vietnamese products not competitive on the market. On average, the logistics costs that Vietnamese enterprises are "carrying" on average are 6% higher than in Thailand, 12% in Malaysia, and three times higher than in Singapore. An independent survey by World Bank showed that logistics costs account for a large part of the cost of many commodities in Vietnam: For the seafood industry, it accounts to more than 12% of total production costs, for furniture 23%, for vegetables and fruits 29.5%, and for the rice industry nearly 30%.

2) Implicit costs represent another significant burden for Vietnamese businesses. A survey by the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry - VCCI (2016) on 2,600 small and medium enterprises operating in processing and production showed that more than 40% of small and medium companies still practice informal payments to state management agencies. On average, about 66% of these companies still practiced informal payment in the 2008-2013 period. Notably, 9-11% of enterprises participating in the survey said that expenditures for this category alone accounted for more than 10% of their total revenue, an increase of 6-8% compared to the previous five years.

3) Poor wages, leading to low productivity, now cost more to the company due to inflation. In fact, the minimum wage increased from 8-12% compared to the labour productivity growth rate of 4-5%. The corporate insurance contribution rate that accounts for 22% of the monthly salary in Vietnam has increased 6-8% in the previous five years. In comparison, Malaysia insurance rate accounts only 13% of the salary, and the Philippines 10%.

4) The unfair treatment between the public sector, the domestic private sector and the FDI enterprises is the basis for high competition for human resources, natural resources and market shares. To be

effective, the new policy should follow the principles of the free-market mechanism, based on the law of supply and demand. In other words, the State's role should be limited to being a shareholder and no longer holds management rights.

Following the assessment on barriers hindering the labour productivity in Vietnam, the author discussed possible causes of barriers on the challenges facing Vietnamese workers.

The comparative study on HDI Index of the region points out that positive or negative externalities such as a legal framework for foreign direct investment, free-market competition and access to market, financial and human resources development, private ownership, transparency and good governance, etc. can be factors that enhance the competitiveness of a firm and encourage competition of workers. In this article, the authors acknowledge that Vietnamese workers have grounds to compete for a better income based on merit, and employers will have to prove their production capacities within each economic sector.

5.4 Areas that Need Improvements

Infrastructure capabilities

According to the Global Innovation Index 2014, Vietnam's technology innovation index ranks 71 out of 143 economies. The country's research, development, and science and technological innovation application remain limited. The mechanization, automation and computerization of economic sectors are still outdated. From 2011 to 2013, the investment rate for science and technology was 0.5% of GDP to reach 0.51% of GDP ten years later. Compared to countries in the region, the Investment for scientific research per person in 2012 was USD 3.1, while Thailand was at USD 22, Malaysia at USD 86, and Singapore at USD 1,340.

After 30 years since Doi Moi, Vietnam's economy remains at the processing and assembly stage level, with the lowest added value in the

industrial value chain. According to VCCI data, only 36% of Vietnamese enterprises participate in the global supply chain network, including direct and indirect exports. As a result, Vietnam's industry is currently at the bottom of the global value-added chain, with 70-80% of agricultural products' value calculated according to imported goods. Moreover, many foreign investors are taking advantage of cheap labour and the inexperience of Vietnam in the practice of international trade relations. In some industrial parks, FDI enterprises modern and advanced technology invested in Vietnam is only 5%. The remaining 95% is traditional or outdated technology. According to the 2016 World Economic Forum, the efficiency of technology transfer from Vietnam's FDI enterprises is very low and lags behind other countries in the region. While in 2009, Vietnam ranked 57th for this criterion, by 2014, its position had dropped to 103rd place, lagging behind Malaysia's ranking at 13, Thailand at 36, Indonesia 39, and even Cambodia at 44.

Currently, the innovation capacity of the domestic business sector is meagre. Over 70% of businesses do not do any innovation or research and development (R&D) at all. In 2014, only 0.2% out of 3,048 SOEs had R&D activities. State-owned enterprises investment rate for technological innovation accounted for 4.3% of their total revenue. Due to the poor integration ability and competitiveness of the SOEs, the participation of Vietnamese enterprises in the global supply chain network remains insignificant.

Human resources capabilities

Currently, the Vietnam workforce is abundant in quantity but very limited in quality. Among university graduates, there are 24,500 doctorates, 1,600 professors, 10,000 associate professors, 16,000 master's degree holders, 30,000 staff engaged in science and technology operations, 52,130 university and college lecturers, of which 49% of university lecturers have a master's degree or higher.

There are currently 14,000 professional intermediate teachers among teaching staff in the country; 11,200 vocational teachers and 925,000 high school teachers. Of the 9,000 PhDs surveyed, 70% hold managerial positions, only 30% do professional work. 63% of university graduates are unemployed. Many agencies and businesses that accept students to work take 1 to 2 years of retraining. 37% of graduates do not meet the job requirements. There is a discrepancy between the number of graduates and the quality of the workforce. There are 1.16 intermediate graduates and 0.92 technical workers for each university graduate. Meanwhile, this ratio of the world is 4 and 12 respectively. The percentage of university students is 181 per 10,000 people in Vietnam compared to the world average of 100 and China's 140.

Moreover, the distribution of quality human resources in Vietnam is not rational: 92.2% of staff with doctorate degrees or higher live in two big cities, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, while the number of officials with a doctorate or higher in the Northwest, Central Highlands and South regions accounts for less than 1%. 86.2% of professors and associate professors lived in Hanoi, 9.5% in HCMC, and less than 4.3% in the rest of the country. Vietnam has produced hundreds of thousands of university students, tens of thousands of graduate students, and PhD students in recent years. However, High-quality human resources in Vietnam still have many shortcomings. The number of trained workers at the university level and above is increasing day by day. Still, the quality of the trained workers, the ability to adapt to the job and promote the training results of this number of workers is deficient. According to recent survey results, the percentage of trained workers who can apply their knowledge to the job is less than 40%. There is a shortage of skilled workers, unable to meet the needs of the labour market and economic development. According to the World Bank's assessment on the quality of human resources, Vietnam only scored 3.39 points out of 10 points, while Korea scored 6.91, India 5.76, Malaysia, Thailand 4.94.

the proportion of graduates that did not find a job is enormous. Despite having advantages in youth and perseverance, these highly trained workers cannot integrate with the new working environment due to poor foreign language proficiency, lack of industry knowledge, and difficulty adapting to change. According to the assessment of the World Bank, the preparation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and psychology of Vietnamese workers apt for work in ASEAN countries is not high.

The WEF report in January 2018 classified Vietnam among countries that are not ready for the industrial revolution 4.0. With a ranking of 75/100 in terms of university training quality, 68/100 in terms of quality of math and science education (3.7/7 points), 63/100 on critical thinking in teaching (3.2/7 points), 44/100 on the national capacity to attract and retain talents (3.5/7 points), Vietnam is lagging far behind thee standards required. Specifically, Vietnam ranks 90/100 in technology and innovation; 92/100 on background technology; 77/100 in creativity; 70/100 on human resources. In total, Vietnam only scored 4.9 on a 10-point scale in terms of readiness for the 4.0 revolution, equivalent to Cambodia, inferior to Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia.

The labour market information system has not kept up with the labour market fluctuations; medium and short-term forecasts on the labour market are lacking, and the low efficiency of employment services has contributed to this trend. Forecasting long-term human resource needs for socio-economic development is also very limited. The long-term training structure by professions and levels is lacking. Training institutions do not have enough information on labour supply and demand, so the construction of occupations, targets and annual training levels is not close to reality. The size and quality of the teaching staff are limited. Streamlining at the lower secondary level and vocational guidance at the high school level is still confusing. The quality of vocational education has not yet approached regional and

international standards as the educational policy does not meet the requirements of the job market.

5.5 Recommendations for Change

In view of the poor ratings and based on the realities of the Vietnamese economy, some changes in Human Resources Development policies were recommended to address this situation. The action plan includes 4 steps:

Step One: Reallocate resources

According to Tran Van Tho from Waseda University (Tokyo), who is also a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Group, to achieve breakthrough growth rate, Vietnam has to increase labour productivity; First, by reallocating resources and transfer the excess labour from low-productivity sectors (such as agriculture and individual family business) to areas with higher productivity. The Japanese experience shows that labour moves rapidly from the agricultural and the individual business sector to industry. Within the industry, there has also been a shift from low-added-value industries such as textiles and footwear to high-value industries such as electronic product manufacturing.

Step Two: Increase labour productivity

High labour productivity means a fast and sustainable development face to competition of countries in the region. Vietnam can learn from the experiences of South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, that showed that innovation was a key factor driving growth, and that these economies focused on investing in infrastructure, capital accumulation, and human resource development for export oriented production. What Vietnam can learn is to focus on human development through improving education in science and technology; strengthening technical education and skills

training; attracting talents and experienced workers among overseas Vietnamese and foreign experts. Increasing productivity requires the formation of a creative society. Every initiative, even the smallest, needs to be nurtured and appreciated by the society as a foundation to increase labour productivity. Solving bottlenecks in infrastructure and investing in technology will add value to our products. By appreciating the added value of innovation and creativity of workers, Vietnamese employers will benefit from the underlying potential of workers who enjoy working in an environment where creativity is encouraged.

Step Three: Develop human resources

To get the most out of potential employees, employers should learn to adopt a new perspective on criteria for assessing human resources. Instead of relying on qualifications alone, the human resource manager should consider the practical capacity and vocational skills criteria in his assessment and recruitment process. In addition, the employer should see the value of an employee who possesses the general culture, skill level, and crafts needed for the organisation's business purpose. Furthermore, business owners should change the mindset of investing in cheap labour to create a competitive advantage for market share. To create a higher added value to his business, the business owner should develop a business strategy based on the supply and demand, competitive advantage and good human resource development. Similarly, at the macro-economic level, an effective human resource development policy should adapt to the economy's needs and is an essential step to reach higher added value and productivity for more robust economic sustainability.

Step Four: Attract foreign direct investment capital

At the Vietnam Economic Forum (2018) in Hanoi, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc declared that in the coming time, Vietnam needs to persistently pursue a new growth model based on productivity and

innovation. For countries in the early stages of industrialization like Vietnam, the fastest and most effective solution to rapidly increase labour productivity is to attract FDI into service, industrial and agricultural production activities with higher economic values.

In parallel, Vietnam needs to connect domestic small and medium enterprises with multinational corporations through information exchange, skill improvement and technology transfer. Therefore, in 2016-2020, the Vietnamese government will support new strategies to attract FDI, which are necessary to attain higher labour productivity of the sector's workforce with innovation activities.

5.6 Conclusion

Increasing productivity is an essential factor in a country's economic development, and only by increasing productivity can Vietnam achieve rapid and sustainable economic growth. Despite positive changes in recent years, Vietnam must pay special attention to labour productivity because Vietnam's labour productivity is still below the growth rate needed to achieve the expected growth targets. The labour productivity growth rate should reach 6% to earn an average GDP of 7%. Industrial revolution 4.0 opens up unprecedented opportunities for Vietnam and can increase labour productivity and efficiency. The recommendation of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Group is to prioritise the private sector to lead the national labour productivity movement in providing consulting services and reporting feedback to the Government on economic achievements.

Furthermore, the Government should support strategic industries led by state-owned enterprises to benefit from the experience of newly industrialised economies such as Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Singapore through bilateral trade agreements. From such a perspective, the Law on enterprises should include articles that can enforce the protection of foreign investors and increase their trust in the Vietnamese economy.

Institutions that support FDI investments should train competent managers to lead joint ventures based on principles on corporate governance accepted by international organisations.

Consequently, training policies at the university should consider this new development to integrate more relevant skills and knowledge training programmes in accordance to their new mission.

6

IMPACTS OF THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION ON DEVELOPMENT

Bùi Tiến Dũng

Summary

At present, Vietnam is hastening the completion of the institutional framework for the socialist-oriented market economy to integrate the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0)[13]. The revolution with breakthroughs in Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, big data processing, cloud computing and other technologies aimed at conducting major linkages between the real world and the digital space has been impacting the institutional framework in the country on various levels, both in form and in content. Apart from the advantages of IR, the author also warns on potential threats of the use of cyberspace and the lack of institutional framework regulating it.

Introduction

Since 2011, the Vietnam economy has been affected by the Industrial Revolution 4.0. in all aspects, from economic, social, political

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[13] Bùi Tiến Dũng, Tác động của cách mạng công nghiệp 4.0 tới hoàn thiện thể chế kinh tế thị trường định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa ở Việt Nam, Vietnam Journal of Social Science no. 8 (2019). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

to security and defence, at varying degrees. On the positive side, IR 4.0 has changed people's way of working, communicating, and improving their material and spiritual lives. On the other, there are negative impacts associated with the risk of social instability and disturbance, but more importantly, the business risk is associated with economic growth. This article lists the main contents of the Government on perfecting the socialist-oriented market economy institutions to face this trend.

6.1 The New Institutional Framework

The updated institutional framework will support all economic entities in all sectors. State agencies and organizations shall work on the completion of policies on the development of economic sectors, types of products and business organizations;

The new framework will allow the synchronous development and smooth operation of all types of markets. State agencies shall study and perfect mechanisms and policies to improve the operational efficiency of markets and facilitate economic growth while ensuring sustainable development with appropriate tools and procedures on implementing green growth strategies.

Capacity building on institutional implementation will be put in place to ensure the publicity and transparency of obligations and responsibilities and enforce the accountability of related agencies. In addition, state agencies shall improve communication efficiency between local governments and other actors in the political system, inside and outside the country. Relevant State agencies shall complete the legal framework for the signing and implementing international treaties and agreements, with a mechanism to review, monitor and urge ministries, branches and localities involved in the process. Being part of the global economy will allow all enterprises to participate in regional and international supply chains. State agencies shall support the creation

of domestic branding or participate in regional and global supply chains, especially in commodity groups with comparative advantages.

Finally, the new framework will integrate economic growth with ensuring national defence and security. State agencies shall provide the formulation and implementation of the development strategy of the defence industry to strengthen legal provisions on national security in association with cultural and social development.

6.2 Impacts of IR 4.0 at Different Levels

The impacts of IR 4.0 on the Vietnamese economy can be perceived at different levels: on institutions, on public relations, on market mechanisms and on the integration process.

Impacts on the institutions

IR 4.0 has impacted the legal system and social framework. The rapid pace of change of a digitalised society is forcing the state to change its provisions in establishing, amending and enforcing laws. The legislative, executive and judicial apparatus does not have enough time to study and develop a complete legal framework or establish appropriate codes of conduct. Therefore, the current legal system and legal framework need to be more flexible to adapt to the changing social environment and its impact.

The Industrial Revolution 4.0 is affecting the relationship between the State and the people in many ways:

Increasing use of digital technologies and digital transactions. The State uses digital technologies for better management. Public companies can check and monitor the situation more accurately. Consumers are better informed through the modern information and communication tools and equipment. The increasing speed of communication allows a better reaction in time and in quality in the way stakeholders interact

with each other at different levels, and permit better collaboration opportunities.

Information technology allows the participation of citizens in the affairs of the state, directly or indirectly. Technology provides new ways for citizens to express their opinions, and enables them to coordinate their actions. Access to information empowers the people in making decisions of their life orientation to respond to the new environment. Inside the state apparatus, the working attitude is also gradually changing. The changes force government officials to adjust and find new ways to collaborate with citizens and the private sector more effectively.

State institutions are gradually transitioning to new scientific, technological, economic and social frameworks; Due to the requirements of efficiency, effectiveness and transparency, state agencies and social organizations are in the process of achieving transparency and efficiency through leaner and more efficient units. Innovative efforts to strengthen e-governance processes increase the transparency, accountability, and better relations between governments, organizations and citizens, and add more efficiency to public information in the same process.

Impacts on information to the public

IR 4.0 is promoting the rapid development of database systems and information transmission media in the field of public services by

(1) Moving from an administrative role to a service one. Government organizations are gradually being viewed as public service centers according to their ability to provide more efficient and highly personalized services to end-users.

(2) Creating more job opportunities: The digitalization of public services increase digital technology application to public sectors such as education, healthcare and public utilities. These new applications brought changes in the structure and nature of services towards the public in terms of employment opportunities which in turn, require more

vocational training in domains such as healthcare and public utilities, including electricity distribution, gas, hot water, steam and air conditioning and water supply, management of operations and waste and wastewater treatment, etc.

Impacts on the liberalisation of markets

One of the major obstacles to integrating the Vietnamese economy to the high-end industrial development is the current status of industrial production with industries that are either labour intensive and produce low value-added end products, combined with the inefficient use of resources. As competitiveness is key to economic growth, the production organization of Vietnam's primary industries will have to change.

In the new IR 4.0 era, extracting and other manufacturing industries such as food processing, electronic manufacturing, computers and telecommunications equipment, textiles that use low technology and cheap labour will be deeply affected. The emergence of global platforms in a flat world and new business models will lead to profound changes in organizational forms and corporate cultures. In the case of Vietnam, the product structure and export model will be affected. Along with the new supply chain structure, there will be new jobs with different requirements in Vietnam and a work environment or organization that is no longer the same today.

Similarly, with new business models that use e-commerce, electronic payment, and electronic transactions, investing in IT management skills will be more beneficial to Vietnam's economic growth than keeping the traditional model.

With such opportunities of reaching out to new markets, and strengthening multilateral cooperation, the relations between parties need to abide to certain rules to function efficiently.

Impacts on the international integration process

In the cyber era context, international organisations have set new standards, rules, and regulations related to digital technologies and digital interactions, covering aspects of cybersecurity and the use of cyberspace. Similarly, countries also set up their own rules and laws to protect the interest of domestic manufacturers against the cyber-foreign competition.

Indeed, IR 4.0 has created a profound impact on security and defence issues at national and international levels. Great applications in IR 4.0 technology have built brilliant robot soldiers with extraordinary strength and endurance. On the other hand, cyber or electronic warfare represents huge threats in a complex and potentially dangerous setting, with virtual reality technology and intelligent weapons and military equipment in cyber warfare. Advanced means and equipment carry out destructive activities on other organisations or individuals. Anyone or anywhere, the life and security of people are under threat. Meanwhile, the weak counter defence to protect users and absence of media literacy training make self-defence difficult for specific target groups. Vietnamese users could fall into this category without an adequate framework of cyber warfare prevention.

6.3 Conclusion

Given the digital economy's development trend that will significantly impact the working relationship between stakeholders and the need to preserve the socialist-orientation business model, the author recommends that necessary measures be taken to interpret the impact of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 on the institutional framework. Particular attention should focus on the emergence of the digital economy with its components and update the institutional framework along with the digitalisation process.

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SECTION II

PRESERVING OUR VIETNAMESE CULTURAL IDENTITIES

CHANGING HABITS IN CELEBRATING TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS

Phạm Cao Quý

Summary

This paper is about the effects of globalization on the lives of the local communities in Vietnam[14]. One of these aspects is the celebration of folklore in festivals, organized according to the harvesting seasons or following the religious traditions. Vietnamese people show their gratitude by celebrating memorable events such as harvesting seasons, celebrating the anniversary of the death of our ancestors, and worshipping deities that protect people from natural disasters. With the post-war effects and the shift to a free-market economy, the lives of the local communities in Vietnam have undergone considerable changes.

By recognizing that festivals are an intangible pillar of the Vietnamese cultural heritage and the way celebration has changed over the years, along with the country's socio-economic development, the author concludes that festivals usually transform according to the changing social environment and development of the economy.

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[14] Phạm Cao Quý, Cục Di Sản Văn Hóa, Tạp chí Khoa học xã hội Việt Nam, số 1 (2018). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Keywords: Vietnam in transition, cultural changes, socio-economic environment, cultural identity, acculturation, cultural heritage, traditions and values

Introduction

This paper discusses factors leading to the changes in the way traditional festivals are celebrated, seen under the prism of changes due to endogenous or internal factors within the village community and external factors.

Traditional festivals are cultural expressions that are transmitted from one generation to another. Celebrating traditional festivals is the way communities live their cultural values through rituals, processions, tributes to the gods, costumes, music, culinary arts, martial arts, folk games. Traditional festivals are positive aspects of the socio-cultural life of people through historical development and social contexts. However, to some people, celebrating traditional festivals is a cost to the economy and production resources, and therefore not suitable to the development needs of Vietnam in terms of advancement and progress. In the pursuit of catching up with the global economy, it is important to properly recognise the role of traditional festivals in our social life and identify appropriate solutions to protect and promote the value of traditional festivals as Vietnamese cultural contribution to the world cultural heritage.

The Vietnamese Law on Cultural Heritage reaffirms that

"…intangible cultural heritage includes related objects and cultural spaces that have valuable historical, cultural and scientific values that express the identity of the community, and will continue to be recreated and handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth, professional performance and other forms. These are (1) language spoken or in writing; (2) folk

literature; (3) folk performing arts; (4) social practices and beliefs; (5) traditional festivals; (6) traditional crafts; and (7) folk knowledge."

UNESCO 2013 Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage also considers traditional festivals as a part of the intangible cultural heritage in these terms:

Intangible cultural heritage includes customs, forms, expression, knowledge, skills, and associated tools, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces that communities, groups and individuals have received as part of their cultural heritage, passed on from generation to generation.

