

POLITICAL ORIENTATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE CULTURE IN THE PERIOD OF 2011 - 2020 THROUGH COMMUNIST PARTY'S LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND SOME RELATED ISSUES

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I. Political orientation for the cultural development in the Platform 2011

1. New features of the Platform 2011

Among the documents for the 11st National Congress of the Party released on 03/17/2011, there is the Platform of Country's Building in the period of transition to Socialism (supplemented and developed in 2011, or *the Platform 2011*). It has added a number of new points in comparison with the Platform 1991, and it could be considered as the first milestone in the history of the Communist Party's viewpoints of culture in the renovating period. With the purpose of transiting to Socialism, the Platform 2011 has adopted and completed the Socialism model in Vietnam from the Platform 1991 through 6 basic features. *The Platform 2011 is the combination of maintaining basic features of advanced culture which is rich in national identity, and adding two new features* which are considered as the most important and influence on

the other ones. They were actually identified in the 6th National Congress (2006), and in the Platform 2011. They were adjusted and strongly reformed as the general feature which reflects the ultimate goal of Socialism in Vietnam. It is "to make people wealthy, to make country strong, to make society democratic, equitable and civilized" and the typical model of the politic in Vietnam is to have a Socialist - oriented State management of people, by people, and all for people which is led by the Communist Party of Vietnam.

On the feature of cultural development, this issue has been mentioned in the Platform 1991 but the formation of concept *building culture is the metal foundation of society* has been reflected on the resolutions since the 9th National Congress (2001). In addition, there is a

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new point of cultural development recorded since the 9th National Congress is *to build culture inside the Party* which is the reflection on understanding and applying of Hồ Chí Minh's strategic thought. It is "culture is not to exclude but should contain both economy and politics (Tô Huy Rúa, Hoàng Chí Bảo and colleagues, 2009, p.215).

2. Eight basic developing directions

Eight basic developing directions have been approved in the 11st National Congress (2011) in which *the third one* has focused on the orientation of the cultural development. It is "to build an advanced Vietnamese culture which is rich in national identity" (the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011, p.26). *The Platform 2011 supplemented that to build human, raise living standards, implement renovation and social equality specifically.* These contents showed the improvement of political orientation of culture in building socialism in Vietnam when political oriented research of culture did not mention.

In the Platform 1991, culture is not a separate chapter when it is mentioned in the Social Affairs chapter. Meanwhile, it is said that 'the time of competition in economy has gone and the most important competition for proving power and sustainment is the competition of culture between countries'. Some people considered the 21st century is the cultural century... The Platform 1991 only mentioned to link the economic development with renovation. Until the Platform 2011, a

system of viewpoints is changed into combining reasonably and firmly the economic and cultural development to *implement renovation and social equality* in every step of development", (Phùng Hữu Phú, 2011). Thus, *the renovation of theoretical thinking in the importance of orientation of cultural development is mentioned more completely in the Platform 2011* than the one in 1991.

Beside that, the political orientation of our Party for cultural development keeps focusing on requirements for solving the crucial relations in order to be the guideline for eight basic developing directions to ensure them on track; especially the relationship between economic and cultural development to implement renovation and social equality (Phùng Hữu Phú, 2011).

3. The renovation in theoretical thinking of our Party on issues of cultural development

From 1987s, our Party had many important changes in thinking about the role of culture to the development of country's socio-economy in the period of transiting to socialism. The Party decided that "Culture is an essential part of spiritual and cultural revolution, powerful motivation and big objective of building socialism"^(*).

(*) Resolution 05-NQ/TW of The Political Bureau (Politburo) of the Central Committee Communist Party of Vietnam on "Renovating and improving the leadership, management of literature, art, and culture, to promote creativity, bringing the development of literature, art, and culture", <http://www.cpv.org.vn/>

From 1993 to 1998, many meetings of Party Central Committee step-by-step identified that “Culture is the spiritual foundation of society, motivation of developing socio-economy, and the objective of socialism^(*)” (...). To build and develop economy must be aimed at culture, to make society equitable and civilized, the comprehensive development of human. Culture is both the result of economy and motivation of economic development, all factors of culture are closely linked with life and social activities in terms of politics, economy, society, regulations, and respecting for the laws,... and turned it into the most important inside-resource for development^(*).

From 2004 to 2006, in the documents of 10th Meeting of 9th Central (2004) and Resolution of the 10th National Congress (2006) affirmed that “culture is one of three fronts of comprehensive and sustainable development of the country to socialism” (Nguyễn Duy Bắc, 2011). This thought is clarified specifically in Resolution of the 8th, 9th, 10th National Congress, conclusions, and the guidance of Central Meeting are generally proved the firm viewpoint of the Party in understanding, evaluating, building and

developing culture, to link closely with strategies of country during the period of transition to socialism. As the result, culture must be the truly motivation and objective of development, and at the same time requiring a mechanism of the policies to ensure the cultural and economic development.

