

Applying Ho Chi Minh Thought on “Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable” to the Modern and Professional Development of Vietnam’s Publishing Industry

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Abstract: *Hồ Chí Minh Thought is vast and profound, deserving continuous research, clarification, and creative and effective application in reality. This article elaborates on his thought on “Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable” and explores how it can be applied innovatively to develop Vietnam’s publishing industry in a modern, professional direction suited to current conditions.*

Keywords: *Hồ Chí Minh Thought; upholding the unchangeable to cope with the changeable; publishing.*

1. Regarding President Hồ Chí Minh Thought on “Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable”

“*Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable*” is a principle that President Hồ Chí Minh conveyed to Huỳnh Thúc Kháng, who had been appointed Acting President in May 1946, just before Hồ Chí Minh departed for France. At the time, Vietnam had just regained its independence, yet was already facing immense hardship and challenges.

The phrase signifies the need to anchor one’s actions to enduring, unchanging principles, while remaining flexible and adaptive in response to ever-shifting circumstances. “*Upholding the Unchangeable*” represents fixed goals and principles; “*to Cope with the Changeable*” refers to situational strategies and responses that may evolve, but never at the cost of abandoning core values. One adapts not by compromising what matters most, but by finding innovative, responsive means to uphold it. Throughout his revolutionary leadership, Hồ Chí Minh consistently practiced this dialectical approach. He once affirmed: “Our unwavering goals remain peace, unity, independence, and democracy. Our principles must remain firm, but our strategies must be flexible”⁽¹⁾. This reveals a profound and dialectical mindset, blending strategic clarity with situational agility.

In today's context of deepening international integration, where opportunities and challenges intermingle, the application of this principle holds critical importance in both nation-building and national defense. Vietnam must renew itself to integrate globally, but without straying from its foundational path. That means maintaining steadfast commitment to national independence and socialism, guided by the principle of "integration without assimilation". This is precisely the spirit of "*Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable*": flexible, adaptive policymaking grounded in clear, enduring direction. It supports Vietnam's effort "to develop a modern, integrated market economy, one that operates fully in accordance with market laws while being governed by a socialist law-governed State under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam; ensuring the orientation toward socialism with 'prosperous people, strong country, democratic, equitable, and civilized society' tailored to each stage of national development"⁽²⁾.

Hồ Chí Minh Thought on *Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable* can be applied across all sectors of social life, and the publishing industry is no exception. Certain elements and standards of publishing must be held constant - absolutely firm and consistent - while other aspects require adaptive, creative solutions suited to real-world conditions. The key is to harmonize tradition with modernity, national identity with global trends, in order to build a professional, modern publishing industry that is competitive with those in the region and the world at large.

2. Applying President Hồ Chí Minh Thought on "Upholding the Unchangeable to Cope with the Changeable" in the Current Development of Vietnam's Publishing Industry

2.1. The "Unchangeable" Elements and Tasks of the Publishing Industry Amid Integration and Development

First, ensuring the uninterrupted mission of the publishing industry as a tool for ideological, political, and cultural orientation. Historically, the profession of bookmaking - now known as the publishing industry - emerged in Vietnam relatively early. Despite undergoing many ups and downs, the industry has developed significantly in the modern era and has made important contributions to national construction and defense. Even as it modernizes, publishing must firmly maintain its role as an ideological and cultural front of the Party, the State, and the People. It is an essential component of an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity. Its mission remains to build ideological foundations, raise intellectual standards, train human resources, foster talent, and cultivate a learning society - thereby contributing to national

development. This is the “unchangeable” and enduring mission and principle of the publishing industry.

Alongside economic development tasks, the publishing sector must remain a pioneer on the ideological and cultural front, effectively promoting the Party and State’s guidelines and policies. It should highlight positive examples, honor advanced models, showcase what is good and beautiful, and preserve humane values. It must also actively fight against negative phenomena, outdated or reactionary elements. This mission is clearly stated in the 2012 Law on Publishing (amended and supplemented in 2018): “Publishing activities belong to the field of culture and ideology, aimed at disseminating knowledge of all aspects of social life, national cultural values and the quintessence of human culture, meeting the spiritual needs of the people, raising intellectual standards, and building good morals and lifestyles among Vietnamese citizens, expanding cultural exchanges with other countries, promoting socio-economic development, and fighting against all ideas and actions harmful to national interests, thus contributing to the cause of building and safeguarding the socialist fatherland of Vietnam”.