UNESCO considers festivals as one of five types of intangible cultural heritage listed as oral traditions and expressions, performance art, collective social customs, beliefs and festivals, knowledge and practices related to Nature and the universe and traditional crafts. In addition, festivals can contain many other types of intangible cultural heritage, such as performing arts, rituals, costumes, music, cuisine, traditional crafts, knowledge and folk games.

According to Prof. Dr Nguyen Chi Ben, Traditional festivals exist as a whole with interrelated elements and influence each other. At the same time, the festival is a continuous and ever-changing living and community-driven entity, with principles, structures, and institutions that are both fixed and variable. In the past, the Huong Covenant or other regulations established principles and structures of traditional festivals. For instance, the villagers discussed elements on stages, processes, ingredients, members, space, time, and many other related regulations.

The Huong Covenant is likened to each village's "custom law". However, as society progresses, customs and traditions change to adapt to the new way of life.

7.1 Changes due to Endogenous Factors

At the village or community level, factors that affect the structure and operation of the local festivals include changes in villagers' demographic, economic, cultural, educational, and social behaviour. In addition, factors that directly affect the structure of traditional festivals are changes in the cultural environment, ritual practice, community awareness etc.

The case of Dong Ky Festival in Bac Ninh illustrates the changes undergone by its organisers. Dong Ky Festival has had a long tradition in the history of traditional festivals in and outside the Kinh Bac region. This festival used to accept only male participants to run the festival. However, in 1997, women participants were allowed to join Quan Quan to run the festival and perform several activities and rituals related to the Village Citadel. According to the village tradition, men were to stay in the communal House while women performed rituals at temples. However, with the appearance of "Lady Quan", the activities at the communal House changed. One of these changes was the programme's added contribution by the female sacrifice team at the communal House.

This change occurred mainly due to the endogenous factors within the villager's community, but it could be the result of a change in the perception on gender equality in society. The Dong Ky Festival transformation resulted from a changed structure at the national level. The conversion of the village into an administrative function (the ward) allow endogenous changes in the behaviour of stakeholders at the village level as a community and at the ward level as an organisational unit.

Environmental factors also affect habitat change. For example, with the population growing, the village roads and alleys became narrower, and family houses were more crowded, so it was difficult to pay tribute to the village Chief in his home. As a result, a more spacious traditional house was built as a shrine to worship the Chief and the procession route

was adapted. Such changes added to the Huong Covenant showed that endogenous factors could strongly impact the structure of the festival organisation.

From this case study, we can conclude that the life of communities is constantly in motion, remodelling customs, activities, spaces, processes, and practices according to the new requirements that need to be adjusted. The adjustment was discussed and accepted by the community as an inevitable change dictated by the community's economic, cultural, and social conditions.

7.2 Changes due to Exogenous Factors

The interaction between the village (community level) and the external environment (country level) has always been strong in the past. It continues nowadays concerning the organization of festivals within the community in compliance with Vietnamese laws and regulations. In the case of Dong Ky village festival, as a matter of public health and security caused by the production, sale and use of firecrackers, a decree was issued on August 8, 1994, banning the production, trading and burning of firecrackers. Furthermore, another decree issued on April 15, 2009, followed the management and use of firecrackers.

Dong Ky village festival has a tradition of burning firecrackers as a primary and essential activity in the practice of traditional rituals. However, according to the new Decree, the use of firecrackers during the festival would have been a criminal act. Therefore, the alternative was to make big wooden firecrackers during the procession and then do the worship rituals inside the communal house. In this way, the adjustment still ensures the maintenance of beliefs while not breaking the law. The villagers discussed and agreed upon this change and protocoled in the Huong Covenant. Since then, the people of Dong Ky no longer set off firecrackers during the procession but still perform rituals indoors.

7.3 Conclusion

In a globalised context, cultural differences between countries affect the customs of member countries of the global family in their spiritual practice. While the cultural quintessence is spread and absorbed by most member countries and their respective communities based on the principle of commonly shared values, specific cultural elements that harm other cultures will be prevented. Participants at the 2003 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage had rejected – by consensus– some applications that are considered harmful to other countries. These include violent activities and sensitive elements that affect the cultural respect of different communities and thus are "not honoured and supported at the international level".

Such orientation of UNESCO not only had a significant impact on the candidate countries in question, but it also spread the message to many other communities and countries that have similar cultural practices that it will be difficult for UNESCO to enrol any country that subsequently nominates other candidates with a similar cultural tradition on the UNESCO list.

Indeed, UNESCO guidelines for the implementation of the Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage stated:

"Measures for protection must always be developed, applied with the consent and participation of the communities themselves. In certain cases, government intervention to protect a community's heritage may be undesirable, as it may inadvertently distort the value of the community's heritage. Furthermore, safeguards should always respect the customs that govern access to particular aspects of that heritage, such as manifestations of sacred intangible cultural heritage or is considered a secret."

Thus, like other types of intangible cultural heritage, traditional festivals are not "immutable" but can permanently change over time, subject to historical and social contexts.

Accordingly, in the protection and promotion of festival values, for each specific case, it is necessary to accurately identify the changes and changing trends of the festival at each time and historical and social context to manage the relationship between the conservation and development process in the most harmonious way possible.

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8

CHANGING CULTURAL VALUES AMONG ETHNIC MINORITIES

Trương Minh Dục

Summary

This article is about the change that occurs among ethnic minorities in Vietnam[15]. Along with changes that transformed the socio-cultural framework of Vietnam, the renewal policy that allows the transition of the economy to free market has shed more light on the ethnic minorities whose conditions of living were not so apparent in pre-war Vietnamese literature.

This article analyses the changes across Vietnam's main clusters of ethnic minorities, namely the Northwestern, Central Highlands and Southern provinces, and state policies and measures adopted by regional authorities in the promotion and preservation of the cultural identity, ethics and values and traditions that are part of Vietnam's policy on inclusiveness, diversity and gender equality.

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[15] Trương Minh Dục, Ethnic relations in the Central Highlands in the renovation period, Hanoi National Political Publishing House (2016). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Introduction

Vietnam, home to 54 ethnic groups, is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural country. The traditional culture of ethnic minorities has been formed throughout history and has become a valuable heritage of the nation, contributing to the richness, diversity and unity of Vietnamese culture. Preserving and promoting the cultural identity of the ethnic groups are part of economic and cultural development policies for improving the material and cultural life of the ethnic minorities. The guidelines and policies are adapted to the changing environment observed among these minorities.

8.1 The Fate of Ethnic Groups Facing Modernisation

Along with the Vietnamese integration to the global family, preserving the traditional culture of ethnic minorities is a necessary step to preserving the diversity of the Vietnamese culture. Vietnam has made great efforts, and has achieved great results in preserving, inheriting and promoting the traditional culture of ethnic minorities. Research on ethnic culture, folklore and traditions have been funded by the State. In the Northwest, these activities have taken many forms:

(1) Tuyen Quang province conducted an inventory of intangible cultural heritages of sixteen out of twenty-six ethnic groups, including 425 intangible heritages, of which, five out of six ethnic cultural heritages are endorsed by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism as a national intangible cultural heritage; Lao Cai province has collected 178 ethnographic artifacts;

(2) Every year, provinces organize special traditional festivals of ethnic minorities in the area. In order to preserve the language and writing of ethnic minorities, the provinces of Lao Cai, Dien Bien, Cao Bang, Lang Son, Hoa Binh, Nghe An have implemented the policy on

teaching of learning Thai, Mong, Muong, Tay ethnic languages, Nung in high schools and continuing education centers.

(3) Central Highlands has achieved great results in preserving the traditional cultural capital of ethnic minorities with the collection and editing of a huge volume of epics. Dak Lak accounted for more than 300 lists on Mnong and Ede ethnic groups, 70 epics have been collected and translated into texts into Ede and Mnong-Viet languages; 40 epics include 7 in Ede language and 33 in Mnong language such as: The Ede Epics of Dam San, Xinh Nha, Dam Tiong; The Mnong Epics of De Tieng, Fishing in Lau Lach Lake, Selling wooden statues, Bon Tieng. In addition, the cultural sector of Dak Lak also collected over 1,000 pages of Ede ancient stories, 3,000 pages of Mnong tales, 1,000 pages of Mnong rhymes, and a set of Ede Mnong customary laws. In Gia Lai and Kon Tum, 10 sets of Ba Na epics have been collected and published with 5,511 pages.

(4) In the massive epic treasure of the Central Highlands ethnic groups, there are 4 epic heritages that have been recognized as national intangible cultural heritages. These are: khan (epic) of the Ede (Dak Lak), Ot Ndrong (epic) of the Mnong (Tuy Duc district, Dak Song district, Dak Mil district, Dak Nong province), Homon (epic) of Ba Na people (Dak Doa district, Dak Po district, Kbang district, Kong Chro district, Gia Lai province); Homon (epic) of the Ba Na Ro Ngao people (Kon Tum province).

(5) The customary law is a cultural legacy after the epic, having a profound and persistent influence in the life of the ethnic minority communities. In the Central Highlands, there are quite famous codes such as: Ede customary law (11 chapters), Mnong customary law (8 chapters, 215 articles), Gia Rai customary law (15 chapters), Xtieng customary law (4 chapters), Hre custom (9 chapters, 92 articles), Ma customary law (13 chapters, 68 articles).

The gong cultural heritage of the Central Highlands is also a topic of interest for preservation. According to statistics, the Central Highlands has a relatively large number of gongs that have been collected in different locations:

1) in Gia Lai, in 1999, a census was conducted at 900 plei

2) in the province with 5,117 sets of gongs;

3) in Lam Dong province there are 3,113 sets;

4) in Dak Lak, in 2004, the whole province had 4,675 sets of gongs, 11,466 artisans beat gongs, 100% of traders had gong teams;

5) in Dak Nong there are more than 360 sets of gongs;

6) in Kon Tum, according to 2004 statistics, there are 1,853 sets of gongs [3, pp.136-137].

On the basis of the cultural values collected and researched, the cultural sector made a dossier and on November 25, 2005, UNESCO recognized the "Central Highlands gong cultural space" as a "Masterpiece of the heritage of the Central Highlands Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" and in 2009 transformed into "The Representative Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity".

In just 10 years, from 2005 to 2015, there were thousands of practical activities to preserve the cultural identity of gongs in the Central Highlands.

Dak Nong province has organized more than 100 classes to teach gongs from district, town, or provincial level; established 8 gong clubs; provided 150 sets of gongs and 15 sets of goongs to the Culture and Information Offices of districts and town.

Dak Lak province recorded 2,307 full sets of gongs; 3,855 people know how to perform gongs; 393 people know how to tune gongs; 635 people know how to play gongs; 554 traditional gong teams; organize cultural festivals of gongs, cultural festivals of ethnic groups; Mass

performances are held in the province every two years, in the district, town and city once a year.

Lam Dong province opened 45 classes to teach gongs to more than 1,080 students who are the young generation of Ma, Ko Ho and Chu Ru ethnic groups; successfully organized 3 district-level gong cultural festivals; equipped with 12 sets of traditional gongs (6 or 3 gongs) accompanied by traditional costumes for localities in the province; support the formation of 3 conservation models in Don Duong, Duc Trong and Lac Duong districts.

Kon Tum province built 427 teams of gong artisans; Gia Lai province organizes classes to teach gong tuning for the Ba Na and Gia Rai people in the area. In particular, Gia Lai province successfully hosted and organized the 2009 International Gong Festival with the participation of 63 gong teams representing 6 countries in the region: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Myanmar and Vietnam. Vietnam supported the formation of 3 conservation models in the districts of Don Duong, Duc Trong and Lac Duong.

The restoration of cultural activities is also concerned.

In Dak Lak, there are 1,270 artisans who know how to use bamboo musical instruments; restore 220 traditional wharfs; 155 rituals and traditional festivals with different names; the number of artisans who know how to make bamboo, wooden and stone musical instruments is 568; building and maintaining 16 mobile communication teams; There are 184 performing arts teams at commune and ward level.

Dak Nong province has restored more than 50 festivals of ethnic groups; 8 folk art teams. Gia Lai province has organized 87 classes with nearly 1,200 students being taught folk culture (such as the art of folk singing, brocade weaving, the art of playing gongs and gongs during community festivals. ethnic groups, making ethnic musical instruments); organization of restoration: The sword transfer ceremony of Yang Potao Apui (in Ploi Oi village, Ayun Ha commune, Phu Thien district); New

rice celebration of the Jrai people (at Mrong Yo village, Ia Ka commune, Chu Pah district); New Rice Celebration of the Ba Na people (in Leng village, To Tung commune, Kbang district).

Large-scale ethnic cultural activities (such as cultural and sports, festivals of ethnic groups, gong festivals, folk music and dance festivals, and exhibitions of ethnic costumes) are inherited and enhanced. Many literary and artistic works are widely popularized (such as works on folklore, professional music and dance arts, traditional art products, ethnic performances in competitions, in art documentaries, in radio and television broadcasts). Through performances, folk music and dance competitions, ethnic cultural festivals, costume exhibitions, research works, scientific seminars (such as gong culture, customary law, history), traditional culture and art of ethnic groups are increasingly discovered, explored, preserved and promoted.

The preservation and promotion of traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities, the restoration of festivals of traditional crafts and ethnic cuisine in combination with tourism activities, have contributed to economic development in some localities, bringing income to the cultural subjects themselves and contributing to widely promoting the culture of ethnic minorities in the country and abroad.

8.2 Inclusiveness and Acculturation

The development of the scientific and technological revolution, the process of globalization and international integration, and the economic development of the country have created favourable conditions for ethnic minorities to absorb the cultural quintessence of humanity to develop culture in a positive, modern way and more suitable to the psychology and habits of ethnic minorities.

The material and spiritual life of ethnic minorities has been gradually improved, contributing to creating a healthy environment for cultural development. Many villages (villages, hamlets) have built conventions

and restored many traditional cultural values; many customs and customary laws are studied and applied to the administration and management of society, actively contributing to building a civilized lifestyle and building a healthy cultural life. The process of building a new cultural life, especially the movement to build a cultural family and village (village, hamlet) of culture, has achieved positive results, contributing to promoting the tradition of industriousness and improving spiritual life, forming a new way of life for ethnic minorities.

The investment in building cultural institutions is focused. Localities interested in building cultural institutions, from large-scale provincial cultural centres, district-level cultural houses, to communal cultural houses, community cultural houses or community living establishments in the village, create a favourable environment for the development of ethnic culture, contributing to a step up in the spiritual and cultural life of ethnic minorities.

In the Central Highlands, by 2012, there were 5 cultural houses at provincial level, 56 cultural houses at district level, 2,536 communal cultural houses or grassroots community activities. By 2017, Dak Lak province built 2,608 traditional houses; Kon Tum province has 302 communal houses; Gia Lai province has built 576 communal parks, 633 village cultural houses; 74 community cultural houses; 1,349 rural sports fields; 96 clubs of all kinds; 162 commune cultural post offices; 400 libraries, reading rooms of schools, agencies, units, commune law bookcases; 1 provincial library and 15/17 district libraries, with 465,292 copies of books.

According to statistics, the northern midland and mountainous provinces have 150 libraries, with 3,225,100 titles; the Central Highlands provinces have 59 libraries with 1,578,700 titles; The provinces in the Mekong Delta have 131 libraries, 3,997,800 books, of which Soc Trang and Tra Vinh are two provinces with a large number of ethnic minorities, with 12 and 8 libraries respectively, with 335,600 and

155,800 titles. [7, pp.706-707]. As a result, it has created a favourable environment for building and developing spiritual and cultural life towards the goal of building a strong country with a society of rich people and with the values of democracy, justice and civilization.

Moreover, the intellectual level is improved; human resources in general and staff are formed and developed; that creates conditions for people, as subjects of culture, to receive, create and enjoy cultural values.

The education and training system in ethnic minority and mountainous areas (from pre-school education, general education to university) is strongly developed, widespread and reasonably distributed from villages (villages, hamlets, villages) to communes, districts, provinces and regions; in terms of facilities and teaching staff, students increased rapidly.

According to statistics, as of September 30, 2015, the number of high school students belonging to ethnic minorities is 2,487,832, accounting for 16.2% of the total number of students nationwide, of which primary school students are 1,354,009 children, accounting for 17.38%; lower secondary school are 834,429 children, accounting for 16.23%; upper secondary school are 299,394 students, accounting for 12.34% of students at the same level in the country;

On average, 2 people in 9 go to high school, and the proportion of ethnic minority high school students at all levels is high compared to the population rate.

The development of education and training in ethnic minority areas not only contributes to gradually improving people's intellectual standards and forms a contingent of ethnic minority officials, civil servants and public employees, but is also a breakthrough for ethnic minorities' development and culture.

On the other hand, the need to enjoy cultural and spiritual values and achievements of ethnic minorities has increased significantly. The

provinces are interested in building cultural life at the grassroots through the movements of building villages (hamlets, villages) of culture, cultural families, and mass cultural movements that have promoted the cultural identity of the people of traditional ethnic groups, selectively inheriting typical values, gradually eliminating some customs, forming civilized lifestyles and cultural families.

The information and communication system has developed strongly, so the ability to receive information and access to current events at home and abroad is timely and quick. Local radio and television stations have broadcasted stably and spent a considerable amount of time on languages of ethnic groups: Tay, Nung, Thai, Ede, Ba Na, Gia Rai, Xo Dang, Co Ho, Mnong, Khmer. Thanks to the appropriate investment in building reception, transmission and broadcasting facilities in the Central Highlands, the percentage of radio coverage is nearly 100%, television coverage is over 93.8%; radio coverage rate in Lam Dong, Dak Nong, Gia Lai, Dak Lak provinces reached 100%, Kon Tum province 95%; TV coverage in Lam Dong province, Dak Lak 100%, Gia Lai province 95%, Dak Nong province 89% and Kon Tum province 85%. Other types of information thrived; there are 4,468,743 telephone subscribers (reaching 83.28 phones/100 people); 177,884 internet subscribers (reaching 3.31 subscribers/100 people); 533 commune cultural post offices have been built [4, p. 260].

In the Southwest region, in the provinces of Soc Trang and Tra Vinh, provincial radio and television stations conduct radio and television programs of Khmer language regularly (for radio, in Soc Trang: 3 sessions/day, in Tra Vinh: 90 minutes/day; on television, in Soc Trang: 2 sessions/day, in Tra Vinh: 60 minutes/day) [8], [9]. In particular, Soc Trang Province Radio and Television Station builds a Chinese-language radio program 1 session/day, television 2 times/week. The percentage of households with audio-visual equipment has increased, over 98%, and in some places it has reached 100%.

Local newspapers are also published in Khmer and distributed free of charge (Khmer-language Soc Trang newspaper publishes 1 period/week, Khmer magazine is published 2 times a week; Tra Vinh newspaper is published twice a week and Khmer photo newspaper is published once/quarterly). The implementation of the policy of granting newspapers and magazines, and donating television and radio receivers to ethnic minority areas, has contributed to bringing information to those minorities.

The results in cultural development demonstrate the ability of ethnic minorities to rise to receive the cultural values of the nationalities and human culture to enrich their culture.

However, at present, the material and spiritual life of a part of ethnic minorities (in remote and isolated areas, resistance bases, new economic zones, free migration) is still low. The disparity in living standards, educational attainment and conditions for enjoying culture, education, and health care between urban and rural areas, between local ethnic minorities and other population groups not only do not narrow. Our recent survey in remote communes, revolutionary bases and border areas (in the provinces of Dak Lak, Gia Lai, Son La, Dien Bien) shows that the cultural and spiritual life gods of ethnic minorities are still poor and needy; The gap in cultural enjoyment ability and conditions between these regions compared to plains and urban areas has not been narrowed. This is caused by: the environment for cultural development is not really attractive; the establishment of cultural regulations at the grassroots level is still exemplary; the system of community houses is still monotonous; cultural and artistic activities at grassroots level are mainly for performance, not to raise the level and enjoyment of traditional values of people of all ethnic groups; the dissemination of the media lacks direction.

Moreover, the development of education and training in ethnic minority areas in order to improve people's knowledge faces many

difficulties. Mobilizing school-age children is a dilemma. The results of a study by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Education and Training in 2014 showed that the proportion of children of primary school age not attending school in many ethnic groups is particularly high. For example, it is 4.5% for the Thai ethnic group, 14% for the Khmer ethnic group; among the Mong ethnic group 26.5% of children (especially, nearly one-third of girls) of primary school age do not attend school. The number of students from ethnic minorities at all levels is still large. The number of retained students at the primary level is higher than in the middle and high schools. Because they have not been fully prepared in terms of knowledge, especially with the knowledge of Vietnamese, they have many difficulties in absorbing the subjects.

The quality of education and training in ethnic minority areas is still low, and the percentage of students graduating at all levels is lower than the national average. According to statistics, the rate of high school graduation in the 2014-2015 school year in the eastern regions of ethnic minorities is lower than the national average. Specifically, the Northern Midlands and Mountains region is 93.58%; the North Central and Central Coast regions is 91.92%; the Mekong River Delta is 94.05%; The Central Highlands region is 87.61% (while the average rate of the whole country is 93.85%); of the Red River Delta is 96.31%; of the Southeast region is 96.03%.

