

New Viewpoints on Cultural Issues in Documents of the 13th National Party Congress of Vietnam

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Abstract: *To inspire a shared vision of a prosperous, happy and high-income developed country by 2045, it is necessary to mobilize comprehensive national strength and creativeness for development, of which cultural and human resources play crucial roles. The 13th National Party Congress of Vietnam has introduced new viewpoints of promoting cultural values and strength of the Vietnamese people.*

Keywords: Values, Cultural Values, Strength of the Vietnamese People, the 13th National Party Congress, Vietnam

1. Introduction

After 35 years of reforms (Doi Moi) and 30 years of execution of the Platform for National Development in the Transition to Socialism, Vietnam's principal ideology of continuous reforms and construction of socialism have been clearly shaped and steadily implemented. The country has attained remarkable achievements and more comprehensive development than in the ante-Doi Moi era. Vietnam now aims to become a modernized and industrialized country by 2030 and a prosperous and developed country by 2045. In order to realize the aspiration, it is imperative to mobilize inclusive strength and resources for national development, for which cultural and human resources have a critical role to play. The 13th

National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) thereby has introduced new philosophies in regard of promoting Vietnamese values of culture and humanity in the coming time.

2. Promoting Vietnamese cultural values

The 11th Central Committee's political report at the 12th National Congress set out the orientations and tasks for cultural building and developing culture and values of humanity (CPV, 2016: 123). At the 13th National Congress, the political report prepared by the 12th Central Committee emphasized further the tasks of building and promoting the values of Vietnamese culture and humanity (CPV, 2021: 143). Thus, there has been an adjustment, not just in terms of the words used, "promoting" instead of "developing", but

as well ideological views towards cultural development. The documents at the 13th National Congress aim for the promotion of cultural values and Vietnamese core humanities, which is consistent with the current requirements of strengthening and purifying the Party's and political systems; advocating the aspiration to develop the country; bringing into play the will and strength of national unity; fostering the comprehensive and synchronous innovations; building and defending the Fatherland; maintaining peace and stability; and striving to advance Vietnam to a developed socialist country by the middle of the 21st century (CPV, 2021).

In the previous congresses, the missions of building and developing culture were aimed for preserving and disseminating traditional values and unique national identities while at the same time welcoming the cultural quintessence in the world. They also targeted a revival of core values of humanity against the degradation of social morality. In this sense, cultural issues were comprehended not only as a moral foundation but a target and driving force of development. By the 13th National Congress, the CPV's awareness of culture became even more comprehensive and profound, by looking at the role and functions of culture from different perspectives and in a close relation to the politics, economy, society, and human development.

Culture in association with the economy is considered an endogenous resource and a "soft power"¹ to promote the country's rapid and sustainable development. Promoting

cultural resources are also of particular importance under the circumstance of exhausting the country's restricted natural resources. Culture is seen as renewable and constantly innovative resources that contain high degree of intellectual content. These rich resources of Vietnam have been developed and accumulated throughout the country's longstanding history.

In recent years, the Party and the government of Vietnam have strived to increase the "soft power" by incorporating cultural issues into economic development, particularly in sectors such as tourism and services. The 13th Congress continued motivating the integration of cultural development and tourism in order to make tourism a spearhead economic sector (CPV, 2021: 145-146). The documents of the 13th Congress stressed and affirmed the development philosophy for cultural industry: "Speeding up the development of cultural industry and services in order to take full advantage of Vietnam's soft power on the basis of applying the world's technical and technological achievements" (CPV, 2021: 145). Therefore, it is essential to create a harmonious relationship between cultural and economic development, particularly through the development of tourism and services and promotion of Vietnamese culture through local products of the cultural industry. This is one among the key tasks that needs to be paid attention and carried out effectively in order to increase the soft power in the socioeconomic development strategy.

In addition, the 13th Congress also emphasized its viewpoint of protecting and preserving cultural resources for future generations to ensure the country's long-term, continuous, and sustainable

¹ First ever termed in the documents of the 13th National Congress.

development (CPV, 2021: 146). Making use of cultural resources in general and cultural traditions in particular must follow the principle of harmonization to avoid exhausting the resources for commercial purposes and hasty development. It must be ensured also there is no infringement upon natural landscape, relics and heritages; no encroachment on the environment and ecology.

President Ho Chi Minh when alive had always wished for a more prosperous and thriving Vietnam to be named among the greatest countries in the world¹. The key to the fulfillment of his wish is to provoke the will and promote traditional strengths of Vietnam. This is considered a sacred command and the responsibility of the CPV and the Vietnamese people in the process of developing and defending the nation, which has been also set as one among critical missions of the 13th Congress.