Until the 11st National Congress, *the Platform 2011 defined two basic contents of cultural development*. They are: 1/To build an advanced Vietnamese culture, rich in national identity, comprehensive development, unity in diversity, imbued with the humanity, civilization, advanced, to link culture closely with social life, and to be the spiritual foundation, a great inside resource of development. 2/To inherit and develop valuable traditional customs of ethnic groups in Vietnam, adopt the quintessence of world’s culture, to build a democratic, equitable, civilised society, for the true benefits and human dignity, brainpower, morality, physics and betterment of beauty. The Platform 2011 adjusted “policies” into “development” and changed the word “culture” into “significant orientation of economic, cultural, social, national defence, security, and foreign development”. Orientation of development and the scope of orientation are expanded a lot more than these specific contents in the Platform 1991.

In general, the Party’s viewpoints of building and developing the culture of Vietnam become advanced, rich in national identity are affirmed at the 10th National Congress. Our party decided

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^(*) The 4th Meeting of 7th Party Central Committee, http://dangcongsan.vn/cpv/Modules/News/NewsDetail.aspx?co_id=30656&cn_id=91227

^(*) Resolution of the 5th Meeting of 8th Party Central Committee on building and developing an advanced Vietnamese culture rich in national identity, http://dangcongsan.vn/cpv/Modules/News/NewsDetail.aspx?co_id=30579&cn_id=124001

cultural development is the spiritual foundation of society, to link with, be harmonious, and to balance with economic development duty (central task); to build up and reorganize the Party (a key assignment) are critical conditions for the sustainable and comprehensive development of the country, to make people wealthy, country strong, to make a democratic, equitable, civilized society and keep transitting to socialism firmly. It could be said that in comparison with the Platform 1991, cultural contents are oriented to develop more widely and comprehensively.

II. Political orientation of cultural development in Strategy of developing socio - economy 2011 -2020

1. Generally, with a 10-year-vision, the *Strategy of developing socio - economic 2011-2020* affirmed that Vietnam must basically become an industrial country toward modern direction; stable politic and society, democracy, regulated, harmony, spiritual and material life of people significantly improved, independent, and maintainance of sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity; the position of Vietnam is improved in terms of international relations, to be a solid foundation of development for the next phase.

About the specific objective of cultural development is considered as an important content of general strategy. It is to build an advanced culture rich in national identity, happy family, to complete the development of human in

knowledge, ethnics, physics, brainpower, awareness, and follow regulations.

2. At the 11st National Congress (2011), the strategic viewpoints of development are approved including: 1/ Fast development must link with sustainable development which is mentioned throughout the Strategy. 2/ To innovate economy and politic completely and suitably in order to make people wealthy, country strong, democracy, equitable, civilised. To see it as the highest standard for evaluation of renovating and developing period. 3/ To expand democracy, maximize human factor; human is the subject, main resource, and goal of development. 4/ To develop high level of science and modern technology workforce meanwhile completing the productive relations in market-economy toward socialism. 5/ To build up an independent, autonomy economy in consideration with adapting deep and further international standards (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011, p.98-102).

At the same time, the documents for the National Congress also identified essential and *strategic breakthroughs* which are: 1/ To complete the socialism - oriented market - economic institutions that focus on creating fair competitive environment and reforming administration. 2/ To fasten the development of high - quality human resource, focus on innovating basic and comprehensive of national education; closely linked the development of

human resource with the development and application of science and technology. 3/ To build a complete infrastructure with number of modern works, to focus on transportation system and infrastructure in urban areas (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011, p.106).

III. Some problems in the political orientation of cultural development

1. Development is one of the most popular concept in the world today. In the pathway to achieve sustainable development, there are many practical and theoretical conclusions on models of development which mostly focus on “paradox of development” and a dilemma between developing economy and/or society^(*).

From 1943, when *the Outline of Vietnamese culture* published, there are certain changes and adjustments made on political orientation of cultural development after each phase. *the Outline of Vietnamese culture* imbued with the spirit of Marxist as its commented on the relationship between culture and economy: “the economic foundation of a society and its economic mechanism based on that will decide the culture of that society (infrastructure

decide the superstructure” (Nguyen Ngoc Thien, Ho Si Vinh, 2004, p.15). It is a consistent viewpoint of *economic* from philosophical theory of dialectical materialism and historical materialism of K. Marx, *determinism* which is drew economic factors - the material factors decide social life (both spiritual and material life). Meanwhile, the non-Marxist viewpoints (different from Marxist or de-Marxist) indicated that non-economic factors such as political factors, cultural factors, social factors, ecological factors will decide the development of modern society.

The new viewpoints in the Platform 2011 on political orientation of culture showed that there is a transition in theoretical thinking about the role of culture in developing socio - economy. It could be said that the critical viewpoint to theoretical economy is to “simplify” in laws. The role of cultural development is re-evaluated and adjusted and the importance of culture in sustainable development is admitted.

However, the changes in theoretical thinking about cultural development in documents for the 11st National Congress are still questioned, not synchronized between viewpoints and implementation of strategy. The objectives start showing the “simplifying” thinking under the consideration of today un-balancing socio - economic development framework but they still pay too much attention on economic growth; do not raise the specific solutions for problems arose during the development stage.