The literacy level is still low. As of 2015, the rate of people who can't read and write in the Central Highlands between the ages of 15 and over is 9.6%; in which, in Kon Tum is 12.1%; in Gia Lai is 16%; in Dak Lak is 7.8%; in Dak Nong is 6.3%; in Lam Dong is 7.4%. In the Northwest region, 11% of the people in the whole region cannot read and write in general; 17.2% of ethnic minorities aged 10 years and older are illiterate; the number of untrained ethnic minority employees accounted for 94.2%; the number of untrained Mong ethnic workers

accounted for 98.7%; that rate in the Thai ethnic group is 94.6%; in the Muong ethnic group is 93.3%.

The low and poor cultural life, slow improvement of the quality of education and training, not only greatly affects the raising of people's knowledge, development of human resources and training of ethnic cadres, but also affects to the ability to create, enjoy and absorb culture.

8.3 Loss of Cultural Identity

Among the 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam, there are some ethnic groups with a population of less than ten thousand people such as Pa Then, Co Lao, Lo Lo, Mang, Lu, Cong, Bo Y, La Ha, La Hu, etc. Ethnic groups with a population of less than one thousand people such as Si La (Lai Chau), Pu Peo (Ha Giang), O Du (Nghe An), Ro Mam, Brau (Kon Tum). These ethnic groups have difficulty to control, protect and promote the value of their cultural heritage.

The first challenge must be mentioned is the ability to lose the traditional language, the soul of the national culture, which is also the means to transmit the arts, customs and habits of the ethnic groups.

According to cultural researcher Lo Van La: "The Thai people are one of the largest ethnic groups in our country, also having early writing; but since the seventies, Thai is rarely used. Only radio and radio stations in districts and towns have programs in Thai; In daily communication in urban areas, even in many families with Thai parents, only Mandarin is used. In the countryside, some families still speak Thai but very little. Currently, the number of people who know how to write Thai can only count on their fingers. Meanwhile, schools also teach only in Mandarin. Ethnic minority languages are not taught as a bilingual for cultural subjects, so they are increasingly losing their place in daily life".

The process of socio-economic development will disrupt the old economic infrastructure, leading to a change of culture. Folklore festivals are seen as unique and precious identities that are in danger of

disappearing. A series of customs and festivals were destroyed; Many ethnic musical instruments were lost along with the decline in folklore activities. In addition, music, dance, and costumes (which are considered the identity of ethnic minorities) are also at risk of being lost, like the lute of the Vietnamese people, the tau (of the Tay and Thai people), the lute, the gong (of the ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands), the Khen (of the H'mong), the typical musical instruments of the ethnic groups. Nowadays few people know how to use them. Similarly, other art forms (Spot dance, gong dance of the Muong and Thai ethnic groups; drum dance and shrimp dance of the Cao Lan ethnic group; rowing dance…).

Musician Nong Quoc Binh, Chairman of the Literature and Arts Association of Vietnam Ethnic Minorities, commented: "The downside of the cultural exchange process is that the element of national identity is likely to be lost. Traditional art forms and dances are also increasingly absent. The elders in each ethnic community are no longer able to pass on their skills and knowledge to the younger generation, because many people think that preserving these traditional cultural values is of little value in modern life".

With the hot development of industrialization and modernization, the crafting techniques of traditional folk products are also in danger of perishing. Items produced by handcraft (which is the pride and proof of the creativity and ingenuity of the Vietnamese people, such as: brocade weaving; embroidered patterns; crafting ethnic musical instruments with materials like stone, copper, bamboo, etc.) are currently, due to a lack of output, facing competition from mass-marketed industrial products, and are gradually lost and forgotten.

The development process over the past time has made the material culture of ethnic groups have many changes. In the Central Highlands, the Ede, the Mnong, and the Gia Rai, etc., no longer use traditional costumes, and the architecture of houses is also modelled on the

architecture of lowland people. As for the gong culture of the Central Highlands, the most valuable cultural value of the Central Highlands, the preservation still faces many difficulties. The conversion of shifting cultivation practices to industrial crops such as coffee, rubber, cocoa, etc., has contributed to economic restructuring, but led to the decline of gong activities associated with activities and traditional production. The space of the village, the graveyard, the water wharf, e.g. the space of the gong culture has been narrowed down or replaced by solidly built houses and drilled wells.

In the Northwest, living conditions are still difficult; the rate of households in poverty is still high; the ability to self-preserve and promote the traditional culture of the people is very limited; there are ethnic groups, even their language, writing, costumes... are lost, even completely lost; Some ethnic groups no longer exist in the traditional village and residence model. In the process of contacting and exchanging with other ethnic groups, their cultural characteristics have overlapped and disappeared. Ethnic minorities such as the Khang, Man, Kho Mu, etc. are in danger of being "Thaiized". Ethnic groups in the border areas with China are at risk of being "sinicized", and ethnic groups in urban areas and along roads are at risk of "merchanization". Ha Nhi people in Y Ty (Lao Cai), Muong Te (Lai Chau) abandoned the traditional costumes of his people and wore costumes of the Ha Nhi people (China) made of industrial fabrics. Similarly, the Mong and Dao people in the Northwest border region also give up handmade costumes to buy costumes with materials produced by industrial methods.

The loss of ethnic cultural identity is also reflected in the loss of a number of good artisans in traditional music, the young people rarely know how to use the instruments left by their fathers, many young people do not know what is a folk song.

When Protestantism penetrated into ethnic minority areas, many traditional cultural values were denied. The political riots in 2001, 2004

in the Central Highlands and 2011 in Muong Nhe, Dien Bien (Northwest region), had many causes (objective and subjective, internal and external, economic, political, cultural, social), but from a cultural perspective, it is the "conflict" between traditional culture and foreign culture.

The change towards the eradication of traditional culture of ethnic groups has many causes, but the most basic cause is still the law of development of history and culture.

o   Firstly, due to the impact of globalization trends, strong cultural exchange trends, and the emergence of many new forms of entertainment, young people are no longer interested in national culture (such as participating in performances of national culture). Young people have not really loved and cared about the unique and distinctive traditional culture of their nation, while many good artisans, due to their advanced age, died one after another.

o   Secondly, the change in the economic life of the community leads to the spiritual need of enjoying a traditional culture that is no longer maintained. For the ethnic minorities in the Northwest, the West of the Central Coastal Provinces and the Central Highlands, the forest is not only an economic (survival) space, but also a cultural space. The culture of ethnic minorities is associated with the forest, which is the result of the human behaviour with the natural and social environment. In recent years, the survival space of ethnic minorities has been severely narrowed, and the cultural environment has declined at a rapid rate. The reason for the decrease in forest capital is due to population growth, migration, economic development requirements (development of industrial crops, construction of industrial parks, and construction of hydropower projects). Forest loss not only seriously affects economic development,

but also disrupts the traditional cultural structure, disrupting the cultural traditions of ethnic minorities. When forest capital shrinks, natural resources are exhausted, people lose their source of life, traditional culture loses its basis for existence, and ethnic minorities lose themselves.

o   Thirdly, the migration process of recent years has caused the cultural identity to be gradually diluted, the change of social life has caused many cultural features to change.

o   Fourthly, Although the economic life has improved in many places, the gap in cultural enjoyment is still large, in which the role of the subject, the people and the community has not been promoted and placed in the right position. Moreover, the ethnic minorities themselves are aware, but not deeply, that their cultural identity faces cultural interference and the strong impacts of social and religious life. Facing the trend of exchange and integration, a part of young people lacks confidence and pride in their national cultural identity. They think that speaking the ethnic minority language and wearing the traditional costumes of their people is outdated. Some people even want to "Chemize", only when they want to receive preferential regimes on studying and working, will they recognize themselves as an ethnic minority.

o   Fifthly, Management (from awareness to way of thinking and doing) is still weak, one-sided, imposing, and hasty.

8.4 Conclusion

The socio-economic development of the country in general and the ethnic minorities in particular during the renovation years has promoted the development of ethnic minority culture, contributing to improving material and spiritual lifes. The trends of cultural change of ethnic minorities, on the one hand, bring the ethnic groups closer together and

strengthen the unity in ethnic relations in Vietnam; on the other hand, the changes are also causing increasing ethnic conflicts, adversely affecting the sustainable socio-economic development of the country. Therefore, it is necessary to have synchronous solutions to not only build culture and people of ethnic minorities, but also ensure the development of the country in a sustainable way.

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PRESERVING ETHNIC MINORITIES' CULTURAL HERITAGE

Đặng Thị Hoa

Summary

With globalization overwriting the identity of ethnic minorities in most parts of the world, the tasks of preserving, promoting and conserving traditional cultural heritages of Vietnamese ethnic minorities are becoming urgent[16]. Vietnam, with its 54 ethnic minorities, offers a rich background for research on traditions and cultural practices that are in danger of extinction in the context of globalization.

In the present context of Vietnam, the preservation, promotion and conservation of traditional cultural heritages of Vietnamese ethnic minorities are becoming urgent. Cultural interference and cultural change due modernization, the influence of urban culture and foreign culture have gradually erased the authenticity and cultural identity of ethnic minorities.

Recommendations include methods of research, collection, restoration and creation of a cultural environment to keep the memory of the past alive for generations to come.

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[16] Đặng Thị Hoa, Bảo tồn di sản văn hóa truyền thống của các dân tộc rất ít người trong bối cảnh phát triển và hội nhập, Tạp chí Nghiên cứu Dân tộc, số 21-03 (2018). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Introduction

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country. Each ethnic group in the Vietnamese national family has created its own unique cultural elements, contributing to enriching the unique and diverse identity of Vietnamese culture. In the process of building an advanced culture imbued with national identity, the issue of inheriting and promoting the national cultural tradition, preserving the bravery and national identity is one of the issues of decisive significance.

Currently, cultural heritages are tending to change both in terms of tangible culture and intangible culture. Besides the loss of time, the cultural heritages of ethnic minorities are also vulnerable in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration. With ethnic groups with a small population, ethnic culture tends to mix and change strongly. Cultural elements that have been built and cultivated by ethnic groups for thousands of years are rapidly changing with factors affected by the status of alternate residences, ethnic cultural exchanges, and are also influenced by ethnic groups of modernization and urbanization. Some ethnic groups with a small population are considered to be long-time residents in the Northern mountainous region such as Ha Nhi, Lo Lo, Pu Peo, Si La, etc. Ethnic groups reside alternately in villages and hamlets, divided into three ecological zones: valley region, midland and highlands. Ethnic groups with a very small population often concentrate in highland areas such as Lo Lo, Ha Nhi, La Hu, Pu peo, etc.

The cultural heritage of the ethnic groups with a small population preserved is quite diverse. One of the symbols of that cultural heritage is the house on stilts. For some ethnic groups, the house on stilts has bold traditional activities of ethnic groups such as Lo-Lo and Si La, but also with some other ethnic groups; the house with defensive design is a unique feature, like the house on stilts of the Ha Nhi people. The traditional costumes of ethnic groups with a small population also have their unique characteristics and are still preserved today. Some costumes

are created in a very sophisticated and creative way and create a unique and diverse picture, such as the Lo Lo, Pu Peo, Cong, Ha Nhi, Mang people, etc.

In the intangible cultural treasure, the treasure of folklore with its own and unique features of the ethnic groups with a small population must be mentioned. Each ethnic group in the region has a treasure of folklore compositions with proverbs, idioms, folk songs, fairy tales, jokes, etc. Folklore activities of the ethnic groups also have their own unique culture and show the cultural region's typical features, like the dances and folk dances in the region. Northwest ethnic groups prefer to use wind instruments such as the "chi pa po", mainly made of copper leaves, while others use those made of bamboos. In particular, the Ha Nhi Hoa ethnic girls in Muong Te (Lai Chau) use a straw flute to convey their message of love to the opposite sex. Before opening the festival, the whole village goes to the mountain to build the church guard, then groping in the forbidden forest. The festival's offering is a buffalo that has not ploughed, its fur is black, it is in good health, and its forehead has no white swirls. During the festival, Ha Nhi people also organize many games such as swinging rope, ferris wheel, seesaw bridge... In particular, bachelor boys and girls will gather to find a match. In addition to folk games, married women will join hands to sing in a circle, affirming that they are the mother of rice, praying for the rice crop to stretch as long as their dance. The festival "Dry old age" of the Ha Nhi people is a typical harvest festival of the Tibetan-Burmese residents.

From Lung Cu to Xin Cai - Meo Vac (Ha Giang) there are villages of nearly 1,200 Lo Lo people. The place of worship is a large courtyard in the middle of the village. After the ceremony, the villagers gather to drink wine, dance and sing around the ceremony table. The folk songs of Te Phua, Te La, Ho La Te, and Ta Si Phua are love songs for the homeland and happiness of the couple. On the day of praying for rain,

the elderly meet to talk about the house, planting trees, planting rice, raising livestock, choosing a bridegroom, and getting married. For young people, this is an opportunity to find a lover through the love song, with the sound of flute and double flute. Lo Lo girls are brilliant in new dresses embroidered with bright patterns. Squareneck shirt, sleeves are stitched with different coloured fabrics, long skirts are embroidered with blue, red, yellow, etc. on a blue indigo fabric background. Floral embroidered belt with colourful tassels. Combined with the traditional outfit are sparkling silver necklaces and bracelets.

The festival of praying for the rain of the Lo Lo people with the belief of fertility is quite popular among agricultural residents. During the festival, almost all activities of the Lo Lo people are directed towards praying for rain. They pray and pray, and wish that the raindrops would fall to water the Meo Vac fields to become greener and greener, for the villagers to have a good harvest and eternal prosperity. Following that is the mysterious fire dance festival of the Pa-Then people. Usually, the offering must begin about four hours before the fire dance. The Fire Dance is usually held at the end of the year, when the weather is entering the harshest period of winter. The fire will help bring warmth, celebrate a crop harvest that has just ended and pray to the gods to bless health and prosperity and ward off evil spirits and diseases.

Hereunder are some characteristics of ethnic groups of Colao, Pu Peo, La Chi, Bo Y, Mang, who live in the Northern Highlands of Vietnam.

9.1 The Co Lao Ethnies

The Co Lao ethnic group resides mainly in Dong Van and Hoang Su Phi districts. In addition, there is a scattered part in the districts of Meo Vac, Yen Minh, Quan Ba, and Ha Giang province. Co Lao has long been a popular name for the sub-ethnic group, including the Red, the White, and the Blue Co Lao.

The Co Lao people live in settlements, with 15 to 20 roofs. The house is a traditional type of house with one compartment and two wings, roof or thatched bamboo, the walls are covered with planks or thatched sheets. Particularly for the Co Lao Do group, they have sand walls at home.

The traditional costumes of Co Lao women are still preserved to this day. The woman wears two shirts, the outer sleeves are shorter than the inner ones, to reveal the coloured cloth covering the inner sleeves. Currently, only a few old women in the Co Lao Do group wear skirts, while in general, the women in the Co Lao Do groups wear pants.

9.2 The Pu Peo Ethnies

The Pu Peo ethnic group mainly resides along the Vietnam-China border in the communes of Pho La, Sung Cheng, Dong Van district… and in addition are scattered in some communes of Yen Minh and Meo Vac districts of the province of Ha Giang. They called themselves Ka Beo, and the name Pu Peo, called by the Tay and Nung people, has now become a family name.

The Pu Peo have long lived in settlements, but they live in scattered hamlets, with only 4 to 5 families scattered in 8 communes in Dong Van district. The traditional house of the Pu Peo people is a house on stilts, but recently, the Pu Peo people have built houses like the Chinese, the H'mong and other ethnic groups in the area to build houses in the style of two roofs, without a wing or covered with boards.

Costumes of the Pu Peo: Women wear two shirts, the outer shirt is split chest without buttons, the inner shirt buttoned in the right armpit, looks like the shirt of the Giay and Co Lao women. Pu Peo women often wear black ao dai, outside with bibs, decorated mainly by stitching coloured cloths together, their hair is tied with a wooden comb outside covered with a square towel, decorated with colourful patterns. Men's

costumes are simple with indigo-dyed clothes, like other ethnic groups in the mountains.

Every New Year, the Pu Peo people eagerly prepare black *banh chung* on the 29th day of Lunar New Year to end the year, and at the same time, every family pack white *banh chung* on the evening of the 30th New Year to celebrate the new year and pray for good Fortune and worship ancestors. Pu Peo people have a taboo custom during the three days of the New Year in washing dishes and chopsticks, and only using paper to wipe from the third day of the New Year to the 13th day of the first lunar month (lunar calendar) to perform *Pan bee* (squeezing water) ceremony for the whole village. Similar to the groundbreaking ceremony of the Vietnamese, the whole village will celebrate the opening of the harvest season, starting the production of the next year, praying for the people and the family to be happy with green corn and new rice.

The Pu Peo people are one of the few ethnic groups in our country that still use bronze drums. In the past, bronze drums were widely used but today they are only used in Lent holidays. The Pu Peo people have two types of bronze drums, one is called *lung quan*: it is a big drum, but this one does not have a long, resonant sound. Another type is called *lung ma* or small drum, which is more resounding.

The Pu Peo people always use drums that have a pair of "male" and "female" drums. When they finish using the drums, they keep them on the attic floor and do not move them out of its place, so as not to scare the souls of the corn and rice crops. After the crops have been harvested and before they are used, they must make offerings to each drum. The drum is hung next to the door, the "male" drum is on the left, the "female" drum is on the right, the two drums face each other, the drummer stands in the middle, using a banana to knock on the drum according to the rhythmic instructions of the shaman, following the sound of bronze drums, while everyone attending the ceremony is happy

to dance and sing during the full duration of this festival, that lasts one whole day and night.

9.3 The La Chi Ethnies

The La Chi ethnic group mainly resides in the communes of Ban Phung, Ban Diu, Ban Pang and Ban May of Xin Man district. In addition, they also reside in two districts of Hoang Su Phi, Bac Quang, Ha Giang province and another part in Muong and Bac Ha districts of Lao Cai province.

The La Chi have many different names such as: Tho Den, Man La Chi, Xa, but the name La Chi is one of the most popular ethnic names. Cu Te is a self-named name: according to the interpretation of the La Chi people, Cu is a person, Te is a nation. Each locality has its own name.

The La Chi people's house is built with a half-ground floor washing structure, the ground floor is where the stove is located, the floor is the living place of the family, the three sides of the house have the ground floor, thick walls close to the ground.

The costumes of La Chi people are simple and not sophisticated. Men wear ao dai, indigo color, buttoned in the left armpit, long hair, turban; the majority of women wear pants, and a few wear skirts like the Tay people. They wear a long dress slightly open on the tope without buttons, but have a cloth belt, bibs and collar embroidered with beautiful multi-colored threads.

The La Chi people have a rich folklore, myths, legends and many fairy tales about the origin of the land that gave birth to all things and all species, including the La Chi and many other ethnic groups. Typical stories are the story of Pu Lo To referring to the community origin of the La Chi people, the story about the great-grandfather Hoang Din Thung, many stories reflecting natural phenomena such as the story "Why there

is sun and moon?", stories about the origin of rice and customs, social relations, etc.

On the occasion of New Year's holidays, boys and girls often dress up to sing and respond to each other at a large beach, especially on the Lunar New Year, they play nì khum (throw away), nuns (hit spin), and nì gèe (balancing swing), August New Year (new rice), they suddenly swing on the rope (pie worship), the children like to play phoenix. In these happy days, boys and girls sing ni ca, gong sing in the Tay language, play the three-stringed zither, and play the trumpet of the boys to go on dates with their girlfriends, and some localities even use gong drums.

9.4 The Bo Y Ethnies

The Bo Y ethnic group consists of two local groups, the group residing in Quan Ba district (Ha Giang) is still called Bo Y (this group has a smaller population), and the group residing in two provinces of Yen Bai and Lao Cai is called Tu Di (this group has a larger population). The Bo Y group still maintains their native language, while the Tu Di group has to use Chinese to communicate in daily life.

Bo Y people live in wooden or bamboo frame houses, which are quite solid, structured in the style of a Vietnamese house with three compartments and two square roofs, surrounded by walls, roofed with grass in front with a veranda. Currently, there are many families that have replaced the thatched roof with tile roofs. The house has two doors, the main door is in the middle, the side door is in the mid back, sometimes there is also a house with a four-sided porch and side door, used to go down to the kitchen to cook. There are two windows on the house overlooking the veranda to keep cool against the humidity of the high mountains all year round, covered with fog.

The house characteristics of the Bo Y people are land-based houses, but every house has a loft in the middle used as a place to store rice,

corn, potatoes, cassava, peanuts and sesame, and as a sleeping place for unmarried young people.

9.5 The Mang Ethnies

The Mang people live in the mountainous Northwestern region of our country, located between the Da and Nam Na rivers, in some communes of Sin Ho, Muong Tu, Phong Tho, Muong Lay, Dien Bien and Lai Chau districts. The array (muy) usually has dozens of rooftops on stilts clustered on the top of a hill or on the side of a mountain. The house of the Mang people is small and simple with two roofs, the door opens to the two sides, the structure of the frame uses the technique of snapping in and tying, the two roofs have no elbows like the Thai house, and the house architecture is slightly curved up. Called Puong Nhua, it is the traditional house and village of the Mang people.