Given its role in the work of ideological and cultural orientation, publishing must rally the entire Party and people to successfully implement the Party’s renovation guidelines; protect and promote Vietnam’s traditional cultural and human values; emphasize social responsibility and civic duty; foster public awareness and voluntary adherence to social norms and legal frameworks; and ensure equitable access to culture for all. It should work to reduce disparities in cultural life and development levels between regions and social strata, with special attention to remote, disadvantaged, and ethnic minority areas as well as industrial zones.

Publishing must also be resolute in rejecting materials with inappropriate content - harmful, misleading, reactionary, or morally corrosive content that could destabilize political and social order or violate national customs and traditions. It plays a vital role in curbing moral and lifestyle degradation, combatting social evils, and promoting positive values. At the same time, publishing must actively and proactively engage in international cultural integration, selectively absorbing global cultural achievements in ways that align with Vietnam’s practical conditions.

In the current complex and unpredictable international and regional landscape, hostile forces are intensifying their efforts to undermine Vietnam’s revolutionary cause across ideological, cultural, economic, and social fronts. These adversaries seek to distort and reject the values of Marxism-Leninism and

Hồ Chí Minh Thought, challenge the ideological foundation of the Vietnamese State, and deny the Party's leadership. Amidst this situation, publishing has an even more urgent, essential, and heavy responsibility.

Second, promoting and developing a reading culture in the community. Reading culture plays a crucial role in social life. It contributes to the holistic development of human character and directly shapes each nation's developmental trajectory and prosperity. In Vietnam, over the past few decades, reading culture has made remarkable progress. The number of published titles has grown rapidly, library systems have expanded, and the demand for and proportion of readers have increased significantly. They are clear indicators of the public's growing thirst for knowledge and rising intellectual standards.

The Vietnamese publishing industry carries the important responsibility of spreading positive values throughout society: promoting reading culture, encouraging a passion for books and respect for cultural knowledge, and inspiring self-study, personal growth, and aspirations to contribute to the nation. Building and promoting a reading culture in the community is both a heavy and an unchanging responsibility of the publishing industry - especially amid today's explosion of information. The goal is to develop a streamlined, high-quality, and efficient publishing industry - one that serves readers and supports national and cultural development.

Third, ensuring the core mission and guiding principles of publishing and distribution organizations.

The resolutions of national Party Congresses over many tenures have shown consistent concern and direction regarding the publishing sector. They have emphasized: "Addressing the trend of commercialization that drifts away from the core mission and objectives of journalism and publishing"; "Strengthening leadership and management of journalism and publishing. Media organizations must uphold their core mission, target audiences, and serve public interests. They must enhance ideological content, humane values, and scientific knowledge; emphasize social responsibility and civic obligations; and contribute to building a culture for the Vietnamese people"⁽³⁾.

In a socialist-oriented market economy, publishing is a business activity with unique characteristics in the cultural and ideological sphere. It operates and develops according to economic principles, but must never deviate from its original mission. Publishing organizations must strictly adhere to their core objectives and refrain from any prohibited content or practices as defined by law.

Fourth, prioritizing the development and expansion of human resources in the publishing industry.

In the context of globalization and international integration, countries are increasingly prioritizing the training and development of human resources. Publishing is a vital sector in the ideological and cultural sphere. It plays a critical role in disseminating cultural knowledge, raising public intellectual standards, and shaping the ideological and moral foundations of the Vietnamese people. Therefore, the development of human resources must be treated as a top priority to ensure that the publishing industry can evolve in line with global trends.

In addition to general qualities and competencies, publishing professionals must thoroughly understand and strictly adhere to the Party's guidelines and the State's policies. They must grasp the industry's mission, understand and effectively implement the functions, tasks, and guiding principles of their respective organizations. In particular, leaders, managers, and editors must possess firm political resolve, resisting wavering or confusion in the face of misleading narratives. They must be committed to fighting against false ideologies and the signs of "self-evolution" or "self-transformation" from within. Professional ethics such as objectivity, integrity, and honesty must be upheld. Editors must also work carefully and meticulously, with strong dedication to creating high-quality publications that meet the needs of society.

In addition, the State should pay close attention to the political, ideological, and ethical education of those working in the publishing field. This is considered one of the industry's "unchangeable" duties and principles in the current era of global integration.

Fifth, ensuring the purity of the Vietnamese language in publishing practices.

Vietnamese is the national language of Vietnam. With a long historical journey of formation and development, it has accompanied the people through every stage of the nation's history. Preserving the purity of the Vietnamese language means protecting the national language, and in turn, protecting the voice and identity of the Vietnamese people. President Hồ Chí Minh once emphasized: "Language is an ancient and immensely valuable asset of the nation. We must preserve it, respect it, and work to make it more widely known. If we have something of our own but don't use it, and instead borrow from foreign languages, isn't that just a form of dependency?"⁽⁴⁾. Thus, preserving the purity of the language is the responsibility of the entire community, including the publishing sector.

