

Re(senhas)

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**CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON "CULTURE AND
GLOBALIZATION - TRANSFORMATIONS OF
TRADITIONAL VALUES IN VIETNAM"**
by Kien Pham

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Kien Pham's essay, "*Culture and Globalization - Transformations of Traditional Values in Vietnam*", pertinently addresses the tension between tradition and modernity in a country that, although historically marked by strong cultural

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roots, has been enthusiastically inserted in the dynamics of globalization. The author deals with globalization not only as an economic phenomenon, but above all as a cultural process that directly impacts traditional Vietnamese values.

A positive point of the essay is the recognition of the ambivalence of globalization: on the one hand, as a phenomenon that offers new opportunities for development, but on the other, as an agent of risk to the preservation of local identities. The author points out that globalization imposes external cultural imports, which often conflict with endogenous (internal) values, creating complex challenges for societies such as the Vietnamese. Other authors who could dialogue with those already mentioned in the essay and who deal with Globalization include Bauman (1999), Beck (1999), Giddens (2000), Hall (2000) and Santos (2002), among others.

The author could have enriched the essay with the authors' contributions, as globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon that transcends economic and political boundaries, profoundly shaping the cultural, social, and identity dimensions of contemporary societies. According to Anthony Giddens (2000), globalization is not a linear and

homogeneous process, but rather a phenomenon that reconfigures social and cultural relations, bringing to light both new opportunities and challenges. He argues that globalization has the potential to "globalize modernity," creating new forms of communication and integration, but also generating inequalities and fragilities in some regions of the world.

On the other hand, Ulrich Beck (1999) warns us of the dangers of globalization, especially with regard to the "risk society". According to him, globalization, by increasing global interdependence, intensifies global risks (such as economic crises and environmental problems) and makes societies more vulnerable to these threats. Beck points out that while globalization creates new opportunities, it also exacerbates social inequalities, since the advantages of this process are not equally distributed between and within countries.

Still, for Zygmunt Bauman (1999), globalization is not only an economic phenomenon, but a profound transformation of human relations, which tends to "destroy local bonds" and reduce the importance of space and time in social interactions. He observes that, in a globalized world, people are increasingly disconnected from their communities and cultural roots,

experiencing a "liquid modernity", in which traditional certainties and values are dissolved.

Finally, the contrast of Stuart Hall's (2000) view of globalization focuses on cultural transformation. For Hall, globalization does not only imply the imposition of Western values, but also the appropriation and resistance of local cultures, which reconfigure external influences according to their needs and traditions. He argues that globalization is a field of cultural disputes, in which identities are not passively absorbed, but are reinterpreted and resignified by individuals and communities.

In this sense, globalization, as a unifying and simultaneously fragmenting force, provokes a series of challenges, but also opens spaces for new forms of cultural expression and resistance. What we see, as these authors suggest, is that globalization cannot be reduced to an imposition of a single model, but must be understood as a dynamic process of interaction and adaptation, where the local and the global meet and reconfigure each other.

In addition, the text raises a fundamental question: the value scale between the "old" and the "new" is not rigid, but intertwined. This perspective is important to understand that traditional values are not simply replaced by modern ones, but rather reformulated, adapted or even hybridized in contact with other cultures.

The passage that states that "*the value scale between the 'old' and the 'new' is not rigid but intertwined*" reveals a sophisticated understanding of the cultural dynamics involved in globalization. This perspective breaks with the simplistic view that traditional values are automatically replaced by modern ones in contexts of global integration. On the contrary, the author proposes that these values enter into a process of negotiation, adaptation and even hybridization.

This approach is particularly relevant because it recognizes the agency of local cultural subjects — that is, they are not only passive recipients of globalized culture, but also active agents who reinterpret and resignify the new values in the light of their traditions. This allows us to understand globalization as a multi-path process, and not as a unilateral imposition of Western modernity on other peoples.

However, the author could have deepened this analysis by offering more concrete examples of how this hybridization occurs in Vietnam. For example, how do young Vietnamese reconcile traditional family values with Western influences on individualism? Or how popular culture, such as music or cinema, reflects this fusion between the old and the new?

Despite this limitation, the reflection on the fluidity between tradition and modernity is one of the richest points of the article, as it challenges deterministic views and contributes to a more complex and realistic reading of cultural transformations in times of globalization. It is a rich opportunity to discuss philosophically these issues that affect the whole world, and that at the same time go through processes of fragility due to the great economic powers thinking only about maintaining their power. Or as the author herself emphasizes:

"In globalization, transnational values become more common, which can sometimes create a conflict between transnational values and other values, especially when individuals or communities in a given country are interested only in their local interests." (Phan, 2025, p. 14).

However, the essay could present more concrete examples of these cultural transformations in Vietnam. The analysis remains at a more general and theoretical level, which makes it difficult to understand more clearly the specific changes that are taking place, for example, in areas such as education, religion, family structure, fashion or the media. Of course, in the philosophical field this would also come out of the delimitation of the proposed object.

Another point that could be further explored is the role of the Vietnamese state in this process: how are public policies mediating (or not) the conflict between tradition and cultural modernization? Is there institutional resistance to cultural globalization or is it encouraged as part of national development?

We can highlight that Kien Pham's essay makes an important contribution by discussing the impacts of globalization on the culture of a developing country like Vietnam. Its merit lies in its critical and balanced approach, which recognizes both the benefits and risks of this process. Still, the lack of empirical data and specific examples reduces the analytical impact of the text. A more in-depth and

contextualized approach would help strengthen the conclusions and make the analysis richer and more relevant.

One of the most interesting aspects of the text is the idea that the relationship between the "old" and the "new" is not rigid, but intertwined. This view rejects the notion of the automatic replacement of traditional values by modern values, proposing instead a more complex reading in which these elements coexist, reformulate, and mix. This analysis demonstrates sensitivity to the dynamic character of cultures, which do not disappear with globalization, but are transformed through contact with the other.

The cultural resignification mentioned in the article shows the capacity of resistance and reinvention of traditions in the face of external pressures. The text contributes significantly to studies on cultural globalization, by highlighting that global impacts are not uniform, but rather mediators of complex local processes. By proposing a critical and balanced reading of the phenomenon, the author avoids the extremes of the alarmist or enthusiastic discourse of globalization, offering a mature analysis of the dilemmas experienced by societies in transition.

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