The Mang people eat two lunches and dinners every day, they eat very lightly. The rice used for each meal is pounded with a wooden pestle, the corn is crushed and cooked into thick porridge, bamboo shoots and wild vegetables boiled with salt, sometimes a little bit of fish, shrimp, small wild game caught, every year they have little opportunity to eat fat from livestock and poultry.

Men's costumes are similar to Thai people. Women wear long skirts (usually they buy or exchange goods with Thai people), a short blouse with split chest, at the arms and front body sewn pieces of red fabric, to be colourfully decorated, and at the same time, they put on a white cloth, crossed under the armpits, decorated with red or blue patterns on a white background, with wrapped legs leggings.

Women's hair is cut short and stroked back to the top of the head to form a crest. In the old traditional society of the Mang, when an adult girl reaches the age to learn how to build a family, she has to perform the custom of tattooing around her mouth and ears to wear metal rings: it is a unique beauty of a woman. Although there are differences in the

areas of residence, landscape, environment and culture, in the process of living together and communicating with each other for thousands of years in history, the northern mountainous ethnic groups have harmonized together to create a unique beauty of each ethnic group, that blends in with the picture of ethnic groups in our country.

Faced with the realities that are happening in the current situation, the preservation of cultural heritages of ethnic groups with a small population in the northern mountainous region is becoming urgent. Cultural interference, cultural change due to changes in lifestyle, the influence of modernization trends, urban culture and imported culture are gradually losing the ethnic identity of the ethnic groups.

One of the ways to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities is to organize the protection of those heritages from the village community. Besides investing in organizing research and collecting cultural heritages, it is necessary to keep these traditions alive, which are truly meaningful for the community. This is also an opportunity to develop community-based tourism and eco-tourism associated with culture.

To achieve this objectives, a few steps are necessary:

1) Organize the dissemination of documents on the cultural heritage of the people, select and widely introduce its meaning, originality and value.

2) Invest in building models of cultural villages associated with eco-tourism and community-based tourism activities so that those heritages can really live and become meaningful in the community.

3) Train younger generations on the knowledge and how to preserve this heritage. Restoration of cultural heritages must be carried out from the community, stemming from the actual needs of the people and, through that, the cultural identity of the

ethnic group can be handed down and promoted through generations. Preserving and developing in the future.

9.6 Conclusion

The above are just sketches of the culture of the ethnic groups with a small population in the northern mountainous region. It is difficult to describe all the treasures of cultural heritage of ethnic minorities in this region. Although there are differences in habitat, environmental landscape and culture, in the process of living together and communicating with each other for thousands of years in history, ethnic groups have harmonized together to create their own beauty. Each ethnic group, in a colourful picture of ethnic groups living in harmony, peacefully builds their homeland.

The national cultural heritage is accumulated in history and is the creative achievement of the people in the process of labour and production. The preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities should be initiated by the research, collection, embellishment, restoration and creation of a development environment for the relics to be alive and really meaningful in the community of nations. Cultural heritage is the totality of products created by the ethnic community members and expressed in the form of tangible (visible) and intangible (invisible) symbolic objects, unconsciously and consciously transmitted from one community to another, from generation to generation.

The tangible cultural heritage is an important part of the material basis of the national culture. It is the place where cultural activities take place and can be preserved as the cultural values of the times. Intangible cultural heritage is the cultural phenomena found in the form of concepts of values and social norms, expressed in cultural symbols, in language (including speech and writing), in social normative values (ethical, legal, aesthetic), in lifestyle and way of life; in customs, practices, beliefs,

religion, in folk cultural activities. Intangible cultural values are very important to the development of community culture. It is a "sacred" part of the spiritual life of each nation.

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10

ON DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN VIETNAM

Phan Huy Xu, Võ Văn Thành

Summary

In this article, the author assesses spiritual tourism in our country in the past years and proposes solutions for developing spiritual tourism in a more sustainable orientation[17]. Spiritual tourism is the fastest-growing tourism market segment and will be one of the significant trends in global tourism for personal needs such as physical well-being, mental well-being and increased spiritual experiences. Vietnam's spiritual tourism has also progressed significantly in this trend.

Keywords: tourism, spiritual tourism, sustainable tourism.

Introduction

Spring, the season of festivals and spiritual tourism, is coming to our country and the demand for spiritual tourism in the domestic market is growing. As there have been many works on this topic, this article will only focus on the concept of spiritual tourism, the potential and current

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status of spiritual tourism in Vietnam, and some recommendations for its sustainable development.

10.1 Definitions and Concepts

First, we find it necessary to mention 'spirituality' before defining spiritual tourism.

According to Professor Daniel H. Olsen of Brandon University (CA), there are several different aspects of spirituality such as: "1) the way of looking at things beyond oneself; 2) the search for a sense of existence and the meaning of existence; 3) the ethical path towards personal perfection; 4) the experience of a thing or phenomenon associated with nature, substance and beauty; 5) feelings of connection to self, others, and higher powers, energies, or larger entities; 6) care and attachment to entities and values beyond the individual ego; 7) transcendental, metaphysical sentiments associated personal memory; 8) enriching knowledge and love; 9) overcoming harmful personal selfishness, opposition and autocracy towards positive, healthy, tolerant and united thinking".

Based on Olsen's understanding of spirituality, we will try to define spiritual tourism within the limitations of our knowledge.

Spiritual tourism is a type of cultural tourism that includes spiritual and cultural elements to satisfy people's spiritual needs. Olsen's interpretation includes aspects of religious tourism and pilgrimage tourism. Spiritual tourists may or may not be explicitly associated with a familiar religious tradition; nonetheless, spiritual tourism exploits cultural and spiritual factors in activities based on tangible and intangible cultural values related to faith, religion, belief and other spiritual matters. From a cultural perspective, spiritual tourism is a particular form of cultural tourism that relies on spiritual elements to create feelings and experiences about the sacred, to strengthen faith, intellectual and spiritual balance, or to form positive human thoughts.

According to Norman A., spiritual tourism is often associated with individuals and is deeply personal. One of the characteristics of spiritual tourism is to seek out good spiritual values and find oneself through one's inner path instead of focusing on the religious community. Spiritual tourism is also associated with faith, strengthening faith practices, elevating personal seeking spiritual truth which contains the notions of rightness, moral and spiritual beauty.

In terms of the content and nature of activities, spiritual tourism is a form of cultural tourism that takes cultural and spiritual elements as both a basis and a goal to satisfy the spiritual needs of people in spiritual life. Spiritual visits to sacred monuments helps people remove painful memories and cultivate the mind and spirit of wisdom. Spiritual travel is necessary for people in a modern society burdened with many frustrations, such as worries, depression, loss of faith, etc., in their journey back to traditional cultural values. Spiritual tourism is the recitation of religious enlighteners, sages, and transcendent wisdom in human history.

The late president of India, PJ Abdul Kalam, once said that spiritual tourism is completely different from sightseeing. "Spiritual tourism means visiting the hearts and minds of the sages. Indeed, spiritual tourism emphasizes self-awareness, wellness, and spiritual renewal. Visits to places of residence and work of historical figures at places of religious significance, places of contemplation or monuments are part of the practice of spiritual tourism. Spiritual tourism combines beliefs, culture, heritage, business and community. To add more flavour to the spiritual tourist experience of visitors, we need to involve businesses and local communities. Tourist services such as transportation, dining, shopping, participation of local authorities… can create and maintain a green, clean and beautiful environment, ensuring security and safety for tourists."

Quoting Nguyen Van Tuan, characteristics of spiritual tourism in Vietnam include:

1) Spiritual tourism is associated with religion and faith.

2) Spiritual tourism is related to the worship and gratitude of national heroes and ancestors of our country.

3) Spiritual tourism is associated with ancestor worship, family lineage, gratitude and filial piety to the parents.

4) Spiritual tourism is related to spiritual practices such as meditation and yoga practice for spiritual life.

5) Spiritual tourism also includes activities related to sacred elements and mysteries.

6) Unlike religious tourists, spiritual tourists visit public sites such as cemeteries, war memorials, celebrity residences, meaningful events, places with spiritual meaning, or natural attractions that provide spiritual experiences.

7) Spiritual tourists also discover other religious beliefs and philosophies outside their own culture to discover themselves or improve their physical, emotional and mental health.

According to Timothy and Cover, spiritual tourism is the core of wellness tourism, which helps visitors balance physically, intellectually, and morally. Similarly to spiritual tourists, the new-age tourists focus on self-improvement and spiritual enlightenment through the experience of faith and philosophy, interreligious exchange, emphasizing "the power or the sacredness of nature and the spiritual, intellectual, and physical self-improvement." Spiritual tourists often travel to spiritual destinations such as temples, pagoda, communal houses, memorial monuments, mausoleums, places of worship and sacred lands associated with scenic spots.

Spiritual tourism is related to the cultural or traditional local way of life. It includes sightseeing activities, learning about culture, history, philosophy, performing collective prayers, practising compassion and

awareness with donations, showing gratitude by celebrating ancestors' death anniversaries, or participating in spiritual festivals. Spiritual tourist activities bring good feelings with liberating values in the human soul, balance and strengthen faith towards the importance of life, such as the meaning of life, goodness, beauty and spiritual elevation. Experiencing these spiritual feelings in sacred places help people retrieve balance in their souls and immerse themselves in celebrations or festivals that make people more compatible with each other. As each individual comes from a different cultural background, they still have the chance to contact other cultures through this type of gatherings. Tolerance and acceptance of differences helps develop good behaviour in people.

Applied to the Vietnamese way of life, we need to understand spiritual tourism in a broader sense: spiritual tourism is related to beliefs and religious monuments and sacred pilgrimage sites associated with each person's spiritual life. Throughout the history of Vietnam, many heroes have sacrificed their lives for defending our nation. Therefore, many temples and monuments were raised to commemorate their exploits. Visits to battlefields are also part of spiritual, historical, and cultural tourism practiced in Vietnam.

Spiritual tourism has become an indispensable part of the cultural and spiritual life of Vietnamese people. Spiritual tourism not only serves religious followers who seek spiritual places to find peace and security for their personal lives, but it often combines Taoist practices of praying for good luck, wealth and safety associated with the old and popular beliefs ingrained in the Vietnamese way of life.

10.2 Spiritual Tourism Potential in Vietnam

Spiritual tourism is most prevalent in springtime. Spring is the time for the Lunar New Year Holiday, which is the time to celebrate and pray for the coming year. Vietnamese people tend to visit spiritual sites and

perform rituals during this period. Spring is a renewal period and the right time to go to the pagodas and show gratitude to ancestors and national heroes.

With a rich historical tradition and deep cultural background specifically linked to Vietnamese historical and spiritual beliefs, spiritual tourism is a growing component of festival celebrations and rituals such as ancestral pilgrimage on religious, national, agricultural, fishing, and Vietnam hero festivals. In addition, as a rural country, Vietnamese people often begin a new year with spring festivals such as the ploughing ceremony, Ok Om Bok Festival.

Typical festivals include King Hung Vuong Celebration, Phù Đổng Thiên Vương Celebration, Phủ Dầy, Bà Chúa Xứ, Linh Sơn Thánh Mẫu, Hai Bà Trưng, Trần Hưng Đạo. These unique festivals are celebrated by millions of local tourists nationwide. Spiritual tours to national heroes' sacred places include Hồ Chí Minh Mausoleum, Trường Sơn, and Côn Đảo Prison.

Vietnam has many potentials and strengths to develop spiritual tourism, which reflects the rich culture associated with traditions, religions and beliefs and the diversity and abundance of religious monuments. Many beliefs and folk festivals are held all year round across the country.

Some typical spiritual tourist spots at the national level that attract a large number of domestic tourists during the tourism season are: Hung Temple (Phú Thọ); Yên Tử (Quảng Ninh); Hương Pagoda (Hanoi); Phát Diệm church, Bái Đính pagoda (Ninh Binh); Bà Đen Mountain, Cao Đài Temple (Tây Ninh); Đại Nam Văn Hiến (Bình Dương); Bà Chúa Xứ Temple (An Giang); Côn Sơn Kiếp Bạc Temple (Hải Dương); Tây Thiên Pagoda (Vĩnh Phúc); Trần Temple - Phủ Dầy (Nam Định).

In terms of spiritual and cultural heritage, Vietnam has up to twenty-six World Heritage Sites recognized by UNESCO. Some are related to spiritual tourism such as: The My Son temple complex (1999); The

Dong (Giong) at Phu Dong and Soc temples (2010); The Xoan Phu Tho Singing (2011); Hung Vuong Cult (2012); Trang An Complex (2014); Three Palaces (2016). These are important bases for the development of spiritual tourism for Vietnam.

10.3 Classification

In Vietnam, spiritual tourists account for a reasonably large proportion. Of the 32.5 million domestic tourists in 2012 alone, the number of visitors to spiritual sites (temples, palaces, religious buildings) was about 13.5 million, equivalent to 41.5%. Some typical spiritual tourist destinations in 2012 welcomed a large number of visitors such as Bà Chúa Xứ Temple in An Giang (3.6 million visitors), The Hương Pagoda (1.5 million visitors); The Bái Đính Pagoda (2.1 million visits), Yên Tử Mountain (2.3 million visitors), Bà Đen Mountain tourist area (2.2 million visitors); Côn Sơn Temple, Kiếp Bạc (1.2 million). Out of 6.8 million visitors to Vietnam in 2012, about 12% of international tourists have visited spiritual tourist sites.

Among the tendencies identified in spiritual tourism, our research on the five categories of tourists, tourism service providers, local communities, state management, and tourism resources has given the following results:

1) Individual tourists: There is a confusion between spirituality, belief and religion in this group. "Spiritual tourists" tend to ask to buy cheap, sell expensive, pray for good luck, make a lot of money, ask for promotion or fall into mysticism, superstition and superstition. Visitors are not properly dressed and styled. Some even also have unethical behaviours such as littering and fighting for favours and privileges. In the meantime, some with high expectations on spiritual tours feel disappointed with the reality of the destinations. During the festive season, spiritual tourist attractions have "capacity overload", adversely affecting the natural landscape and ecological environment.

2) Travel agencies: this category is still heavy in commercialisation; some have not carefully prepared the content and organisation of the spiritual tours; their guides have insufficient qualifications, knowledge, skills and languages on spiritual tourism to serve tourists. Many guides were not qualified on the nature of spiritual tourism and the history of Vietnamese traditions and culture and failed touch the sensitive spots in the heart of spiritual tourists about their beliefs, feelings and experiences. Moreover, visitors did not have enough time to explore and experience spiritual cultural values at the destinations.

3) Local communities: Most of the local people did not fully and deeply understand the type of spiritual tourism, so their participation is still spontaneous, and not adequate to the nature of spiritual tourism. The selling of flowers and ceremonial items at inflated prices disturbed and upset tourists, especially foreign tourists. In some localities, people have opened many shops to buy and sell wild animals and unsafe food for tourists. The burning of incense, votive papers, littering and showing no sense of respect to the environment have caused pollution in some destinations.

4) Tourist authorities: The local authorities have not closely coordinated with the local community, tourism service providers and tourists, so the management of spiritual tourism destinations had many shortcomings and inadequacies. In many places, the locality management was not sufficient to ensure the security and sanctity of the place. Local officers were not friendly and hospitable. Many monuments and heritage sites have not been preserved, and no proper guidance was given in terms of providing tourism services in a professional manner.

5) Capacity building for spiritual tourist market. Most importantly, the majority of people doing tourism are not properly aware of the concept, content, methods and organization of spiritual tours. The content of spiritual tourism activities is mainly pilgrimage to spiritual places; sightseeing, enjoying the landscape and architectural space,

sculpture associated with spiritual points as well as learn about culture associated with history, religion and indigenous way of life, cultural heritage values associated with psychic points; participate in religious festivals, folk and many other fields outside of religion.

According to Nguyen Van Tuan, spiritual tourism contributes positively to sustainable tourism development in creating jobs, raising incomes and improving the lives of local communities who reside in spiritual tourist spots. These communities should live a good life, have a good religion, raise awareness of environmental protection and bring values and ethereal experiences to visitors. However, the reality shows a different result.

According to Duong Bich Hanh, Vietnam UNESCO Cultural Program Coordinator:

"some cultural heritages are over-exploited, and there are weak mechanisms to protect and preserve them. In these heritage sites, as a result, economic development adversely affect both traditional and spiritual heritage as Vietnam orients to develop spiritual tourism in the direction of exploiting outstanding values of natural and cultural landscapes associated with regional planning. Developing spiritual tourism to become a driving force to attract visitors, promote other tourism service activities, create diversity for Vietnam's tourism, actively contribute to socio-economic development in a sustainable direction.

However, in some destinations with many tourists, many services such as fortune-telling, drawing hexagrams, selling lucky charms, holy water, etc., are mixed. Spiritual tourism is a specialized cultural tourism, an essential factor bringing economic growth and promoting spiritual values, patriotism, and belief, strengthening national and international unity. Therefore, spiritual culture is considered the core of spiritual tourism products.

In Vietnam, products on spiritual tourism are still monotonous and contain loose, offensive, unsafe and disorderly elements; environmental pollution; superstitious factors arise to repel the cultural beauty of the festival. The most objectionable thing is the motivation of some people to go to the temple to pray for good fortune, good luck, ask for favours, etc. There is even a phenomenon of looting at temples and pagodas." (Source: nd.)

10.4 Proposed Solutions

Given the situation as analysed above, experts have proposed some critical solutions to develop spiritual tourism sustainably as follows:

Developing a travel culture of spiritual tourism

Tourists, tourism service providers, communities, and managers must have the proper awareness and correct orientation on sustainable spiritual tourism development and coordinate synchronously and professionally tourist development strategies in the following ways:

Spiritual tourism must focus on investment and development according to systematic planning to exploit outstanding natural landscape values and national culture.

Developing spiritual tourism becomes a driving force to attract tourists, promote other tourism service activities, and create diversity and attractiveness for Vietnam's tourism.

Developing spiritual tourism becomes the goal of developing people's spiritual life towards the values of truth, goodness and beauty.

Steps to be done include:

1) Training to raise the proper awareness of spiritual tourism; eliminating superstition and commercialization; ensuring the correct implementation of different viewpoints in developing spiritual tourism, bringing values with a progressive spirit for society, actively contributing to sustainable socio-economic development. Develop,

propagate, educate and take measures to punish violations of the "Code of Conduct on Spiritual Tourism" to subjects involved in tourism activities such as tourists, service providers, tourist agencies, local communities, state management levels.

2) Building spiritual tourism products and services in the direction of diversity, difference, class, uniqueness and sophistication following local culture and potential spiritual tourism in destinations. Concentrate resources and create a mechanism to mobilize resources to invest in spiritual tourist areas and attractions based on the planning of spiritual tourist areas and spots.

3) Focus on training human resources to serve the spiritual tourism market in terms of knowledge, skills and working attitude. The most important thing is to be aware of spiritual tourism's concept, content, method, and organization. At the same time, attention must be paid to improving foreign language skills, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the integration period. In addition, cultivating respectful attitudes towards spiritual tourists is essential.

4) Provide services and strengthen the management of spiritual tourism destinations to enhance heritage values and satisfy tourists' needs. Strengthening market research, product development, and promotion of spiritual tourism in connection with the development of other types of tourism associated with destination management to become a prominent tourism brand.

5) Implement responsible tourism policies towards the benefit of local communities, especially disadvantaged groups. Strengthen the capacity of people to participate in management and service in spiritual tourist areas and destinations. It is necessary to adequately address the interests of the target groups involved in tourism activities.

Currently, a few spiritual tourist destinations have initially been well implemented, such as Cai Bau Pagoda (Quang Ninh). Truc Lam Giac Tam Zen Monastery is a spiritual and cultural work that attracts many

pilgrims and sightseers. In the pagoda, there are no burning votive papers, no shops, no street vendors, rowing scenes, etc. Visitors can immerse themselves in a quiet space, watch the beautiful Bai Tu Long Bay, have a feeling of peace and serenity, and feel free of worries.

Learning from the experience from other countries

Myanmar is a valuable lesson for developing spiritual tourism for Vietnam.

After five years of opening, the number of foreign tourists to Myanmar increased 170 times. There are many ancient temples with unique architectural styles in the country. The relics of the Buddha and the enlightened monks are well preserved; modest clothing and barefoot are mandatory for locals and visitors when visiting spiritual tourist sites; the hearts of the people here are open and welcoming to visitors.

Looking at the example of Myanmar, or Thailand, as spiritual tourism is a type of tourism with a lot of potential for Vietnam, we need to correctly perceive and effectively exploit the potential of spiritual tourism towards sustainable development.

10.5 Conclusion

Spontaneous spiritual tourism has existed since ancient times in human history in terms of personal experience. Still, spiritual tourist activities as an industry have recently emerged as people need material things and a healthy spirit. Their souls are always spread with spiritual experiences towards truth, goodness, and beauty to make their life sublime, so they need spiritual travel as a way of life. Spiritual tourism contributes to raising self-awareness, self-cultivation, and self-cleansing the soul.