The purity of Vietnamese manifests in many aspects: speaking and writing must comply with proper norms and grammar; there must be no careless borrowing from foreign languages. Purity is also reflected in cultural and respectful communication. Preserving linguistic purity means preserving and upholding the cultural values and identity of the Vietnamese people. More than anyone, editors play a vital role in polishing, standardizing, and maintaining the integrity of the language - enhancing the value of published works. Upholding the purity of Vietnamese in publishing is of immense importance in today's deeply globalized environment. It stands as an "unchangeable" task in line with Hồ Chí Minh's philosophical thinking.

2.2. The "Changeable" Aspects and Adaptive Practices in Publishing Activities

First, continuously improving the effectiveness of publishing to meet new tasks and demands in the current era. The Communist Party of Vietnam has affirmed: "Publishing is a sharp ideological instrument of the Party, the State, and the People, and an essential component of an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity ⁽⁵⁾. Therefore, publishing activities must prioritize political and ideological service while simultaneously meeting the growing reading demands of society. At the same time, publishing must fulfill its business function, developing into a comprehensive and sustainable knowledge-based industry within the economy. Reforming publishing operations is essential to remain responsive and timely - selecting operational models suited to market mechanisms. The publishing economy must evolve into a modern knowledge-technology economy as an integrated part of the market economy.

To this end, and based on practical conditions, publishing professionals must proactively advise the Party and State to improve institutional frameworks. They must build long-term visions and strategic orientations; renew organizational structures and human resources; reform operational methods and management systems. It is also essential to formulate policies that attract investment into the publishing sector, implement programs to promote reading culture, and advance digital transformation. The ultimate goal is to turn the publishing industry into a comprehensive, sustainable knowledge-technology sector, on par with regional and global standards.

Second, diversifying content and types of publications. Publishing has always pursued content diversity. In addition to traditional topics, publishing seeks to reflect and disseminate new human knowledge, provide and share timely information, and contribute to meeting readers' needs and national development.

With advances in science and technology, modern readers' demands have evolved. The publishing industry must quickly adapt to meet these new realities. Alongside traditional printed books, the industry has actively applied digital technologies to publish and distribute modern formats such as e-books, audiobooks, and AI-enhanced books - across various digital platforms and reading applications. Readers can now access books anywhere, anytime, with more diverse and engaging experiences.

Third, diversifying communication methods and reader engagement strategies. Publications are, at their core, cultural commodities subject to market dynamics. As such, communication, promotion, and marketing play a crucial role. Today, the publishing industry has adopted many creative approaches to publicize its products, creating widespread social resonance. Previously, readers mainly accessed publications through traditional means - book launches, author-reader exchanges, Vietnam Book and Reading Culture Day events, trade fairs, exhibitions, advertisements in print newspapers, flyers, posters, television, radio broadcasts, or visits to bookstores and libraries. Nowadays, in addition to those traditional methods, readers can access books more conveniently via the Internet, digital platforms, social media, mobile apps, and e-commerce marketplaces. These efforts are integrated with initiatives like "book streets," community libraries, and family or clan libraries - creating breakthroughs in speed, interactivity, and content sharing.

Online platforms such as websites and e-commerce channels (e.g., Amazon, ebook365, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok) are being used effectively. Many books include interactive features that allow readers to leave comments and reviews - helping publishers better understand public demand and enhancing author-reader engagement. Events now combine in-person and online formats to expand the reach and richness of publishing activities.

Thanks to this diverse range of communication tools, publishing has become more professional and effective in promotion, increasing public access to books and offering more choices and experiences to readers. These efforts not only serve commercial goals but also celebrate books and creativity, and promote reading culture throughout the community.

Fourth, reforming management practices and diversify editorial processes by applying new technologies. With rapid advances in science, technology, and artificial intelligence - as well as global publishing trends - publishing houses must reform their organizational structures, management systems, and operational models to remain relevant and sustainable. These changes

should align with publishing activities that are now deeply embedded in digital platforms and modern technological environments. To meet developmental demands and cater to diverse reader needs, publishing units must continuously improve the quality of their publications. They need to be more dynamic and innovative to better serve social demands.

