

INFORMATION OF SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

Workshop of “Central Sea Culture in Contemporary Society”

On October 16th, 2017 in Da Nang, Institute of Cultural Studies (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) held a workshop of *Central Sea Culture in Contemporary Society* that attended by numerous domestic and international cultural researchers.

The delegates confirmed that as a sea nation, Vietnam early formed a sea culture. From legends about sea to sea culture substratum, from marine exploitation tradition to sea-oriented thinking, from marine power to marine trade development potentials, etc. all showed that our people were early engaged in the sea, early had sea-oriented thinking and showed the ability to exploit the sea, to be a master of the sea. The Central Sea kept many cultural values not only of Vietnam, but also of the mankind. Cultural and natural heritage in the Central sea and islands not only played a significant role in demonstrating the presence, exploitation, construction and fighting for protection of sea and islands by our forefather of all generations but also contained miraculous beautiful features, historic values, natural ecosystem and biodiversity, humanity. The workshop aimed to orient and develop policies to develop economy and resources in the Central sea through the long-standing cultural institutions of the region.

The workshop was divided into three sub-committees.

At sub-committee 1 (*Vietnamese Sea Culture Study Stage*), the reports focused

on the overview of the topics in sea culture research, marine anthropological studies, and studies on creeds of the inhabitants in the Central Vietnam sea, etc.

At sub-committee 2 (*Central Sea Culture and Contemporary Issues*), the reports mentioned the livelihoods of Central Coast residents, changes in their livelihoods, the real situation of fishermen's leave from the sea, the real situation of developing a number of traditional jobs, along with the impacts on the community's life and culture, and simultaneously analyzed the real situation of the Central region sea culture preservation and planning issues; empirical studies of some countries on sea culture heritage management and promotion; the current situation of sea tourism exploitation in some Central region provinces; etc.

As for sub-committee 3 (*Sea and the Central Region sea culture from a historical perspective*), the reports intensively investigated the creeds of the residents here; focused on clarifying Vietnam's sovereignty and sea resource protection policies in history; etc.

Due to a long pause in familiar approaches, frequent use of descriptive and listing methods, and sometimes content with secondary data, the studies on Vietnam sea culture were currently at a risk of discontinuation. Therefore, it was necessary to develop and update more theories of study on sea culturology, ocean culture, fishery anthropology, maritime anthropology, fishing village

anthropology, ocean anthropology, etc. ; at the same time, there should be elaborate and updated surveys about the real situation of sea culture life. According to the delegates, the study on sea culture in Vietnam had many gaps. Sea culture researchers had a great responsibility for identifying sea culture, pointing out barriers in traditional sea culture, pointing out challenges facing sea culture subjects in shaping a cultural identity in order to assert the sea culture of a sea nation had so far been facing many challenges in its history.

PHẠM NGUYỄN

International Workshop of “Improving Vietnamese Labor Force Quality in the Context of Implementing the Vietnam - European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement”

On October 25th, 2017 in Hanoi, Vietnam Institute of Economics (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) in collaboration with Vietnam Konard Adenauer Stiftung Institute organized an international workshop titled “Improving Vietnamese labor force quality in the context of implementing the Vietnam-European Union (EU) free trade agreement”. The workshop attracted a large number of attendees from some scientific research institutions, policy-making agencies in Vietnam and some international organizations in Vietnam.

The Vietnam - European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA) is a new generation FTA between Vietnam and 28 EU member countries, with the widest range of commitments in Vietnam so far. The major areas of commitments in EVFTA

include: Trade in goods; Rules of origin; Customs and trade facilitation; Sanitary and phytosanitary measures; Technical barriers to trade; Trade remedies; Trade in Services; Investment; Competitiveness; State-owned enterprises; Government procurement; Intellectual Property; Sustainable Development; Legal issues; Cooperation and capacity building. EVFTA is expected to come into effect in 2018, to bring many advantages in employment, market and technology transfer for Vietnam. The workshop took place in two sessions, focused on analyzing the new context from the EU/ Germany's perspective; the impacts on, issues of and policy implications for Vietnam; the responses to the new generation EU FTA (Korean experience and policy suggestions for Vietnam); the roles of multinational companies in Vietnamese labor force training; the case of Vietnam Samsung Electronics; Vietnamese labor force development in the context of EVFTA; FDI and labor productivity growth in Vietnam; Vietnamese workers and trade unions in the new context; enterprises and labor issues before the threshold of EVFTA, etc.

At the workshop, the experts and delegates discussed and exchanged views on and assessed the trade relations between Vietnam and EU, especially the opportunities and challenges set out in bilateral relations. The delegates said that the Vietnam - EU trade relations were highly complementary, facilitated Vietnam's promotion of comparative advantages in terms of natural resources, cheap and low skilled labor. In order

to exploit the comparative advantages, create a long-term competitive advantage, develop reasonable goods structure and improve benefits and reduce losses during FTA implementation, it is required to build a strategy for developing labor force in a reasonable way. Accordingly, Vietnam needs to focus on enhancing the quality of its workforce to meet EU requirements and standards, maximizing opportunities and mitigating possible negative impacts during EVFTA implementation.

The delegates confirmed that the Vietnamese workforce is plentiful but their quality is low. Vietnam lacks skilled labor, has low labor productivity and relatively low levels of foreign language proficiency among Vietnamese workers compared with other countries in the same region. The delegates provided some recommendations and policy suggestions for Vietnam to improve the quality of Vietnam's labor force in the context of Vietnam's participation in EVFTA.