Spiritual tourism is essentially a type of cultural tourism, taking spiritual and cultural elements as both a basis and a goal to satisfy human spiritual needs. Spiritual tourism is necessary for people in

modern society. There are many potentials for spiritual tourism to develop in our country because our people have a long historical and cultural tradition, have many tangible and intangible cultural heritages and have the moral of "drinking water, remember the source".

Although our country's spiritual tourism is currently growing in the number of tourists, there are still many shortcomings in quality. Therefore, the tourism industry and the authorities need synchronous and professional solutions to bring spiritual tourism to sustainable development in the spirit of Resolution No. 08-NQ/TW of the Politburo on turning Vietnam's tourism into a spearhead economic sector in the coming years.

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EDITOR'S TAKEAWAYS
FOR THIS SECTION

In the early 1960s, an essay entitled "Political Solutions of Vietnam" was circulated among the leadership of South Vietnam, reflecting on factors that affect the course of development of the country for the next hundred years. At that time, Vietnam's international position was of a small and undeveloped land that belonged to the cultural tradition of East Asia that had just escaped the yoke of imperialism. The authors argued that Vietnam needs to be 'westernised' to preserve its independence and develop its economy to build the people's happiness. Seventy years later, these assertions still situate our country in the world today, both in geographical terms and in the general evolution of international relations.

Below are a few characteristics of the country's background information used to justify the authors' assertions.

According to the international classification of countries, an underdeveloped nation meets the following conditions: (1) Lack of production techniques and means, hence the low national income. Therefore, the living standard of the whole population is low and lacking. (2) The pursuit of daily living takes up all time and energy of the people. (3) As a result, their cultural life is underdeveloped; the artistic creation is worthless, and the contribution to human civilisation is absent. (4) These influencing conditions interact to form a vicious circle.

To break free from that vicious circle, we need to develop the nation to bring it forward. Therefore, a successful development strategy must base on these two prime elements:

(1) Development is not the work of a group of people or a small community, but it requires the commitment and participation of the whole nation to succeed. This determining factor will heavily influence the choice of our political course later.

(2) Human capital is the second most crucial success factor for a developing economy. A country with a significant population has the advantage of having a big workforce. Organising this workforce in contingency for economic development is an essential factor to consider in the choice of our future development policy.

Furthermore, Vietnam should base its development policy on other factors such as its cultural characteristics, historical context, and self-defence and leadership capacities.

As Vietnam's economy is still heavily dependent on agricultural activities, solutions to boost productivity in this sector would not be sufficient to get out of poverty. However, to really improve the competitiveness of Vietnam economy as a whole, we should shift to a higher value-added economy using innovative technologies to boost productivity in the service industry such as tourism, journalism, communication, IT, and financial services.

The main challenges for a successful integration therefore, are not up to the economic or political policies of the State alone, it would require the participation of the whole population at all levels, based on the following premises:

Changes are inevitable, and customs or traditions are not immovable but subject to external changes such as economic, socio-political, legal, environmental, and technological development.

Although changes may start from within a community due to the need to adapt to the new economic environment, the contrary can also

happen, and laws and regulations may have to be changed to suit the community's needs. For example, the case study of changes within the Vietnamese way of life through festival celebrations shows the interdependence between endogenous and exogenous factors. In contrast, in the case study of highland ethnic minorities' displacement, exogenous factors such as environmental and societal transformation cause the authorities to adopt the rules and regulations in response to the needs of the newcomers, such as building more schools, housing and updating the infrastructure to accommodate the resettlers.

Geographical location also affects the way or speed of people's change. While life can continue in the mountain regions without the interference of external factors of modernity, people need to adapt to faster working and living conditions in city areas. The newcomers will have to learn a new language to blend into the new environment to survive socially and economically. This phenomenon is called assimilation in migration terms.

Independently from geographical locations, within a community of migrants, the second generation will forget or ignore traditional values, especially in the absence of practice of their mother tongue or being far away from the group pressure of their community and may lose their cultural identity. This phenomenon is called acculturation, through which people change their worldview to adapt to new changes, for example, conversion to a new religion, or adopt a new ideology for survival, or, on the contrary, manifest resistance and die for their beliefs or ideals.

In such cases, the influence of the external environment and the self-transformation occur concurrently on a big scale, especially in the displaced population due to war or other ecological catastrophes. In addition to displacement, people are subject to abrupt changes that disrupt their way of life, causing psychological and social problems to individuals or groups of individuals. For example, integration may be

challenging with the new way of living, new foreign languages, and new habits, and suffering comes from being persecuted combined with the hardships of adjusting to a new environment from the perspective of the newcomers.

Adapting to the changes imposed with new habits from another group can also be challenging for local people. In such a situation of change, both sides have to make an effort to understand other's perspectives and find a compromise to live with each other. Likewise, facing the changes, we all need to examine all aspects of the situation and identify the causes and the effects that are not so apparent at first glance.

Changes usually noticeable in a lifetime are now manifesting more frequently in a shorter life cycle and at different scales. However, some changes are manageable when there is a consensus between members of the same community or a survival instinct to adapt to changes. On the other hand, cultural interference and cultural change can occur due to modernisation, habitat disruption, urbanisation or input of foreign culture. These are threats that gradually or abruptly erase the authenticity and cultural identity of (ethnic) minorities and even the survival of certain nations, as demonstrated in history. Therefore, keeping the link between generations through shared values and connecting them through the preservation, promotion and conservation of traditional cultural heritage remind us how humanity can exist in the past and present times for a shared future.

Vietnamese ethical values and cultural heritage are part of the Vietnamese spirit, which is also part of the world heritage of humanity. Cultural heritage is also a manifest of historical events that accompany a nation and its relationship with other countries.

Keeping alive memories of national heroes through learning history reminds younger generations of our traditions in defending the country. The capacity for resistance against external attacks is part of the cultural

heritage, personified with monuments and epics on historical legends such as Tran Hung Dao, Nguyen Binh Khiem, Hai Ba Trung, or eminent scholars such as Nguyen Trai or Confucius.

Arts and Literature are excellent media to revive this feeling of togetherness; literary traditions such as Cai Luong, Hat Cheo, Music, Culinary and Martial Arts, Buddhist or Christian celebrations have been the primary links between Vietnamese communities worldwide. Lunar New Year, Mid-Autumn Festivals, Buddha's Birthday, Ancestral worships of dead parents and national heroes such as Trung Sisters, Tran Hung Dao, and Christmas alike are all occasions to express eternal gratitude towards our loved ones. Indeed, as long as the whole nation – within Vietnam boundaries and beyond– still keeps the tradition of honouring memories of a shared past and keeping true to our family values, can our contribution to the World Heritage of Humanity be remembered as the "Spirit of the Children of Dragons and Fairies", according to our Legend.

SECTION III

STRATEGIES
FOR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

BALANCING NEEDS AND CHANGES WITH ORIENTATION

Anh Tho Andres

Summary

In this section, the discussion is about balancing needs and changes through policies for economic integration. Needs are limited and tangible, but wants are unlimited and intangible[18]. Using capabilities to enhance the productive capacity of existing industries, encourage economic diversification, and strengthen the business environment are part of the conceptual framework for a policy making process.

Development policies provide guidelines for economic development from a regional or cultural perspective, such as tourism, farming, preservation of cultures and traditions of ethnic minorities, equality and access to natural resources for sustainability based on the conservation and respect of human rights and the natural environment.

Introduction

From a market perspective, knowledge of standards and norms are also an asset to attract foreign investment and trade partners. A sound economy relies on competent managers who respect international trade

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[18] Volume editor's commentary notes to the third section of this book.

laws and support law-abiding trade practices along the supply chain of values.

From the individual perspective, employability depends on the level of competencies of the workforce. Therefore, vocational training and general education form the foundation of any educational policy for human resources development. In addition, positive externalities through education and work ethics encourage foreign direct investors (FDI) to whom corporate governance rules and regulations are much appreciated and valued.

Across all sectors, the state's role in regulating the agricultural economy is present in all papers, even in an industry that is traditionally family-based business, such as farmers. The main characteristics of the Vietnamese agrarian context are also due to the complexity of the country's administrative and demographic structure, which stretches along 3600 km of coastline. Composed of 65 provinces, three distinct geographical, climatic regions, and fifty-four (54) ethnic minorities, Vietnam also has to deal with the profound intercultural and interregional divide between generations and political partisanship due to long centuries of war and intermittent peace periods.

12.1 Overview on Provinces of Vietnam

There are eight (8) regions in Vietnam, named after their geographical location: Northwest, Northeast, Red River Delta, North Central Coast, South Central Coast, Central Highlands, Southeast, and Mekong River Delta.

Administrative units in Vietnam comprise three tiers or levels: Level I (municipality or province), Level II (provincial city, urban district or town district), Level III (ward, township, commune). The Level IV, although non-official, comprises the neighbourhoods, hamlets, and villages.

On the First Tier or Level I, Vietnam is divided into fifty-eight provinces (Vietnamese: tỉnh) and five municipalities under the command of the central government (Vietnamese: thành phố trực thuộc Trung ương). Municipalities are centrally-controlled cities and have special status equal to the provinces, including provincial cities, towns and rural districts as the Second Tier or Level II units. Local cities and towns are divided into wards and communes at the Third Tier or Level III, while rural districts are divided into townships (thị trấn) and communes.

The Chairman of the People's Committee is the head of each province, except for the five municipalities where the Party Committee Secretary is first in charge.

The district-level subdivisions (Vietnamese: đơn vị hành chính cấp huyện) of Vietnam include district-level cities (thành phố thuộc Thành phố trực thuộc trung ương, thành phố thuộc Tỉnh), towns (thị xã), rural districts (huyện) and urban districts (quận).The urban areas (cities and towns) at the district level are classified into five classes (Class-1 and Class-2 in urban areas are recognized by the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Class-3 and Class-4 are recognized by the Vietnam Ministry of Construction, while the provincial People's Committee recognizes Class-5).

Under Decree No. 42/2009/ND-CP, towns are officially classified into Class-3 or Class-4. The towns may only be a province's capital, but not of a municipality as the Second Tier unit. At the Third Tier, towns are divided into wards and communes. Most provincial capitals were once towns, but now they have become regional cities.

The following list can give some clarity for the distinction between these classes:

Class-1 urban area includes: Haiphong, Da Nang, Can Tho, Thủ Đức, Hue, Vinh, Da Lat, Nha Trang, Quy Nhon, Buon Me Thuot, Thai

Nguyen, Nam Dinh, Viet Tri, Vung Tau, Ha Long, Thanh Hoa, Bien Hoa, My Tho, Thu Dau Mot, Bac Ninh, Hai Duong, Pleiku.

Class-2 urban area includes: Long Xuyên, Phan Thiết, Cà Mau, Tuy Hoà, Uông Bí, Thái Bình, Rạch Giá, Bạc Liêu, Ninh Bình, Đồng Hới, Vĩnh Yên, Lào Cai, Bà Rịa, Bắc Giang, Phan Rang-Tháp Chàm, Châu Đốc, Cẩm Phả, Quảng Ngãi, Tam Kỳ, Trà Vinh, Sa Đéc, Móng Cái, Phủ Lý, Bến Tre, Hà Tĩnh, Lạng Sơn, Sơn La, Tân An, Vị Thanh, Cao Lãnh, and Phú Quốc district.

Class-3 urban area includes: Yên Bái, Điện Biên Phủ, Hoà Bình, Sóc Trăng, Hội An, Hưng Yên, Vĩnh Long, Đông Hà, Kontum, Bảo Lộc, Tuyên Quang, Hà Giang, Cam Ranh, Cao Bằng, Lai Châu, Tây Ninh, Bắc Kạn, Tam Điệp, Sông Công, Sầm Sơn, Phúc Yên, Hà Tiên, Đồng Xoài, Chí Linh, Long Khánh, Gia Nghĩa, Dĩ An, Ngã Bảy, Thuận An, Sơn Tây, Cửa Lò, Phú Thọ, Bỉm Sơn, Gò Công, La Gi, Từ Sơn, Bến Cát, Tân Uyên, Hồng Ngự, Sông Cầu, Phổ Yên, Long Mỹ, Tân Châu, Cai Lậy.

Class-4 urban area includes the list of recognized areas by the Ministry of Construction (Vietnam), and Class-5 urban area includes townships that are not in district-level as indicated in the links below.

^http://www.gso.gov.vn/dmhc2015/TongHop.aspx

^http://vietnamlawmagazine.vn/decree-no-42-2009-nd-cp-more-specific-definitions-for-urban-centers-2395.html

12.2 Overview of the Post-75 Reunification

Context

Due to many socio-economic changes in the history of modern Vietnam, it is essential to distinguish the different primary contexts to understand the Modern State of Vietnam since 1976 after the reunification. Changes include: the change of regimes (from colonial, to communist for the North and liberal for the South), the Vietnam war

situation, ended in 1975, and the introduction of new changes to the defunct Republic of South Vietnam.

In practice, the readers must have an overview of the administrative organisation of the regions, provinces, cities and village levels and how the Hanoi Central Committee manages them. Although officially, the prime minister office (referred to as the Government) is the executive branch in charge of implementing law about issues on the economic governance. These include policy implementations in response to climate change, policy implementations on restructuring state-owned companies, implementation guidelines by institutions that accompany the change management, etc. The internationalising process of the economy also involves the intervention of the Hanoi Central Committee in the decision-making process at all levels. Last but not least, reading legal documents issued for each action plan requires a deep understanding of the political environment and the changes that occur at each stage of development due to internal and external factors.

12.3 Conclusion

The texts presented in this section are related to policies for regional development of the provinces in Vietnam. In particular, the policy on environmental protection for the Mekong Delta as a region that shares cross-border issues with neighbouring countries due to water movements of the Mekong River on almost 4500 km across five countries. The selection also provides text on development policies of a particular sector, such as tourism, education, human resources, foreign relations, foreign direct investment, and economic development.

13

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES FOR VIETNAM

Nguyen Danh Son

Summary

With Vietnam's economic development in process, the contribution of regional planning for the development of provinces has been added to the national socio-economic development agenda[19]. However, there is a need to coordinate and optimise the process between key economic actors at different levels.

Introduction

In Vietnam, the region is defined as a part of the national territory with relatively independent socio-economic activities, implementing the division of social labour of the whole country. Therefore, from a legal point of view, the region is not a state administrative management unit. Instead, it is a territorial unit serving strategic and territorial socio-economic development, managing the development processes in each region and linking administrative units inside and outside the region.

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[19] Nguyễn Danh Sơn, Chính sách phát triển vùng ở Việt Nam, Vietnam Journal of Social Sciences, no. 1 (2018). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

Government's Decree No. 92/2006/ND-CP dated September 7, 2006, is about formulating, approving, and managing the master plan for socio-economic development. Decree No. 04/2008/ND-CP dated January 11, 2008 amends and supplements several articles of Decree No. 92/2006/ND-CP which covers the planning at two levels: the socio-economic regions and the key economic zones.

13.1 Socio-economic Zone Planning

The current master plans for socio-economic development in Vietnam include: (1) Master plans for socio-economic development of regions and key economic zones; (2) Master plans on socio-economic development at provincial and district levels; (3) National and regional development planning of branches and domains; (4) Development planning of major products at national and local levels.

These plans cover a ten-year duration, with a 15-20 years vision. They are presented every five years and can be reviewed, adjusted, and supplemented according to the socio-economic situation. The regional master plans include socio-economic activities in a given territory and a given time when the region has relatively independent socio-economic activities.

Six planning regions cover Northern Midlands and Mountains, Red River Delta, North Central and Central Coast regions, Central Highlands, Southeast and Southeast regions, and Mekong Delta.

Regional planning includes the national socio-economic development strategy; resolutions and decisions; sector and field development planning at the national level; construction, urban and land use; plannings already approved by competent authorities; statistics survey results. The Prime Minister supports and adopts the regional planning.

Rationale of planning

The main content of the regional socio-economic development master plan is uniformly regulated and includes the following nine points:

i. The plan consists of the analysis, assessment and forecast of development factors and conditions of development such as feasibility and comparative advantages of the region;

ii. The objectives, viewpoints and directions of socio-economic development are in line with the national socio-economic development strategy and master plan;

iii. Specific tasks to achieve the objectives for the development of an economic structure; justification of development options; identification of the development direction of key industries, fields and key products, functions, tasks and roles for the region of critical urban centres and sub-regions are determined;

iv. Integrated plan in the territory of the region;

v. Infrastructure development planning to ensure immediate and long-term requirements of economic and social activities of the region associated with other regions;

vi. Orientation of land use planning;

vii. Justification of the list of investment priority projects;

viii. Environmental protection measures including the identification of severely polluted, environmentally sensitive territories and proposing appropriate solutions to protect or use these territories;

ix. Identify solutions on mechanisms and policies to realize planning objectives; propose key investment programs and projects with a balance of capital sources to ensure the implementation and justification of the implementation steps

of the planning; propose a plan to organize the implementation of the plan.

Implementation Status

Up to now, development plans for all six socio-economic regions have been established and implemented. According to the regulations, the regional planning has identified solutions on mechanisms and policies to achieve the planning objectives.

Box 1 shows an example of a regional development policy identified in the Socio-Economic Development Master Plan of the Red River Delta up to 2020.

Box 1. Development policies in the Red River Delta [8] – Support policies for rice-producing regions to ensure national food security (granting preferential credits for purchasing, storing, stabilizing prices): rice, investment in infrastructure, storage system in the direction of linking with localities, creating a driving force for development; supporting the development of clean agricultural products, high-tech agricultural products, especially export products and building brands of farm products; policies to encourage the development of agro-processing and agro-processing industries in remote and disadvantaged areas; specific policies on investment, finance and credit for sub-regions with many rivers and canals, including investment rate for development projects using capital from the state budget and credit with funding from the budget.

However, in addition to the six socio-economic zone plans, there are also plans approved by ministries and branches containing contents related to regional development. The Planning Law Drafting Board reports that in each planning period, 2001-2010 and 2011-2020, over 300-400 master plans have been approved by the Central Committee. For example, during 2001-2010, the Committee approved 419 master plans, and for 2011-2020, 344 master plans were approved.

Although not all of the above 300-400 plans were regional, all have content related to the regions. For example, Section 5, Article 1, Decision No. 880/QD-TTg dated June 9, 2014, approved the Master Plan on Industrial Development of Vietnam to 2020, with a vision to 2030. According to the Ministry of Planning and Investment, if we separate the master plan for socio-economic development of a particular region and territory, there are currently 21 master plans.

Many specific policies for regional development have been promulgated and implemented in recent years, bringing positive results. Thanks to regional planning with regional development policies, key products associated with regional characteristics (rice, aquatic products, fruit trees in the Mekong Delta; rice, vegetables, fruit trees in the Red River Delta; coffee, rubber, pepper in the Central Highlands) are contributing to the economic development of the whole economy.

Industry has also benefitted regional development with several typical regional products (high-tech products in the Red River Delta and the Southeast region; heavy industrial products in central coastal areas). Specific economic policies have also supported and developed the division of labour by areas.

Specific social policies for ethnic minorities in the Northern mountainous region, the Central Highlands, and the Southwest region (Mekong River Delta) have helped eradicating famine and alleviating poverty, significantly improving livelihoods, incomes, and lives.

Limitations and weaknesses

The regional development planning has contributed significantly to development management in our country today. However, the assessment of regional development policies has not yet been available because there is no regional development management agency. The number of several hundred regional plans promulgated above also shows that, besides the advantages, there are many shortcomings and even contradictions in the regional plans.

The most prominent policy issue in regional development planning lies precisely in the overlap in the delimitation of the planning areas.

For example, regional adjustments on Decree No. 92/2006/ND-CP that defined six economic zones and four key economic zones later added a special area with the Hochiminh City area, which cannot be considered a regional area. In addition, researchers and managers have pointed out many inadequacies in the current planning zoning, such as too many planning areas, overlapping between economic zones and key economic zones.

Inadequacies in zoning are also the reasons that made regional planning in the past become heavy on the number of regional plans and, more importantly, the overlap, duplication, and dispersion in the area that rendered area management tasks harder. According to the summary assessment of the Planning Law Drafting Board, shortcomings related to regional development planning are as follows:

- o   The legal documents on the planning system existed but are still scattered. There are inconsistent regulations and a lack of standards.
- o   The number of approved regional plans is high. However, the quality is still low, and coordination is not consistent. For instance, local plans were sometimes approved before enacting regional plans.
- o   There is no linkage and coordination in making regional and inter-regional plans and in organizing the implementation of regional development policies.
- o   The methodology of regional planning has shortcomings and is not associated with the requirements of the market mechanism and international economic integration. Moreover, the participation and consultation of stakeholders, especially from the business community, is still limited.

- o The planning vision is still limited and not strategic enough, and the quality of the forecasts is still low.
- o The content of the plannings related to the region has overlaps and contradictions.
- o The subject of regional management has not been clearly identified.
- o Publicity and transparency in planning are still low.
- o Due to significant limitations of resources and capacity for implementing the plan, the efficiency of implementing regional projects is significantly reduced.

13.2 Planning of Key Economic Zones

Rationale of key economic zone planning

According to the general definition, "A key economic region is a part of the national territory, converging favourable development conditions and factors, has great economic potential, plays the role of driving force, the locomotive promote the common development of the whole country".

