Vietnam in the Age of Globalization: Economic and Political Changes in Vietnam

by William Vu

Economics and Political Science, Western Connecticut State University

It is safe to say that in 1988 most of the Vietnamese leadership supported the idea of reform, but some of the conservative factions feared that liberalization and reform if carried out too quickly will result in anarchy and the loss of party control. The population during the postwar period was composed mainly of people in their 20s and younger, untainted by the party’s years of conflict against the French and Americans, and lacking in the discipline characteristic of older veterans of these conflicts.¹ In comparison, the younger people tended to be less interested in the party, less distrustful of Western influence, and less willing to accept the rigidity inherent in an authoritarian system.² The same characteristics can be said of Vietnam’s young people today. The interdependence of markets, nation-states and technology has only heightened the demand for Western culture amongst young people living in Vietnam, instead of suppressing it. I contend that Vietnam’s current political economic policies are benefiting only a small portion of the population at the expense of political freedoms and ecological damages

---

² Cima, 86.