At the same time, the State should regularly provide professional training to improve the qualifications, professionalism, foreign language skills, and technological capabilities of editorial staff. This will help editors adopt and integrate new technologies into both management and professional practices. They must be able to quickly adapt to new publishing methods, utilize multimedia communication tools, manage publishing operations, and run sales and distribution networks. In particular, editors must be capable of filtering, synthesizing, analyzing, and verifying unconfirmed sources of information, especially in today's overwhelming information landscape.

In addition, publishing units must actively innovate in editorial work. Beyond traditional paper-based editing, editors should embrace modern practices such as digital editing, remote collaboration, and tech-assisted content development.

Fifth, applying "to cope with the changeable" motto in training human resources for the publishing industry.

To provide high-quality human resources, training programs must be promptly reformed - adjusting content, delivery methods, and teaching approaches - to align with real-world demands and global publishing trends.

Curricula should be designed to foster learner competence: reducing excessive theoretical instruction and increasing practical, experiential learning - especially emphasizing the development of creative thinking. The structure must align with expected learning outcomes while integrating key knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to operate in digital environments. This includes digital transformation, electronic publishing, data processing, content development, and interactive engagement with modern readers on digital platforms. Training should also include knowledge of communications, public relations, business, and online publishing on e-commerce platforms - enabling future publishing professionals to develop both specialized knowledge and cross-functional skills. However, in designing such curricula, it's important to balance the proportion of theoretical, practical, and interdisciplinary content in a scientific and feasible manner.

Traditional teaching methods often make students passive - heavy on theory but light on practical application. As a result, graduates may face difficulties

applying knowledge to real work situations. Some even require retraining or extensive self-study to meet job requirements. Therefore, educational institutions must strongly reform their pedagogical methods - shifting from knowledge transmission to holistic development of student capacities and character. Instruction should be problem-based, encourage open dialogue, and support knowledge systematization. It must reduce one-way lecturing and promote two-way interaction between lecturers and learners to best develop learner competence.

Sixth, modernizing the Vietnamese language in publishing activities. In the process of publishing - especially editing - there is a dual responsibility: preserving the clarity and correctness of the Vietnamese language, a “upholding the unchangeable” element, while also modernizing it to enrich expression, a “to cope with the changeable” element, and meet the evolving demands of communication in society.

Creatively applying Hồ Chí Minh Thought to develop journalism and publishing in today’s globalized context means keeping pace with international media and publishing trends, including language modernization. As Hồ Chí Minh stated: “If there are words we lack and cannot translate properly, it is necessary to borrow from foreign languages. But borrowing must be done in moderation, only when truly necessary”⁽⁶⁾. Thus, language modernization must go hand in hand with preserving the clarity and essence of Vietnamese. This ensures that Vietnamese remains a living, evolving language - worthy of its national status and responsive to communication needs. Therefore, each editor must raise their awareness and responsibility in using the Vietnamese language. They must perform editorial duties with excellence, helping to create meaningful, high-quality publications that meet the demands of society.

Innovation for development is both a task and an inevitable trend for the publishing industry in the context of deep international integration today. Creatively applying Hồ Chí Minh Thought on “Upholding the unchangeable to cope with the changeable” to the development of the publishing industry in a modern and professional direction is of profound significance. Renewing the publishing industry is a continuous process that must bridge tradition and modernity, harmonizing national identity with global trends, and staying grounded in practical realities. The “*unchangeable*” lies in core values: the mission of providing ideological and cultural orientation; preserving the traditional values of the Vietnamese people; upholding the principles and purposes of the publishing profession; contributing to the formation

of national and cultural value systems, as well as the moral standards of Vietnamese citizens; promoting reading culture; and safeguarding the clarity of the Vietnamese language. “*To cope with the changeable*” involves ongoing improvements through the creative application of science and technology, content diversification, innovation in publication formats, modern communication strategies, enhanced training programs, managerial and editorial reform, and the thoughtful modernization of language - aimed at producing the highest-quality publications and elevating Vietnam’s publishing industry to regional and global standards./.

(1) Hồ Chí Minh (2021), *Complete Works*, National Political Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, vol. 8, p. 555.

(2) Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 13th National Party Congress*, National Political Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, vol. 1, p. 128.

(3) Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 12th National Party Congress*, National Political Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, vol. 13, p. 456.

(4) Hồ Chí Minh, *Complete Works*, National Political Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, vol. 13, p. 456.

(5) Communist Party of Vietnam, *Directive No. 42-CT/TW dated August 25, 2020, of the Secretariat on enhancing the overall quality of publishing activities* (Dangcongsan.vn).

(6) Hồ Chí Minh (2021), *Complete Works*, National Political Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, vol. 13, pp. 464–465.