The key economic regions contain major economic, social, scientific, and technological centres and include: Hanoi, Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh, Can Tho. The key economic zone planning is regulated with a focus on promoting the driving force's role of the area.

Box 2. Location and role of the Mekong Delta Key Economic Zone. The Mekong Delta key economic region is a major centre for rice production, farming, fishing and processing of aquatic products, contributing to the country's agricultural and aquatic exports.

In addition, the Mekong Delta also plays an important role in transferring biotechnology, providing seeds, technical services, processing and exporting agricultural products to the whole Mekong Delta region. The Mekong River Delta is a dynamic region with a

modern economic structure, contributing largely to the development of the country's economy. Therefore, building the Mekong River Delta area into a rich and robust cultural and social regional centre is founding a solid pillar for the Vietnamese economy.

Implementation Status

Currently, four key economic regions have been planned:

(1) The Northern key economic region includes seven provinces and cities: Hanoi, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh, Hai Duong, Hung Yen, Vinh Phuc, and Bac Ninh.

(2) The Central key economic region includes five provinces and cities: Thua Thien, Hue, Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh.

(3) The Southern key economic region includes eight provinces and cities: Ho Chi Minh, Dong Nai, Ba Ria Vung Tau, Binh Duong, Tay Ninh, Binh Phuoc, Long An, Tien Giang.

(4) The Mekong Delta key economic region includes four provinces and cities: Can Tho, An Giang, Kien Giang and Ca Mau.

In general, the master plans for key economic zones are the basis and fundamental orientation for the division and cooperation of production within the key economic zones and promote and spread the division of labour and cooperation between regions and beyond. The preferential policies identified in the master plan of key economic zones have created favourable conditions for the area to manifest and assume the role of the locomotive and driving force of the region.

Box 3 illustrates preferential policies for the Mekong Delta Key Economic Zone.

Particularly for key economic regions, the Government has just established a Steering Committee and a Regional Council for each key economic region (Decision No. 2059/QD-TTg dated November 24, 2015) with the function of being an interdisciplinary coordination organization to help the Prime Minister Office.

In general, the planned key economic regions have achieved economic growth about 1.2-1.25 times higher than the national average.

Limitations and their causes

The limitations in the planning of socio-economic regions and the reasons mentioned above cause limitations of the key economic regions. They include:

i. A Region in the region: a key economic zone is formed from several provinces and cities of the socio-economic region, but includes most of the provinces and cities of it, specifically 7/11 provinces and cities of the Red River Delta, 5/14 provinces and cities of the North Central Region and Central Coast, 6/8 provinces and cities of the Southeast Region (additional two provinces of the Mekong Delta socio-economic region are Long An and Tien Giang) and 4/13 of the Mekong Delta. This fact confirms that the distinction between socio-economic and key economic items is not very clear.

ii. Weak spillover power: spillover effects and promotion of development are the top requirements and goals of key economic regions. However, this power of influence has so far not been up to the level.

The first three key economic regions that include the North, the Central and the South were formed between 1997 and 1998 with 13 provinces and cities. They expanded with 20 provinces and cities; The fourth key economic region (Mekong Delta) was formed in 2009 and includes four provinces and cities. However, after two decades of establishment and development, the spillover effects and promotion of development around key economic regions are still limited. The regional development linkages, both internal and external, are still weak.

13.3 Recommendations

The renewal of regional development policy is in line with the strengthening role of development management institutions and the State's new role. State's resources should only focus on the region's primary and essential development issues that the private sector does not or has not paid attention to investing. It is necessary to create conditions that benefit investment activities to attract private investors.

Regions with particular geographical conditions and human resources are divisions of labour in the national development plan. However, so far, regional development management has not clearly defined regional interests as the basis for attracting private investment and regional policy design.

According to management science, interests are the "glue" of the different collaborating parts. Investors will not invest in ventures with unclear objectives and undefined returns on investment. The studies on regional development linkages showed a lack of this "binder" factor. To enhance the attractivity of a region, the State should issue a clear orientation on regional development policies.

Clear orientation on policies in regional planning.

The draft Planning Law was drafted according to the guidelines and direction of the Central Committee (Resolution of the 4th Conference of the Central Committee of the Party, term XI, No. 13-NQ/TW dated January 16, 2012). and has been submitted to the National Assembly by the Government. Accordingly, the regional planning is determined to be in the national planning system, including defining the policy to implement the regional planning. Guidelines will include regional characteristics in each region's planning. Still, three general fundamental distinctions in the regional planning documentation should be clear:
- Regional integration policy (regional and beyond)
- Policies on enhancing the competitiveness of the region

- Policies on key products and services of the region

Coordination between specific policies for regions

Currently, specific policies for regions are proposed to promulgate other policies; those policies have created consequences not only for localities in the area but also outside the region. There should be general principles on promulgating specific policies in general, and for the region in particular, to avoid subjective factors and group's interest influence in policy issuance.

Region-specific policies should only be issued in two groups: (i) general specific areas, for example, remote areas, densely populated with ethnic minorities, high poverty rate; and (ii) support to enhance regional competitiveness. The basis for promulgating policies to support regional competitiveness improvement is the regional competitiveness index (RCI). The Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI), which is published annually, can serve as the basis for the publication of the regional competitiveness index.

Committee on regional development

Currently, because the Constitution does not have a state management level for the region, there is no management agency with sufficient competence and resources to coordinate regional development policies.

The need for a regional governing body is urgent. The region needs a "conductor" to coordinate the implementation of regional development policies. Therefore, there have been plans to establish regional management agencies. Hopefully, the program on regional management agencies proposed in the Draft Law on Planning will be approved by the National Assembly next year.

13.4 Conclusion

Regional development in general and regional development policy in Vietnam is still an area with many gaps. Besides certain achievements, there are still limitations in regional development policy, especially in the overlapping in planning, lack of regional linkages, and lack of a regional management agency. The new development policy aiming to transform the growth model to focus on depth and sustainability and international economic integration requires inevitable major reforms in development policies.

To effectively implement the regional development policy, Vietnam needs to have common basic policies in regional planning. Therefore, the tasks of harmonizing policies on regional development are crucial for a better use of resources to the benefit of all stakeholders.

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ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES FOR MEKONG DELTA

Nguyễn Quang Thuấn, Hà Huy Ngọc, Phạm Sỹ An

Summary

This article discusses the negative impacts of climate change in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam[20]. According to the 2016 Climate Change And Sea Level Rise Scenario, if the sea level rises by 1m, the Mekong Delta region will bear a high risk of flooding, with Hau Giang province being the largest flooded area at 80.6 % of its total area.

After providing a list of policies for environmental protection and action programs to respond to climate change (CC) that have been set up by the Vietnamese government, the authors discuss on the impact of climate change and how sea level rise and salinization affect the livelihoods of the population of this area. Recommendations for a sustainable development in terms of governance and implementation of COP21 are presented to address many shortcomings and limitations of the current situation.

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[20] Nguyễn Quang Thuấn, Hà Huy Ngọc, Phạm Sỹ An, Giải pháp thích ứng với biến đổi khí hậu ở đồng bằng sông Cửu Long trong bối cảnh mới, Tạp chí Khoa học xã hội Việt Nam, số 3 (2019). English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

The author argues that a better coordination between Central government and provincial authorities will be more effective in terms of disaster management and environment protection.

Keywords: Mekong Delta, Vietnam, climate change, policies, governance, directives, regulation, decision, COP21

Introduction

The Mekong Delta has a shallow and flat terrain with diverse ecosystems. It is subject to climate change impact because the area is located at the end of the Mekong River basin, adjacent to the East and West seas on two sides. With a population of 18 million people, most of whom live on agriculture, aquaculture and related services, any significant climate change will significantly affect the lives of millions of this region. Many policies, programs, and projects have been implemented in the Mekong Delta since 2008, thus considerably reducing climate change impacts. However, as these policies mainly focus on infrastructure works and uncoordinated implementation within each locality, we are still far from the set goals. Therefore, we need to review our strategies to face the new circumstances of the environment, especially the effects of climate change in the Upper Mekong region and its local economic development activities.

This paper analyses the adverse effects of climate change on the Mekong Delta and proposes practical solutions in implementing climate change policies.

14.1 Climate Change Negative Effects

According to the 2016 Climate change and sea-level rise scenario, if the sea level rises 1m, the Mekong Delta has a high risk of flooding, with a potential effect of a 38.9 % of its terrain. In this scenario, Hau Giang and Kien Giang provinces will have the largest flooded area with

80.6% and 76.9%, respectively. This will greatly impact the production and employment of the majority of rural workers. From the end of 2015 to June 2016, some localities in the Mekong Delta had suffered severe droughts and saltwater intrusion.

As of June 2016, all the 13 provinces and cities of the region have issued decisions to publicize natural disasters, droughts, and saltwater intrusions in the area. Shortages and saltwater intrusions have damaged about 139,000 ha rice fields causing about VND 215 billion in damage. At the same time, droughts and saltwater intrusions caused about 400,000 households (est. 1.5 million people) to lack water for their daily life activities. The 2015-2016 damages in drought and saltwater intrusion amounted to VND 7,520 billion. Kien Giang, Ca Mau, and Bac Lieu are the most affected localities with about VND 6,050 billion.

In 2017 and 2018, the Mekong Delta region continued to suffer from riverbank and coastal erosions with an unprecedented frequency and scale in the whole history of the region. Landslides have directly threatened people's lives and properties, seriously affected the safety of disaster prevention works and coastal infrastructure, and degraded coastal mangrove forests. The total damage caused by the riverbank and coastal erosion in the Mekong Delta provinces by the end of 2018 was about VND 2,766.6 billion. Furthermore, damages caused by natural disasters and climate change in the Mekong Delta are increasing rapidly. In short, the total damages caused by natural disasters and climate change in the Mekong Delta reached VND 20,945 billion for the period 2010-2018.

14.2 Environmental Policies for Mekong Delta

The Vietnamese National Target Program on Climate Change in 2008 includes environmental policies in response to climate change in the Mekong Delta, such as:

Policies on regional development: As of December 2017, over 2,500 masterplans related to the Mekong Delta region have integrated elements in response to climate. In particular, 22 regional plans include 3 masterplans on socio-economic development; 5 on construction planning; 7 on agricultural and rural development; 7 on development of key sectors related activities such as transportation, electricity, commerce, tourism, information and communication. Regional plans are prepared according to geographical conditions, as in the case of the Mekong Delta region, which includes 13 provinces and cities, key economic zones in 4 provinces and coastal areas along the Southern part of the Gulf of Thailand.

Decision No. 1397/QD-TTg dated September 25, 2012, approving the Mekong Delta Irrigation Planning for 2012-2020, with orientation to 2050 on response to climate change and sea-level rise. The Decision supported efforts in irrigation planning given the exploitation, efficient use, protection and development of water resources in the Mekong River upstream and neighbouring areas. It also recommends maintaining a harmonious combination between structural and non-structural solutions and limiting the harmful effects caused by water, especially floods and saline intrusion in climate change and environmental conditions.

Proposed solutions include controlling salinity, resolving conflicts between coastal aquaculture areas and agricultural production areas such as Kien Giang, Hau Giang and Bac Lieu that are part of Cai Lon - Cai Be river basin, such as:

- o   proactively responding to climate change by creating fresh water sources for coastal areas to solve the shortage of fresh water in the dry season, and preventing forest fires;
- o   enhancing the capacity of flood drainage, waterlogging and acid drainage to improve alkaline soil; and
- o   combining development of waterways and land transport in the project area.

Decision No. 498/QD/TTg dated April 17, 2017 approves the investment policy of Cai Lon - Cai Be Irrigation SystemProject Phase 1 in Kien Giang and Ca Mau provinces, with a total investment amount to VND 3,309.5 billion.

Decision No. 2623/QD-TTg dated December 31, 2013, approves the project of urban development of 12 urban areas of the Mekong Delta in response to climate change for 2013-2020. Scenarios to assess the impacts of climate change, to improve capacity to respond to climate change, and to develop urban planning on environmental protection criteria.

Decision No. 68/QD-TTg dated January 15, 2018 approves the revised planning on construction for Mekong Delta to 2030 in view of making the region based on green growth, sustainability and resilience to climate change. The vision 2050 is to develop the region into a key area in agricultural production, fishing and aquaculture, with a strong focus on marine economy and eco-tourism.

Decision No. 639/QD-BNN-KH dated April 2, 2014, approves the agricultural and rural planning for Mekong Delta in consideration of the context on climate change. Emphasis is placed on agricultural and rural planning in the Mekong Delta based on innovative thinking and market-based approach. Action plans include:

o exploiting and enhancing regional and local advantages to develop agricultural production for sustainable development;
o creating production networks of specialized production areas and large areas of plantation;
o applying scientific and technological achievements into the production, processing and responsible consumption respecting environmental protection measures in response to climate change.

Decision No. 593/QD-TTg dated April 6, 2016, is the pilot implementation of regulations on Mekong Delta socio-economic

development of period 2016-2020 in response to climate change, and include activities such as:

- o invest in building and upgrading systems for irrigation, flood prevention and control of saline intrusion;
- o manage, exploit, use and protect water resources, improve the efficiency of water use for daily life, agricultural production and aquaculture in the dry season;
- o build and upgrade the system of sea dykes, dykes, sluices, dams, mangrove belts and other projects on environmental protection and climate change response.

Decision No. 2220/QD-TTg dated November 17, 2016 is the implementation plan of Decision 593/QD-TTg. It sets out a regional network action plan to respond to climate change which includes activities such as:

- o A plan for the management, exploitation, use and protection of water resources with the aim of controlling floods and salinity, enhancing the area's fresh water storage capacity;
- o A plan for planting mangroves, environmental protection, climate change adaptation, forest protection and care.

Decision No. 64/QD-TTg dated January 18, 2017, is about establishing an inter-sectoral steering group on regional networks for the Mekong Delta for the period 2016-2020.

Resolution 120/NQ-CP on November 17, 2017, on Sustainable Development in the Mekong Delta sets out the following strategic guidelines:

- o A people-centered development model;
- o Water resources are key issues in planning regional development strategies;

o   Model of transformation based on the ecosystem and respecting the laws of nature;

o   Integrative approach to strengthen linkage between localities in the region;

o   All investment activities to be coordinated to ensure inter-regional, inter-sectoral objectives.

In order to reach a long-term and sustainable development vision for the Mekong Delta region, based on respect for the natural and human ecological values of the region, the Resolution 120 includes 6 main actions:

o   review, perfect and supplement the system of mechanisms and policies;

o   update and systematize interdisciplinary data;

o   plan and organize territorial space;

o   build a reasonable economic structure to serve the diversified market agriculture, adapting to climate change;

o   develop infrastructure projects associated with climate change adaptation; and

o   focus on human resource development, science, technology and international cooperation.

On that basis, 55 projects have been supported by the government, with programs, projects, priority and urgent tasks to be implemented in 13 provinces of Mekong Delta region. In parallel, some ministries also issued action plans to implement this Resolution.

Decision 2878/QDBTNMT dated August 28, 2018 to implement Resolution 120/NQ-CP to adapt to climate change includes 7 main tasks:

o   update and standardize data and interdisciplinary data in the Mekong Delta;

- o   review, improve, and supplement mechanisms and policies on natural resources and environment;
- o   review and finalize the plan for the natural resources and environment sector;
- o   campaign to raise awareness;
- o   develop science and technology applications;
- o   fund mobilisation and management; and
- o   strengthen international cooperation.

Based on these 7 key tasks, the Ministry has developed 21 projects with specific activities to implement in the Mekong Delta. Following this, Decision 816/QDBNNPTNT dated March 7, 2018 is about the Action Plan of the Ministry to adapt to climate change with 38 tasks and projects implemented in the provinces of the Mekong Delta.

In short, during the period 2008-2018, the Government led by the Prime Minister Office has issued over 66 legal documents including treaties, decisions, announcements, guidelines, and territorial planning related to climate change adaptation.

14.3 Policy Implementation and Evaluation

First, develop a policy implementation plan. Immediately after the decisions were issued, the provinces in the Mekong Delta organized and directed all levels and sectors to synchronously implement the program and achieved some results as follows:

Based on the implementation of the Decision No. 158/2008/QD-TTg dated December 2, 2008, Decision No. 1183/QD-TTg dated August 30, 2012, Resolution No. 24-NQ/TW of the Central Committee, People's Committees of provinces and centrally-run cities have established provincial Steering Committees on the implementation of the National Target Program (NTP) on climate change response and climate change.

The Steering Committee consists of leaders of the Provincial People's Committee as heads, leaders of departments/sectors, and People's Committees of districts, towns, and cities.

The localities have established the Office to assist the Steering Committee, which operates on a part-time basis and is located at the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Notably, Can Tho city and two provinces of Ben Tre and Tra Vinh established the Climate Change Office.

The Office is an independent unit directly under the Provincial People's Committee to assist the Provincial Steering Committee in implementing the NTP on Climate Change.

At the same time, to implement the NTP on responding to climate change locally, the Provincial Party Committees and People's Committees of provinces and cities have issued 325 legal documents in different forms to implement climate change response policies in other localities of the Mekong Delta region.

In addition, to gradually implement policies to respond to climate change, 13/13 localities have developed climate change and climate change scenarios and issued action plans to respond to climate change and climate change for 2011-2015 and the period 2016-2020.

Secondly, we find the policy implementation propaganda. During 2011-2017, propaganda activities to raise awareness include reportage programs, radio and television on natural disasters, communications, training on climate change and response models, contests on learning about climate change, etc. The survey results also show that the propaganda activities have done very well in the content of the manifestations and impacts of climate change on the pillars of sustainable development.

Financial resources to implement programs and projects: The above documents and policies are the basis for developing and implementing programs and projects to respond to climate change in the Mekong

Delta. In 2011-2015, the National Target Program on Climate Change response had invested 2,594 billion VND in the Mekong Delta region to implement 45 projects. In addition, the Support Program to Respond to Climate Change (SP-RCC) has also invested VND 2,301 billion in 7 projects in the Mekong Delta from 2012-2016, mainly focusing on renovating and upgrading the irrigation infrastructure system.

During 2011-2017, the Mekong Delta region had mobilized 12,879 billion VND10 for climate change programs and projects. The Eastern coastal sub-region contributed VND 2,078 billion, Long Xuyen Quadrangle sub-region VND 7,145 billion, Dong Thap Muoi sub-region VND 1,729 billion, and the semi-regional sub-region VND 1,729 billion, Ca Mau island 1,927 billion VND. Investment resources for climate change in the sub-regions are still mainly devoted to constructing infrastructure to respond to climate change. During this period, ODA has also supported projects related to climate change response in the Mekong Delta with more than 764 million USD.

In 2017-2018 alone, the Government has invested more in the Mekong Delta to respond to climate change than in other regions. Specifically, the Government spent VND 1,500 billion from the central budget reserve in 2018 and VND 1,000 billion from the provision for the 2016-2020 medium-term public investment plan to support some localities in the processing area. To manage and overcome urgent riverbank and coastal erosion areas directly affecting concentrated residential areas and essential infrastructure works.

For the Program to respond to climate change and green growth in the 2016-2020 period, the Mekong Delta region is prioritized by the Government to implement 34 projects (there are nine transitional projects from the previous phase and 25 new open projects) with a total investment capital of VND 11,000 billion.

Coordination and sharing information on policy implementation: For the climate change adaptation policy to become more effective, the

parties involved need to improve further the mechanism of assignment, coordination and information sharing among stakeholders in the implementation process. Practice shows that in the period 2008-2018, the coordination and sharing of information happened between ministries/sectors and localities, between localities and localities, and between departments, in implementing climate change policies. However, although it has been paid attention, it is still very vague and loose because there is no binding legal mechanism, and it is related to the parties' interests.

Evaluation on policy implementation

Since the implementation of the Mekong Delta policy, people's lives have improved, incomes have increased, sustainable livelihoods have been created and adapted to climate change, although there are still shortcomings.

a. Firstly, the propaganda of policies to respond to climate change in the Mekong Delta, although implemented, still has many limitations. The form and content of propaganda mainly focus on raising awareness, but there is a lack of specific solutions that directly affect those affected by climate change.

b. Secondly, climate change has wide-ranging effects and inter-provincial impacts on socio-ecological regions. In recent years, programs and projects to respond to climate change have been built and implemented locally, fragmentedly, within the boundaries of each locality in the region. For example, the seven projects allocated by the Government for implementation in the Climate Change Support Program are only implemented separately within seven provinces. In project formulation, localities lack continuity, linkage, and information sharing, while projects on infrastructure and irrigation in response to climate change will have negative, poorly coordinated impacts. This leads to ineffective response to climate change and waste of resources.

c. Thirdly, the programs and projects have primarily been designed to focus on infrastructure (such as the construction of sea dykes, river dykes, reservoirs, dams, drainage canals, and flood slides to prevent saline intrusion, accounting for about 89%) by the investment capital in period 2011-2017. The projects did not prioritise resources for non-structural, semi-structural and technological solutions (such as monitoring and early warning systems for natural disasters, renewable energy, adaptation to climate change based on the ecosystem, mangrove protection, sustainable livelihood models for the community, etc.).

d. Fourthly, the need for a budget in the Mekong Delta provinces is substantial. At the same time, 12 out 13 regions and cities have not yet balanced budget revenue and expenditure and have to ask for the central government's funding. In the context of the current tight and reduced public investment budget, budget expenditure can only meet about 25% of the needs of localities. At the same time, it is difficult to attract investment capital for climate change from the private sector or the community.