Hence, it is imperative to regard igniting the development aspiration and recognizing the significance of culture as urgent requirements to be satisfied. This would lay a foundation for encouragement of the “dare to dream, dare to do, and dare to take the fall” spirit and trigger patriotism of individual citizens for their actions towards a sustainable development of the country and society. In the current process of industrialization, modernization and international integration, Vietnam’s traditional and cultural power needs to make better use of in order to contribute further to maintaining social stability, regulating social and economic relationships, and

reducing conflicts and disagreements. It is culture that is the spiritual fulcrum for the Vietnamese society and people because of the values of humanity it offers.

In order to promote the eminent role of culture in the coming time, the mission set out at the 13th Congress is to study, define and construct the systems of national values and cultural and behavioral standards in association with the family values in the new era (CPV, 2021: 143). This is a new aspect added in the contents for cultural development. National and cultural values are accumulated over the course of the country’s history. They have been tested and proven with time and are therefore respected by people. Defining and building a system of national and cultural values will contribute to the education and orientation of people’s behaviors towards positivity and progressiveness.

3. Promoting Vietnamese values of humanity

The CPV at the 12th Congress has underlined the mission of developing human resources along with culture. The Resolution of the 9th Plenum of the 12th Central Committee highlighted further the importance of the mission to the country’s sustainable development. Previously, in the political reports submitted at the 10th and 11th congresses, the CPV only stressed on “development of culture and spiritual foundation for the society”² and “attention to cultural development”³. At the 13th Congress, however, promoting the potentials of Vietnamese people is particularly emphasized. Among the resources for development, human resources are the most important: “utilizing

¹ *Ho Chi Minh Complete Volume*, vol. 15, p. 131 and vol. 4, p. 35 (2011).

² Section VII, political report at the 10th Congress.

³ Section VI, political report at the 11th Congress.

best human factors, regarding the people as both resources and the ultimate goal for development; taking Vietnamese people and cultural values as the foundation and endogenous power for sustaining development”¹. Along with the emphasis on provoking the aspiration to develop the country, the new philosophy is to promote the spirit of innovation, creativity, and acumen of the Vietnamese people.

In order to untap the potentials of Vietnamese people, more attention should be paid to promoting the good qualities of the Vietnamese. It is imperative to develop human resources in a comprehensive way, “strongly encourage patriotic spirit, national pride, the aspiration to advance, independence and benevolence, solidarity, and social consensus... and upholding knowledge, responsibility, social ethics, and the rule of law” (CPV, 2021: 221-222). The Resolution of the 9th Plenum of the 11th Central Committee in 2014 on Building and developing Vietnamese culture and people for the country’s sustainable development also underlined the task: “The center of building culture is endorsing the good human qualities and lifestyles together with basic characteristics of patriotism, compassion, gratitude, honesty, solidarity, industriousness, and creativeness” (CPV, 2014: 49). At the 13th Congress, the prominent qualities and characteristics promoted includes “benevolence, lenience, sincerity, reliability, morality, diligence, industriousness, frugality, and creativity” (CPV, 2021: 263).

In the process of building qualified human resources, the 13th Congress specifies key tasks to be performed: “Focusing on education, training, and protection of children and young people; strengthening education of patriotism, national pride, and sense of social responsibility for the youth; fostering education to raise awareness, respect, and observance of laws for the Vietnamese people, especially younger generations”²; “encouraging and facilitating freedom of creativity in economic and social life; promoting the role of families, communities, and societies in forming cultural environments”³; upholding the spirit of being exemplary and pioneering in leadership; creating a healthy cultural space and democratic and humane environment; nurturing the spirit of freedom, creativity and innovation in the interest of national development.

In order to overcome the downsides of the market economy, like the materialistic and money-oriented lifestyle that affects seriously the promotion of social ethnics and good values of humanity, the documents of the 13th Congress provide that it is necessary to “build corporate and business culture”, “set up and follow cultural standards in leadership and management; repel bureaucracy, factionalism, disunity, opportunism, and pragmatism”; “uphold the pioneering and exemplary behaviors of leaders in institution and agencies” (CPV, 2021: 144, 262). The exemplary and pioneering role of cadres, party members, and heads of agencies and business institutions is critical for promoting and inspiring others in spreading good and humane values in communities.

¹ 2021-2030 Socioeconomic Development Strategy, <https://tulieuvankien.dangcongsan.vn/ban-chap-hanh-trung-uong-dang/dai-hoi-dang/lan-thu-xiii/chien-luoc-phan-trien-kinh-te-xa-hoi-10-nam-2021-2030-3671>

² CPV, 2021: 143.

³ CPV, 2021: 263.

4. Conclusion

Both achievements and limitations over the course of more than 35 years of Doi Moi have required the ignition of aspiration for a more prosperous and developed country. This is an urgent task representing the will and the wish of the whole nation in today's circumstances. In order to fulfill this, it is imperative that the CPV, the army and the people together promote the cultural traditions and values as well as the spiritual strength of the Vietnamese people to during the development of the country. Therefore, a full and profound awareness of promoting Vietnamese cultural values and human potentials as mentioned in documents of the 13th National Congress of Communist Party of Vietnam is important and helps contribute to the achievement of goals and tasks set out by the Congress □

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