(*) See more: “The philosophy of development in Vietnam - Several key issues”, The authors summarized five models of development in the world, they are: 1/ Economic growth without the renovation and equitable society; 2 Economic growth toward industrialization and urbanization, but led to the decline of agriculture and rural; 3/ Economic growth but no autonomy for the workforce; 4/ Economic growth but led to the cultural and moral degradation; 5/ Economic Growth but led to the environmental degradation and the brokenage of ecological balance (Phạm Xuân Nam ed., 2008).

Especially, the problems of relationship between economic and cultural development, or economic growth and cultural development and environmental preservation... In other words, our country's developing model has not solved the "paradox of development" (ed. Phạm Xuân Nam, 2008).

2. To review all the important documents of the previous 11st National Congress, culture always emphasized as "spiritual foundation", "motivation and objectives of development", one of the fronts to achieve sustainable development; one of the developing objectives in *the Strategy of socio-economic development 2011-2020*; or in Political Report of the 11st National Congress, cultural development specified and focused on four big contents (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011, p.82-86); or in the Platform 2011, the features of cultural development are affirmed in 8 basic directions, especially in "the third one" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011, p.26). However, there is still lack of synchronization, *the viewpoint of cultural development did not mention at all in five viewpoints of development and three strategic breakthroughs of developing socio-economy 2011-2020*, it was mentioned a little bit at the 7th article on Comprehensive development of culture, society to synchronize with economic development in chapter IV - Orientation of developing socio-economic, renovating growth model, and reforming the economy (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011 p.126-127).

Thus, whether it has not reached the "harmony", "synchronization" in the thinking to change the model of development especially when the essential factors and conditions of this model did not consider the culture as a strategic breakthrough, an important viewpoint, and a way and action method or it just being objective or finishing point of sustainable development while society is warning about the cultural degradation?

In *the Platform 2011 and Developing Strategy of Socio-Economy 2011-2020*, culture is affirmed as one of three fronts that forms the sustainable and comprehensive development of the country to socialism; culture and economy are two factors that required a close link and developed together. However, *the way of linking and developing synchronously has not been defined clearly and specifically, it seems that culture and economy are developing separately without the necessary linkage like what it should be* and lack of the harmony, adjustment, and priority to develop these fields (and others like environment, education, health,...). Visually, only the economic car which is old and warned to do the reform many times is running without considering the bigger gap to other cars such as culture, education, health, environment... they are too slow and old in comparison to economic car. May be until the moment of economic car can not stand its own fast speed or other cars due to their slow or brokenage that caused stop would pull back the economic car in its

development. The result is unpredictable!

To review 10-year-vision five strategic viewpoints of development like we mentioned above, to be a modern industrial nation, we can easily find out some *paradox*, for example:

- The *first viewpoint* is a dilemma of fast development and sustainable development. The social issues which are caused by the “hot development” in Vietnam with the similar experiences of China proved that it will be difficult to deal with. Thus, there is a question “Why are us consistent with this viewpoint?” and the practice showed that the impatient, too emphasize on fast and hot growth, quantity not quality, width not depth would cause the brokenage of social sustainment?!
- Among these five mentioned viewpoints, there are three of them directly discussed on economic factor. Whether or not we just only achieve the “simplifying” level but do not have the “simplifying” mind in terms of other social affairs, do not consider culture (spiritual) as the truly motivation for the development of society (?).
- Developing human becomes a strategic viewpoint (also added into the third orientation in *the Platform 2011*) indicated the powerful transition of our Party’s thought in the pathway to socialism in a timely fashion. However, is it one-sided when the two important factors of developing human (in-depth quality of human resource) are culture and education did not mention

meanwhile human factor should be the first one to be cared thoroughly and specially in order to satisfy the requirements of a next ten years modern industrial society?

Conclusion

Economy, politic, culture... are both relatively independent and dependent, they affect each other, could decide others, and have the caused - effect relationship. Thus, the viewpoints of theoretical economy or culture are individual and negative. The changes in socio - economy of Vietnam recently should be the necessary conditions to implement an equitable society and there is no need to put economic development at the top priority before implementing an equitable society because of many unpredictable results could happen based on experiences of other countries. The progress of solving the dilemma of “Theoretical economy or/and Theoretical culture” indicated the shortage of old Marxist’s viewpoint which is to overestimate the critical role of economic factors (physical) while to underestimate the cultural factor (mental) in developing society.

The conclusion of the 9th Party Central Committee (2004) and Resolution of the 10th National Congress (2006) identified the position of culture to be included in development. Cultural development - the spiritual foundation of society closely linked, synchronized, and balanced with the economic development duty (central task); to build and reorganize the Party (a key

assignment) are critical condition for sustainable and comprehensive development of the country, it can be said that cultural development is an important factor of social development, it played a role of balancing the socio-economic development reasonably and is one of the three fronts that contribute to the socialism development of the country □

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