14.4 Impact on Mekong Delta Region

The Mekong Delta region is facing opportunities and challenges that come with the globalised economy, especially regarding climate change issues in the IR 4.0 industrial revolution.

The Paris Agreements, or "COP21" of December 2014, included Vietnam as a signatory together with 170 other countries. Accordingly, Vietnam committed to cutting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 8% by 2030 compared to business as usual (BAU) and will reduce by 25% if the international community supports it.

Decision No. 2053/QDTTg, dated October 28, 2016, approved the Plan for Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. According to the GHG inventory results issued by the Ministry of

Natural Resources and Environment in 2018, the GHG emissions of the agricultural sector were 89,751.8 thousand tons CO_2, accounting for about 27.9% of the total GHG emissions, it is forecasted that by 2020 the GHG emissions of the agricultural sector will decrease to 20.67% and in 2030 to 12.6%.

For the Mekong Delta region, as a specialised farming area with the largest rice paddies production in the country, with 1.7 million hectares of rice land, this represents a huge challenge to implement the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) plan to reduce GHG in agricultural production.

Impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution IR 4.0

The 4th Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0) has major economic, social and environmental impacts in all regions, countries and territories. These impacts are positive in the long term, but they also create challenges in the short and medium term. In terms of responding to climate change, IR 4.0 will affect 23 Mekong Delta regions in the following manners:

IR 4.0 allows Mekong Delta region to catch up and close the technology gap with other countries and enhance Vietnamese labour productivity. The application of modern technology such as automatic irrigation technology to save water as an innovative measure to be less dependent on other climate factors will be an effective response to the adverse impacts of climate change.

IR 4.0 also has positive effects on climate change response thanks to the application of energy-saving, environment-friendly technologies and GHG emission reduction.

In addition, the rapid development of monitoring technologies, such as weather and climate monitoring and early warning of natural disasters helps to collect and process information continuously 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in real local time, thanks to the use of the Internet of Things technologies.

The energy sector of the Mekong Delta can take advantage of the achievements of the industrial revolution to go green by benefiting from breakthroughs in renewable energy technology, especially in energy application technology, solar energy, wind energy, etc. with decreasing production costs.

Responding to climate change in the Mekong Delta will be more effective if the technological elements of the 4.0 Industrial Revolution are applied. Smart trends are being applied more frequently in smart agriculture, smart city, smart traffic, smart home. These trends will reduce the harmful effects of climate change and create new ecological industries and sectors.

Development context in the upstream area

Located at the end of the Mekong Basin, the Mekong Delta region is greatly affected by the development of 11 hydropower plants in the basin. Hydroelectric dams have blocked the flow, reducing the amount of water flowing downstream, while the demand for water is increasing due to the pressure of population growth and agricultural development.

Hydroelectric dams in the Mekong River basin have reduced fine sediments, blocked all sand and gravel to the Mekong Delta, and caused damage to aquatic resources, and affected marine fisheries and flows.

The issue of non-sustainable development of the Mekong Delta

It is forecasted that the population of the Mekong Delta may increase from 17 million to 30 million by 2050. This urbanization and industrialization process will reduce the agricultural land area while it increases the demand for clean water as well as generates a lot more waste water and domestic waste. This is also the cause of climate change and flooding in urban areas.

According to the Revised Power Plan VII dated March 18, 2016, 15 (fifteen) coal-fired power plants will be built along the Hau River route from Can Tho city down to Hau Giang province and then on the estuary

between the two provinces of Soc Trang and Tra Vinh. With such a scale of energy industry development, by 2030 the region will become one of the areas with the highest density of thermal power in the country. As a consequence, it will face many negative impacts such as the pollution of fresh water sources and the destruction of aquatic ecosystems and human health. This will put pressure on efforts to reduce GHG emissions as stipulated under the Paris Agreement.

Furthermore, the development of the region will reduce drastically the mangrove and melaleuca forests due aquaculture. Similarly, the over-exploitation of sand along the Tien and Hau river banks will exacerbate the lack of sediment and will exhaust the groundwater exploitation, causing the ground to subside.

14.5 Recommendations

In view of these potential negative impacts which will lead to severe living conditions for the local population in the Mekong Delta area, the author proposes the following recommendations:

To strengthen the institutional framework for enforcing climate change policies in the Mekong Delta, it is recommended that a regional coordinating committee to be put in place in order to create synergy and linkage among localities in the region. This committee shall have the functions, duties and powers to take on the role of decision-making in the development process of the Mekong Delta. It will establish a technical council to approve projects under the National Climate Change Framework ("Program") based on criteria that reply to the general, inter-sectoral and inter-regional attributes. These criteria shall be included in the selecting procedure of Resolution 120/NQ-CP with the following characteristics:

   i.   projects that are really urgent;

   ii.   projects of inter-provincial and inter-regional nature;

iii.   give priority to innovative and effective solutions to the problem;

iv.   request expert advice on large irrigation projects that must be publicly announced and consulted with the community, experts and scientists in the investment project formulation phase.

In order to optimize the coordination with regional, provincial and national authorities, it is recommended that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development coordinate with the Ministry of Finance to develop financial regulations for disbursement of capital for projects related to the Program and its implementation so that localities can be proactive and speed up the disbursement of capital for urgent projects.

The author also added that "According to the procedure on capital disbursement of the current Public Investment Law, the process of project construction, funding and disbursement for the Mekong Delta region is taking place very slowly with a lot of intertwining conditions".

On the question of how to build a mechanism allowing the mobilization of financial resources to support sustainable development in response to climate change, it is recommended that a fund for sustainable development and climate change response for Mekong Delta be established. This fund shall establish a clear operational management mechanism to mobilize urgent funds that are dedicated to each purpose in accordance with the general principles of sustainable development and adaptive regional management.

It is further recommended that the government shall review and adjust the medium-term public investment plan and projects under the National Target Program On Green Growth and Climate Change and projects using ODA, related to climate change in the Mekong Delta in the 2016-2020 period. In particular, the author stresses on the necessity to select priority and urgent projects based on criteria applied to general,

inter-regional, inter-provincial, and inter-sectoral characteristics in the planning and implementation phase to allow a more effective use of funds and resources.

On the question on how to build and replicate diverse livelihood models that are suitable for each sub-region and meeting the needs of the market with regards to climate change issues, it is recommended that the government should support and encourage investment in the development of key crops and livestock, in parallel with the reconversion of land use of rice farming areas in estuaries and coastal areas into aquaculture use (as a measure of counteracting to saline intrusion that is rising in the Mekong Delta). The livelihood model follows three key directions: fisheries, fruit trees, rice associated with ecological sub-regions, in which fisheries' conditions (fresh water, brackish water, salt water) should be key. In addition, activities in organic agriculture (shrimp-forest, shrimp-rice) for this region should be prioritized.

Another recommendation is to study the mechanism to encourage the private sector to participate in climate change response. The government shall put in place sanctions to encourage businesses to change their production and business activities towards smart agriculture, and reduce GHG. The legal corridor and incentive mechanism shall be strong enough to attract investment projects from the private sector. This will be a source of encouragement for farmers, businesses and other stakeholders to participate in implementing the action plan to reduce GHG emissions into the environment. In addition, the government shall build a pilot mechanism to collect irrigation fees from large-scale rice and aquaculture-growing regions for export in some provinces in the Mekong Delta. The objectives of collection of irrigation fees is to

- o   Make the people and businesses accountable on the use of fresh waters;

- o Reinvest these fees for the construction and maintenance and operation of the in-field irrigation system; and
- o Attract private investment in the construction of irrigation reservoirs, multi-purpose water reservoirs in some key areas where State's resources are not sufficient to do the investment.

In short, the government can develop a pilot mechanism such as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) for the new construction and upgrading of irrigation systems, support the consolidation and completion of the in-field irrigation system to improve the adaptability of the irrigation system to cope with drought and saltwater intrusion in the Mekong Delta.

Special task force to monitor climate change response: It is recommended that a national advisory group on sustainable development and climate change be established under the direction of the Coordinating Committee of the Mekong Delta. This will be a gathering place for scientists, managers, entrepreneurs from different interdisciplinary fields and will be knowledgeable about the Mekong Delta. The advisory group shall advise the Committee on climate change response strategies. It is necessary to merge two provincial steering committees, namely the Provincial Steering Committee on the implementation of the NTP on climate change response and NCDs, and the Provincial Steering Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control and Search and Rescue into the Steering Committee for Climate Change Response and Natural Disaster Prevention And Control in provinces and cities. This merger aims to reduce directing focal points, reduce costs and improve organizational efficiency.

It is recommended that the Office of Climate Change and Disaster Mitigation be established as a standing body and assisting the Steering Committee. This Office has an independent and specialized apparatus based on the departments and staff in charge of climate change of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and the staff in

charge of disaster reduction of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The office's full-time staff must be professionally trained with in-depth knowledge on natural disasters and climate change.

Finally, it is recommended to build a data centre in the Mekong Delta, focusing on the following issues:

- o strengthening the capacity of monitoring, monitoring, warning, forecasting and perfecting, exploiting and using the integrated database on the Mekong Delta;
- o investing in upgrading and modernizing the system of observation, monitoring, warning and forecasting of natural resources and environment, including environment, sea and islands, water resources, hydrometeorology, climate change for subsidence, erosion and accretion in the plains;
- o building, completing and integrating the interdisciplinary database system and establishing the Mekong Delta Data Center. The Center will connect to the database of the International Mekong River Commission to effectively exploit and use information for multiple purposes, and share and organize information disclosure for the agency-related organizations and individuals.

14.6 Conclusion

Through the above analysis, it is shown that the Mekong Delta is suffering from the negative effects of climate change. Up to now, there have been many policies, programs and projects directly and indirectly related to climate change response implemented in the region, however, the content is still overlapping, investment is scattered, and real resources are lacking. In the current state of affairs, this leads to low response efficiency. In the near future, it is necessary to focus on

perfecting policies, programs and projects in the direction of improving the effectiveness of climate change response in the Mekong Delta.

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The author's calculation is based on the statistics of damage caused by natural disasters of the General Department of Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, and the Annual Damage Report of 13 provinces and cities in the period 2010-2018.

Notes by the Authors of this Chapter:

According to data information extracted from the Report on the Implementation of the NTP to respond to climate change in the period 2011-2017 of 13 provinces and cities in the Mekong Delta provided by the Department of Climate Change (2017):

(1) The Eastern coastal sub-region accounts for 65.5% of the budget, the Long Xuyen Quadrangle sub-region accounted for 93.9%, the Dong Thap Muoi sub-region accounted for 81.9%, the Ca Mau peninsula sub-region accounted for 76%.

(2) As of April 2018, 12 out of 13 provinces and cities in the Southwest region have developed and issued a plan to implement the Paris Agreementon climate change at the local level.

(3) Thermal power plants in the Southwest region will use about 170,000 tons of coal per day, and discharge about 70 million m3 of wastewater.

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DEVELOPING VIETNAMESE
UNIVERSITIES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Đinh Văn Đức

Summary

After thirty years of restructuring, the Vietnamese economy has made significant steps in the internationalisation process[21]. To increase its competitiveness in the world arena, Vietnam needs to rely on knowledge-based activities with the support of universities. Science and technology are key to improving the productivity of work production thanks to artificial intelligence (AI) and other knowledge-based applications that transform the process of conceiving, designing, producing and distributing goods and services, helping to raise the standards and competitiveness of the nation as a whole. Vietnamese Universities should be part of this transformation process.

Keywords: Vietnam, policies, governance, directives, regulation, decision, development, globalisation, sustainability, modernisation, regional, international, resources, management, strategies

Industry classification: Education, Governance.

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Introduction

Four key factors that help countries orient their transition to a knowledge-based economy are (1) an economic mechanism and an appropriate institution, (2) a vital source of human capital,(3) a dynamic infrastructure, (4) a quality education and training system at the national level, adapted to the needs of the economy. These four pillars are essential for the practical restructuring of the Vietnamese economy.

According to the World Bank (WB), Vietnam should reduce the inequality gap and use higher education institutions to develop the workforce. Indeed, the University's role is to provide a solution to the economy's needs through training resources needed in teaching and training the workforce.

To effectively fulfil its mission, Universities need an adequate philosophy of education.

In the past, Universities have contributed a great deal to the successful revitalisation of the Vietnamese education sector and helping the national effort eradicate poverty. In addition, HEI has played an essential role in regional and international economic integration through their research and teaching. The Polytechnical School of Technology and Engineering and the University of Social Sciences and Humanities are two leading examples.

The shift of the university teaching programme, that was wholly French-speaking, to Vietnamese-speaking in the North since 1951 and in the South since 1961, was the first achievement of delocalisation. From a French-speaking University that initially covered all faculties during French colonisation, the new University has integrated the Vietnamese component into its teaching programmes.

The Doi Moi policy of 1986 was a breakthrough in the development of Vietnam because it marked a structural change in the social development concept for Vietnam with a direction towards sustainable development. Vietnam no longer cultivated ad-hoc contact with

international partners in this transition but applied the open-door policy that allows economic integration on different levels.

At present, after 30 years of contact with international partners, the Vietnamese workforce has benefited from the know-how and training from various experts of different cultures in the World. At the same time, the international community also knows more about Vietnamese traditions and values. These exchanges have been beneficial for both sides.

During this transition period, many models of education and training, scientific research and cultural development have been explored, with some teething problems at first. Although Vietnam has overcome these challenges despite some initial trials and errors during the past fifteen years, and has started exploring possibilities to integrate new components into its education system, the current status of our education system today still suffers from inadequacies despite some notable achievements. The need to align with international standards is becoming more and more urgent, especially in terms of training resources for economic integration.

In this integration process, we are now trying to avoid the monodisciplinary pathway to embrace the multidisciplinary path, combining theoretical knowledge with applied practice, especially in applied science and technology to agricultural and industrial production. With the progress of technologies and their application to the production, the role of research universities is to prepare the ground and capacities to train high-level experts, scientists, and researchers in order to keep up our creativity and reactivity level.

With the support of the State, the Vietnamese Universities are re-assured that its mission will be fulfilled.

15.1 Mission of the Vietnamese University

Vietnam's policy on building a learning society based on a fifteen-year plan has specific views, goals and measures. As our vision of Vietnam is to be a learning society, we all have to learn by doing. The Vietnamese University's primary mission is to train high-quality resources on a large scale, according to international standards, by absorbing the quintessence of world knowledge, technology and culture. The University must find ways to diversify the types of training but must continually maintain and constantly improve the quality.

With a population nearing 100 million people in 54 ethnic groups, bringing higher education to such a community is not simple. The only way is to rely on the people's power through socializing activities and bringing regular benefits to the people. Ethnic equality, gender equality, and regional equality need to be balanced in implementation and prioritized for social policy beneficiaries. Universities have to operate according to this principle in the general scheme of building a learning society.

The greater responsibility and specificity of the University is also in actively encouraging and encouraging creativity, finding ideas, igniting potentials, and keeping the learning environment constantly innovative.

As a new economy at the middle-income level, Vietnam needs to cover the widening gap with the world community by investing in education and building a learning society.

Our University has that mission.

15.2 Striving to Become a World-class University

To reach the status of a world-class university, a term that has become familiar to Vietnamese students, the University must actively improve quality in teaching and research, and more importantly, develop a competitive educational environment. Naturally, universities and

schools in the world aim for a world-class position, as this also means that a world-class level is also representative of the standards that their country aspire to reach. However, although there are four thousand universities in the US, only a dozen are considered world-class universities, as in the case of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, etc. Therefore, the process of building a world-class university needs careful planning and a high investment in quality assurance.

The definition of a world-class university is sometimes associated with the concept of an elite University. Developing countries have less chance to reach this status as advanced education requires a long tradition of learning like UK, Japan, France and the US. However, looking at the recent rise of universities in China, Korea, Singapore and Australia as role models, Vietnamese universities can consider building a brand for Vietnam, starting from the regional level to moving up to the international ladder. In this way, the Vietnamese universities will have a chance to succeed by going step-by-step with a strategy of strengthening from its internal strength to reach world-class rather than doing PR to become first-class. In his opinion, the approach must be two-fold: the first is to strive internally to reach our objectives, and the second is to focus on achieving excellence in building our international reputation through a good PR strategy. The first must come from within to give birth to the second, rather than the contrary. Therefore, the author recommends that a few universities in Vietnam take the lead and find a suitable path to gain a leadership position among universities in the region. It is clear that "failure to achieve" means that even if we want to hurry, it does not mean that we will necessarily succeed. It is also clear that there is no pattern or unique formula to allow quick success in attaining a world-class status or world-class University without going through the necessary steps in the quality assurance framework.

Competition has started and is becoming very fierce among schools in the public sector and the private sector in Vietnam. That competition

will set a more realistic picture of what Vietnamese educators expect. According to the slogans of the universities and schools, we can see their motivation to move forward and rise on ranking in the domestic competition and going international. All seek to learn from international experiences to improve the reputation of their schools.

Following the way international universities operate in Vietnam, our Vietnamese leaders tend to copy precisely the stereotypes of these international universities instead of adapting these methods into the Vietnamese context. In the author's view, Vietnam higher education needs to be adaptive and creative to learn how to maximise benefits from investments and look for new models consistent with reality.

Striving to be a world-class university is a desire, an aspiration. But, according to Ansbach (2004), "Everybody wants a world-class university, but no one wants to have a world-class university that knows what it is, and they all don't know how to get it." By this, he meant that aspiring to be recognised internationally, the universities must actively strive to be excellent; whether it is Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Oxford or Cambridge, it is not a privilege reserved for anyone in particular.

Vietnam is still in the economic transition from a planned economy to a market economy. Therefore, many problems still need to be examined and explored for their cause. We still have little experience of the market economy in the past, and although our determination is strong, our way of working still has many shortcomings.

At present, there is a tendency or a political will to rank Vietnamese universities on an international and regional scale. However, to reach this stage, we need to invest more resources to build quality and gradually reach the level that seems accessible. We should not prioritise the "ranking option" for two reasons: a) even if they were to go through the ranking now, Vietnamese universities would not have precise ranking criteria; b) it costs a lot of effort to apply to organise the ranking

of universities, as we need to improve the quality of training, the quality of scientific research and the quality of research products.

Maybe in the next five, ten or twenty years, the regional university level for Vietnam will remain very attractive. Still, the transformation must come from inside, although external resources and State funding make it less arduous. Therefore, it is also necessary to have a roadmap and take appropriate steps to improve many more universities from Vietnam to become prestigious regional universities and internationally recognised universities.

Vietnam can start with research universities to succeed in transitioning towards a world-class university or regionally recognised University.

The "research university" is an "old and new" concept because the international community has long been interested in this. We are now posing the question to whether or not the intention of building research universities is necessary, as it is also challenging to understand how to apply this concept to the Vietnamese reality.

So the next step is to identify what characteristics a research university has, what criteria are used to evaluate it, what advantages and disadvantages exist in the construction of a research university. What is the purpose of a research university for Vietnam? What is its mission and vision? Which one among the hundreds of universities can get State funding? What are the objectives it is serving: Is it pure scientific research for academic purpose, or does it suit societal needs?

Recently, an international consortium of universities has issued a manifesto called the HEFEI Statement of the Ten Characteristics of Research Universities that raised up some debates among international academia during a conference on Higher education in Tokyo (2013).

However, the author argues that as much as international experience is essential and valuable to the Vietnamese universities at this point of

time, on the other hand, it is elementary to stick to the reality of our country for a reasonable solution that suits the economics of the country.

15.3 Governance of HEI in Vietnam

University governance is a very new concept for Vietnam because universities were fully managed under state-run planning and governed by line ministries until now. The administration was purely *administrative*. With the present development needs, governance rules should be based on more autonomy and self-determination to build capacity and develop more competitiveness. However, it remains within the operating framework of the law. University administration wants to innovate and include the administration of international players.

15.4 Conclusion

In short, the authors believe there is no general formula or miracle prescription to create high-class universities. It is a matter linked to the context of each country and the conditions of each region. Depending on the context, the University shall adapt to combine tradition and modernity and find a specific direction and a separate path for each unit while integrating values and methods learned from the world experience in education. In short, the University, including national universities and key universities alike, shall strive to recruit experts and talents and apply new management techniques in human resource management and governance accordingly to adopt international methods of government that are deemed suitable for the Vietnam context.

As the Vietnam university model has a limited medium and long-term vision at its infant stage, high-quality universities and research universities are not ready to be world-class. However, some universities already focus on research, technology, or resource training. Whatever the specialisations are, these units will concentrate on social, spiritual

resources associated with the school's participation in solving social problems and achieving sustainable development. The strategic orientation is still the teacher and the student at the centre. Through a step-by-step quality framework based on the realities of Vietnam, the University shall find abundant resources and manage them well through a good framework of governance to carry out the mission at hand.