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Workshop of “Culture and Development: Vietnamese issues and the world's experience”

On December 12th, 2017, in Hanoi, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) in collaboration with the Central Theoretical Council of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam organized a scientific workshop titled “Culture and Development: Vietnam's issues and the world's experience”. The workshop aimed at identifying and clarifying theoretical and practical issues on the relationship between culture and development; the

core role of culture in the sustainable development process. Sustainable development does not cause the birth of social issues. Development is in company with national independence and sovereignty protection. The workshop had a great attendance of the participants from the VASS and the Central Theoretical Council, specialists and researchers from many state management agencies and scientific institutes.

From the view of world community, Vietnamese culture has got positive changes both in people consciousness and practice. The fact that the culture is the spiritual base of the society, the target of the society and the internal force pushing the society forwards, has been acknowledged by the Party and the State. This has facilitated the national culture to prosper, promoting traditional values. These processes have been demonstrated evidently by 30 years since Vietnam joined the World Decade for Cultural Development (1986 - 1997). So far, the traditional culture has been preserved and fundamentally restored, tangible and intangible cultural values have been defined and assessed in accordance with international standards, many cultural activities have been modernized and recognized by international communities, namely increasingly expanded cultural exchange and acculturation; administrative culture, behaviour culture, integration culture, etc. reaching the commonly shared culture of the region and the world to a greater extent.

At the same time, the Vietnamese cultural life is progressively diversified. Numerous

national traditional values have been promoted and several cultural and ethic standards have been established. Literature and art works are increasingly varied and diversified. Cultural movements and activities have achieved definite and practical results. Socialization is more and more expanded, which significantly contributes to build cultural institutions. Values and characters, including local and ethnic identities, have been intensely studied and inspired objective humanity meanings of the existence of Vietnamese ethnic groups in an independent and united nation.

As a matter of fact, the market economy and globalization process have promoted many development opportunities for Vietnam, however, they've also brought out many social issues such as corruption, moral degradation, increasing crime rate as well as social and cultural standard deviance.

Culture and development have a close interrelationship. So does on one hand, development require individuals and social organizations to seriously give up bad habits to preserve true worth of man. The society, once well developed, "fake values" would give place to the real ones, the deception would be dominated by the kindness and honesty. On the other hand, there must be a breakthrough in cultural development in the next renewal period, otherwise, the cultural movement shall be less and less, and cultural degradation is unavoidable.

To make the culture an internal force for the nation's fast and sustainable growth, it's necessary that the Communist Party

and the State should enforce their own development values as well as those of the whole political system. Hence, the Communist Party and the State must firmly fight against corruption, create an effective controlling power mechanism, resolutely resist the degradation in political thought and lifestyle, build the value of trust and sustainable 'credibility' for the society. Particularly, it's crucial to comprehensively perform training and propaganda; legal, economic, social ethic measures in company to effectively promote the roles of the Party, the State, social subjects as well as the whole society. It shall be a base to establish and develop human values and cultural and social values, satisfying the requirements of the fast and complicated changes of the modern world. It's important to create a good environment to establish and affirm the democratic values, the community association and the social obligations to boost the fast and sustainable development.

Participants in the workshop also shared their knowledge of some countries' experience in the use of culture as a tool to build their social development theories.

TRAN AN

Workshop of "Enhancing Social Inclusion in Vietnam"

On December 12th, 2017, in Hanoi, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) in collaboration with the National Commission for UNESCO organized a workshop on "Enhancing social inclusion in Vietnam" within the framework of the UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations Program (MOST). The

workshop has drawn the attention of several specialists and scholars inside and outside the country.

Over 30 years of “Doi moi” (Renovation), Vietnam has incessantly improved the law and policies in the social field and implemented social policies taking care of citizens, this created dynamics to the construction and the defense of the nation. To maintain the sustainable developmental speed, we should take priorities on enhancing the effectiveness of social inclusion as central to a suitable management policy for the social transformation.

At the workshop, most reports focused on describing the current situation of social services in Vietnam; analysing the characteristics, contents, the approach level and social service management in fields of education, employment, safety, health, housing, law... These papers also intensively discussed the inclusive level of basic social service in Vietnam; opportunity to go to school under the socialist-oriented market economy and educational innovation; inclusive business and the matters of employment creation and poverty reduction; the role of the State and the market in delivering services of public benefit to citizens; and social housing for low income persons.

The workshop included a general evaluation of basic social services in Vietnam that reaches the inclusive level. They are the net enrolment rate of all levels; the percentage of citizens having health insurance; the percentage of households having solid and semi-solid houses; the percentage of households accessing clean water in

rural areas; the percentage of households having a television. In addition, these services can be assessed by the data on the multidimensional poverty index; however, there are no national data because of the difference in terms of local regions, levels and vulnerable target groups.

The workshop also emphasized that the important achievement of basic and comprehensive innovation of education and training is to provide opportunities to go to school for all social groups in nation-wide urban and rural areas. This must be kept executing to ensure the social progress and justice in delivering social services in general and education in particular. Although the inclusive business model is still new in Vietnam, as a matter of fact, some business models represent the “inclusion”, in which there is a co-ordination between the corporations and low income persons (take the co-ordination model between the Vinamilk Company with hundreds of households breeding dairy cattle as example). In the coming years, the development of inclusive business models will have a positive impact on employment creation and sustainable poverty reduction.

Ideas, exchanges and discussions on current outstanding matters in delivering social services and suggestions for policy interference and adjustments to enhance the coverage degree and social service quality shall partly help the policy makers to implement the target of further improving the inclusive services in Vietnam.

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