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REFLECTING ON THE QUALITY OF VIETNAMESE HIGHER EDUCATION

Nguyễn Hồng Nga

Summary

This article discusses the objectives of higher education in Vietnam to improve the quality of teaching and research to meet the Industrial Revolution 4.0[22]. Among the objectives of higher education in Vietnam, the article discusses the importance of training high level human resources with qualities and competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, effective communication; based on the principles of academic freedom.

Keywords: Vietnam, modernisation, education, universities, higher education, critical thinking, human resources development, productivity, regional, international, technological, IR 4.0, resources, management.

Introduction

Currently, the quality of higher education in Vietnam is the concern of the whole society. However, there was no mention of any Vietnamese university in leading universities globally and in Asia until recently.

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[22] Nguyễn Hồng Nga, Về mục tiêu của giáo dục đại học ở Việt Nam, Tạp chí của Trường Đại học Sư phạm Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh; ISSNN 1859-3100. English translation of excerpts by Anh Tho Andres (2021).

According to the Asia University Quality Ranking 2018 by Times Higher Education, Vietnam did not have any representative on their list of candidates. On the other hand, QS World Rankings 2020, published by British Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) attributed Vietnam National University of Ho Chi Minh City to the group 701-750 and Hanoi National University the group 801-1000 on their ranking list. Higher education institutions in Vietnam received this result with different attitudes, but it was certainly not a piece of good news for higher education institutions in Vietnam.

Indeed, Higher education institutions (HEI) in Vietnam currently face many obstacles that affect the output quality of Vietnamese universities. One of the causes identified is that the number of universities has been increasing at high speed, while teaching resources do not meet both quantity and quality teaching standards.

According to the 2018 Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) Statistics Report, the percentage of teaching qualifications is not proportional among faculty, with 1/5 of them holding a doctoral degree, 3/5 a master's degree, and less than 1/5 holding a professor or associate professor chair. So, out of a total of 72,792 new university lecturers, there were 16,514 doctorates (22.69%), 43,127 masters (59.27%) and 4687 professors and associate professors (6.44%). Consequently, the staff planning for universities and colleges in Vietnam for the period 2006-2020 required that by 2015, at least 50% of lecturers must hold a doctorate.

Another cause that significantly affects Vietnamese universities' output quality is the lack of facilities for teaching and low pay of lecturers, along with the ambitious setting of higher education objectives. However, the higher education goals set by the Law on Higher Education are still quite general and not fully adapted to the needs of Higher Education in the era of IR 4.0.

The question here is: What goals should Vietnamese HEI set to catch up with other universities, at least starting with Asian universities, before going global.

Since the desire to progress is there, with appropriate support in modern teaching facilities, along with the right consciousness and attitude of each member of the whole society, Vietnamese HEI will achieve the quality of higher education, both at the regional and global levels.

16.1 Overview of Higher Education Institutions in Vietnam

Vietnamese people often boast about having had their "first university" nearly a thousand years ago. King Ly Nhan Tong founded the Temple of Literature or 'Quoc Tu Giam' in 1076, teaching Chinese classical literature and Confucian studies to prepare future mandarins to rule the country and the people. However, there was no life skills or business studies in particular. The modern university started with the French colonial period by establishing the University of Indochina in 1907. French universities during this period focused on training officials rather than doing scientific research.

Before Doi Moi (1986), there were only 96 universities and colleges in the whole country, of which 32 were universities. By the end of 2018, there were 235 universities and special academies in Vietnam. This number includes 170 public schools, 60 private schools, five foreign-owned schools, 37 scientific research institutes for doctoral training, 33 pedagogical colleges, and two pedagogical intermediate schools.

So, after 30 years of renovation, the number of universities has increased by sevenfold, from 32 to 235. In 1986, the ratio of student/faculty was 4.4/1, now in 2018, after 30 years of development, the proportion of student/faculty was 24.28/1, a five-fold increase. These numbers show that Vietnamese universities are growing too fast, with

each year enrolling more than 400,000 students and graduating more than 300,000 students. Moreover, the number of doctorate holders is less than 23%, and the number of professors and associate professors is less than 7% of the total faculty.

Despite this development, the quality of training for undergraduate and postgraduate pathways (master's and doctorate) still does not reach regional and international standards.

16.2 Reflecting on Learning Outcomes at HEI Level

Art. 5, Vietnam Law on Higher Education states two main missions of higher education institutions (HEI) which consist of:

(1) Training human resources, improving people's knowledge, fostering talents; scientific and technological research to create knowledge and new products, serving the requirements of socio-economic development, ensuring national defence and security and international integration;

(2) Training learners with political and ethical qualities; have knowledge, professional practice skills, scientific and technological research and development capacity commensurate with the training level; to have a healthy body; have creative ability and professional responsibility, adapt to the working environment; conscious of serving the people.

Thus, higher education in Vietnam emphasises the training of human resources with sufficient knowledge, skills and required ethical qualities. However, with the development of technology in the era of industrial revolution 4.0, it is necessary to add to the objectives a number of goals to achieve modernity, generality and integration.

Learning objectives include the ability to think critically and creatively; to have a rich and liberal imagination; to have a universal general knowledge; to benefit from a free academic environment; to act as an expert who can analyse meticulously data, have interest for quality

and an acute sense for the details; to have a great passion for business and entrepreneurship, being able to solve problems creatively and effectively, and being able to communicate effectively orally and in writing. Furthermore, learners shall have a good command of a foreign language and ability to do scientific research, and be prepared for self-study and adopt a lifelong and sustaining kind and socially responsible attitude.

In this article, we want to emphasize the training of highly qualified human resources with core qualities and competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, rich imagination, enhanced with academic freedom apart from practical oral and writing skills required in tertiary education.

The learning outcomes for training human resources include three aspects, as shown below.

1. *Critical thinking, which supports problem-solving skills.*

Many famous authors such as Wagner and Einstein can be quoted to support this competence's definition.

According to Tony Wagner (2008), modern workers need seven survival skills for the 21st century, of which "critical thinking and problem-solving" are essential skills.

According to Albert Einstein, asking good questions is an essential element of the two skills of critical thinking and practical problem-solving. Therefore, he recommended that young people learn how to ask questions, develop the ability to grasp problems and ask good questions for the sake of discussion and inquire thoroughly on the nature of things and phenomena. And even though Socrates had recognized the existence of critical thinking two thousand years ago, John Dewey made this concept more popular by considering that "Critical thinking is a category of reasoning that is open and unrestricted, the number of solutions is unlimited. Critical thinking includes constructing conditions, opinions and right ideas to conclude rightly" (Dewey, 2008). Other

authors such as Marx also agreed that critical thinking is essential for a developing society in general and individuals in particular because knowledge always differs, and society needs personal and collective wisdom to function efficiently.

Critical thinking skills include the ability to apply abstract knowledge to solve problems most effectively, and at the same time, deploy and implement effective solutions. It is the ability to think broadly and deeply. More than 90% of professors in the US believe that improving critical thinking is the essential goal of student education (Rhodes, 2009, p.133).

In short, to solve a problem, there must be different opinions and ideas to come up with optimal solutions.

2. Having a rich imagination

Imagination enables people to construct intellectual visions of a new thing, a new world, sustaining the joy of living by suggesting good and reasonable goals. "Youth is full of imagination, and if the imagination is reinforced by discipline, this energy of the Imagination can be maintained for most of life. The tragedy of the world is that the imaginative people have only sketchy experience, and the rich have poor imagination. Fools act on imagination without knowledge; People who are not stupid act on knowledge and have no imagination.

The mission of a university is to bring together imagination and experience. The justification for a university is that it maintains the connection between the intellect and the joy of life, by uniting the young and the old in an imaginative creative interest in learning" (Whitehead, 2017).

Having a good imagination, employees will have high creativity and the ability to apply their ideas to life. For Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited, but imagination holds the whole world in its hands, promoting progress, producing evolution" (Einstein, 1931, p.66).

As for JK Rowling, Author of Harry Potter: "Imagination is not only the human ability to imagine things that are not real, it is also the source of all invention and creation. We don't need magic to change the world. We have enough power, the power to imagine better things! (Rowling, 2008).

When we read fairy tales, listen to music, watch movies, and play video games, it is to exercise our ability to think abstractly, be creative, and use resources most effectively to make the world around us. The goal of universities is to create academics who can imaginatively treat knowledge. Quoting once more Einstein: "Knowledge is limited, but Imagination surrounds the world. The only problem is: how many people know how to awaken and use the power of the imagination? A rich imagination will make people who have the heart and talent to reach far, reach high, and have visions ahead of their time". (Einstein, 1931).

3. *The pursuit of academic freedom & academic obligation*

The term "academic freedom" appeared in early 20C. It was both important and meant to protect university professors and higher education institutions from political interference. It still provides exceptional protection for unorthodox concepts and unconventional behaviour in academic settings.

According to Amartya Sen, who received the Nobel Award, "individual freedom is the basic foundation of development". He distinguishes two reasons for supporting personal freedom:

The first level is basic individual rights, considered paramount. The success of a society should be judged primarily by the essential freedoms enjoyed by its members. These rights are related to the assessment of the freedoms of the members of society, and therefore are important to the evaluation of the development of the society.

The second reason to think that essential liberties are paramount is that freedom is also a significant determinant of individual initiative, social efficiency and effectiveness. Greater freedom enhances people's

ability to help themselves and influence the world, central to development. (Sen, 2002).

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines academic freedom as "the freedom of teachers and learners to teach, learn, explore knowledge and research without unreasonable interference or limitation of law, regulation or public pressure". Thus, academic freedom involves teaching, research, speaking, discussion and expression without censorship or imposition on professional issues or on the problems of the university itself. History shows that academic freedom, freedom in the lecture hall, in the laboratory, and the publication of research and theoretical results is pivotal to creating a research culture, creating environments that stimulate the imagination.

According to economists, about 80% of inventions are created at universities and research institutes of universities, where leading scientists work. If Universities have two main functions that consist of spreading knowledge and creating knowledge for mankind, academic freedom will make universities' research, teaching and social criticism more efficient and serviceable.

As to academic obligation, university graduates and scholars are bound to the obligation to research and innovate, to publish scientific works, to speak out the truth, to reach out to the public and make a change for the world to become better and more civilized.

16.3 Reflecting on the Quality of Teachers

To fulfil the above objectives, the primary and most crucial factor of the university mission is the quality of the teaching staff in universities. University lecturers must have the same specific competencies and grades as the nine basic principles developed by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and gain the approval of those who achieve it.

These are:

- University lecturers must be capable of presenting teaching content;
- University lecturers shall have pedagogical capacity;
- University lecturers need to know and effectively handle sensitive topics;
- University lecturers need to pay attention to the development of students;
- University lecturers must care and skilfully handle relationships with students;
- University lecturers respect their colleagues;
- University lecturers need to know and care about confidentiality issues;
- University lecturers need to know/evaluate students appropriately;
- University lecturers need to respect the school.

In some advanced countries, university lecturers shall take an oath and recite the Socratic Oath:

"I swear to devote myself to the advancement and expansion of knowledge, realizing that I have an obligation to the students with the field of expertise, with fellow faculty members, with the university, and with the public… This oath is voluntarily taken by me and is upheld with the awareness that the privilege of academic freedom is reserved, for I go hand in hand with a duty of professional responsibility to honour and serve my students, my discipline, my profession, my colleagues, my university, and the wider society." (Rhodes, 2009, p.373-376).

In Vietnam, taking an oath is difficult, so university lecturers need to be highly aware of the qualities and competencies of teachers, acknowledging that teaching and research, serving the society and the community is a significant meaning. A noble service implies the people's trust and must be devoted to helping that noble cause.

Conclusion

Higher education today plays a crucial role in shaping the world in general and people in particular. To achieve excellent output quality, universities must determine output standards following the new trends and needs and, importantly, train human resources to devote and dedicate themselves to human resources.

A sustainable educational policy should be concentrating on solving economic and social issues on a global scale. Disciplines related to science, technology and innovation are essential topics of study to allow change and shape the future with a competent and competitive workforce. Vietnamese Universities should equip students with bilingual curricula, media literacy, and critical thinking skills to integrate into international education. The solution proposed is to train high school and primary teachers with learning resources through e-learning capacity training.

An institutional framework that adapts to the IR 4.0 era will allow a higher performance of the economy with the more active participation of the private sector and the international community. Globally speaking, the performance of an economy is subject to comparison against other countries with similar conditions for development through indices such as the human development index (HDI), the gross domestic product (GDP), the gross national product per capita index (GNP), and many others. In particular, the human development index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development such as long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, having a decent standard of living on a given segmentation of survey.

Therefore, the role of the Vietnamese University is to equip future leaders with the creativity, innovation, and leadership skills to build up human resources that are more competent across all sectors of the national economy. The workforce training should include skill development and professional codes of conduct that apply to the

industrial sectors. English and Media literacy should be the foundation in all professional training; managers and business owners should benefit from training in management skills and knowledge to operate in a global business environment.

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17

EDITOR'S TAKEAWAYS: OVERCOMING THE AFTERMATHS OF WARS

Anh Tho Andres

Fifty years have passed since the country's reunification was promulgated in 1976[23]. However, the cultural and political divide due to ideological partisanship and geographical differences persists until today. Some portion of the population is still denied fundamental rights, while others are fleeing the country to avoid political and religious persecution. The post-war reconciliation had never taken place, and the sacrifices of over six million were forgotten in the process.

Although the DOI MOI policy had brought some improvements in the life of the pre-war period population in the Northern capital and to a smaller elite in the South, the majority of the people in rural areas still suffer from poor infrastructure and lack of health and facilities with extremely harsh living conditions. To maintain economic growth for a population nearing one hundred million, of which over fifty per cent in active working capacity, the State needs a solid strategy for sustainable development. A sound reform in education is also necessary to prepare this same workforce to be more productive facing global competition. But more importantly, the Vietnamese people, as a nation, should learn

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[23] Volume editor's takeaway notes to the third section of this book.

how to live together, looking towards one same direction to build a future together, in peace and contentment.

To understand how Vietnamese people relate to war, one should consider reading more literature and memoirs on the Indo-China War period, which lasted for over 30 years from 1945 to 1975.

Two main turning points brought significant changes in the contemporary history of Vietnam: 1954 marked a significant turning point in modern Vietnamese history by dividing the country into the socialist North and the liberal South; 1975 marked another critical turning point in the political direction and the change of life of at least fifty million Vietnamese citizens with the victory of the North over the South, as a result of an abrupt withdrawal of American troops following the normalisation of Sino-American relations under the presidency of Nixon.

On the level of international relations, 1992 marked an essential step for the destiny of the entire Vietnamese economy with the normalisation of Sino-Vietnamese relations, followed by the lifting of the American embargo in 1995 after the normalisation of American-Vietnamese relations.

Post-Vietnam War literature often combined with conspiracy theories is a trend in modern views on war. Reading Wallerstein and Mahan Dependency theories might help explain the relationship between the superpowers (America, Soviet Union, China, France) and Vietnam's role in the East-West confrontation. The country has been the confrontation ground of the great economic powers and a testing ground for war techniques and materials for over 30 years. Reading Vietnamese literature is like conversing with past generations of men throughout history with long periods of wars and short periods of peace. The Vietnamese soul is never at peace, because *peace never came*. The peace break was a period to prepare for the next war, either in the form of an

overthrow of the reigning king, a resistance war, a nationalist war, an anti-imperialist war, or an ideological war.

The ideological war seems to last the longest. Starting from within the resistance movement during the French domination, new ideas imported from the West had ingrained to the minds of the former peasants that social justice could be gained from the overthrow of a corrupt system of exploitation by greedy imperialists and given back to the people, together with the sovereignty of the Kingdom. Unfortunately, the King never benefits from that regained sovereignty, nor the vassals of his Kingdom. Instead, the people of Vietnam have since witnessed numerous changes that forever affected the fragile peaceful relationship between the Northern and the Southern parts of the country.

The divide had already existed during the Nguyen extermination conquests of the Cham and Khmer kingdoms. However, it worsened due to the French "divide and reign" colonial politics with the three 'ky' and the Indochina Alliance. Whatever the benefits the modernisation has brought through the civilising mission of some good intentions, colonialism did not appeal to the Confucian-based elites or the masses of feudal Vietnam. Riding on these premises, the thirty-year long Indochina War did not bring peace to the country.

In this introductory volume, we have examined issues linked to human resources development that hinder economic growth, such as the low labour productivity of Vietnamese workers, possibly linked to agricultural-based activities; the lack of IT competence in educational technology, possibly linked to poor IT infrastructure on educational technologies; the inadequate education in business management, possibly linked to insufficient educational learning resources; and last but not least, the lack of learning material in humanities studies, especially in philosophy, and applied ethics in the context of Vietnam, possibly linked to sources of material in the Vietnamese language due to

the limitations mentioned above. In addition, to attract foreign investors and maintaining good trade relations with the international community, Vietnam must also abide to international business and corporate governance practices. In the same way, Vietnam Education policy shall also consider following UNESCO guidelines to align to international educational standards.

In light of the above, the education sector needs to integrate the necessary learning resources that help understand Vietnam as an object of study with objectivity and facts linked to the Vietnamese reality. Acquiring general knowledge of Vietnam as a country and an economy with its specific history, geography, natural resources, politics and environment, and reading Vietnamese philosophy and literature will help learners –from inside and outside Vietnam– understand the spirit of Vietnam and the shared values acquired through times and space under the lens of education.

In reflecting on the Vietnam Hoc project, we propose to explore all aspects that combine providing general knowledge on the country based on identified issues and linking it to the mission of Vietnamese universities and the quality of teachers. The objective of the Vietnam Hoc Institute exploration work is to build a study program on Vietnam that allows a better understanding of the country –as a member of the ASEAN Community, and as a member of the United Nations. Through this understanding, students of Vietnamese origin will be equipped with the knowledge of their own cultural identity in their new role as global citizens. Non-Vietnamese speakers will be initiated to the Vietnamese perspectives on global issues of current concerns.

Vietnamese students need to face new challenges of an international competitive workplace as the global gap is closing with IR 4.0. They need to answer questions such as: How does change affect our life, our career, our family settings, our worldview, and even our relationship with each other? How do changes influence the development course in

Vietnam as a nation and Vietnamese people with a sense of belonging and sharing collective karma? How do we, as Vietnamese, cope with change and move on with brighter perspectives, using our values and cultural heritage?

Answering these questions may be possible with the studies of international relations (IR) discipline, an essential branch of Social Science. Its scope is about the complex relations among sovereign states of the World. IR studies include many subjects such as international and regional peace and security, international organisations, nuclear proliferation, globalisation, human rights, economic development, intervention, international financial relations, and international trade relations. As this definition fits well with what Vietnam Hoc will achieve, we will follow the structure of this discipline as guidance.

As with other countries with a complex history due to interactions on both the local context as well as external factors, the study of Vietnam should be accompanied with understanding geopolitical factors between superpowers as well as knowledge on the inherent potential of Vietnamese, both inside and outside the country. In our view, exciting topics of research such as issues on post-communism property rights, corporate social responsibility and role of the State in the new world order are themes that are worth exploring. Critical issues in dependency theories with focus on East Asia are themes that deserve more in-depth research and publications on this theme are still lacking the "Vietnamese" components in the repertory.

Indeed, the knowledge gap between what is available about Vietnam Studies and what is required to know about Vietnam shows that our efforts to build up a Vietnam Hoc curriculum is justified. As this gap is not merely a question of language but a philosophical gap that needs to process along with intercultural differences, the Vietnam Hoc Institute work will hopefully provide a platform to build on the knowledge required to fill this gap.

For Vietnamese scholars, one important gap still needs to be filled: the integration of Vietnamese foreign-based scholars into the mainstream education of Vietnam. Although there have been some efforts to recognise past accomplishments of the Southern Vietnamese scholars in the educational system, the legacy of their work is still not known to the younger generations or to the international community. Recognising their rights to be part of the shared cultural legacy of Vietnam is the start of the reconciliation for peace and integration. Furthermore, Integrating Vietnamese people of all walks of life, regardless of their religious or political beliefs, into the post-war reconciliation process would be the ultimate act of peace that Vietnam would have offered to the Peace Movement in the World of today.

End of volume one.

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OUTLOOK VOL. II

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Outlook of the content of the Volume II:

Following Volume I, the logic and organisation of the second volume starts with three sections (IV-VI):

Section IV discusses how Vietnamese culture has evolved throughout many episodes of the country's transformation from a dependency status to a sovereign entity. The texts offered in this section are about changes in the educational and cultural environment from a Confucian mindset to a modern global citizenship awareness.

Section V reflects how Vietnamese education can benefit from the international community by aligning with international standards. The texts offered in this section stress the importance of norms and standards in quality education.

Section VI offers to explore learning experiences of countries that have accomplished a high level of HDI (Human Development Index) and whose educational standards are worldwide recognised. The texts

presented are reflections of international authors who support values-based education as part of the mission of Universities in the new context.

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Global Series

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Anh Tho Andres has extensive experience as a multi-lingual translator and interpreter, specialising in business and legal matters in Vietnam, Singapore, and Switzerland courts. Since 1990, she has actively participated in Vietnam's development, navigating between Singapore, Switzerland, and her homeland. In 2018, she received her doctoral degree at UPEC (Paris-Est University) on the Vietnamese restructuring process. Currently, she is Vice-President of Vietnam Hoc Institute, based in Geneva.

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