VIETNAMESE CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF VIETNAM'S SOFT POWER - A CASE STUDY OF VIETNAMESE CULTURAL DIPLOMACY TOWARDS ASEAN

By

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross domestic product
JENESYS	Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths
ODA	Official Development Assistance
TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

ABSTRACT

The idea of soft power has emerged since the beginning years of the 21st century and it has caught attention of many scholars and political leaders of the world. Cultural diplomacy is an instrument utilized by governments to attract the governments and the public of other countries, especially through cultural activities. Studies on soft power and cultural diplomacy have been carried out in different countries such as the United States (the U.S.), China, Japan, South Korea, India, Canada, Australia and so on. However, there are not many works on soft power and cultural diplomacy of small country like Vietnam in both Vietnamese and English literature. This thesis attempts to provide a more in-depth analysis on how Vietnam has carried out its cultural diplomacy in order to enhance its soft power in Asia. The thesis sets up a framework for the analysis of Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy with theories in international relations as well as with examples from the United States, China, Japan and South Korea. In the next parts, Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy will be analyzed in specific details. Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN will also be discussed in the last part of the thesis as a case study for a better understanding of Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy in general.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The end of Cold War marked a new era of the world politics. The world has undergone tremendous changes in international relations with peace and development as the main themes. Globalization has led to new trends in international relations, one of which is interdependence. Countries are now more dependent on each other in many fields such as economy, technology, science. This has made the trend of using hard power (with tangible sources of power such as military power or economic power) more restricted. Instead, countries can achieve their goals through intangible sources of power such as the attractiveness of culture, a stable political and social system, a peaceful method to solve conflict, a good model for development. All of these ideas came into Nye's concept of soft power in the 90s-"getting others to want the outcomes that you want"[1]. This has been widely discussed not only among scholars but also policymakers. Countries have started to work out strategies to increase their soft power for various goals. Some want to expand their influences abroad, some want to develop their economies and influence neighboring countries, some want to advance to a higher level of development. To achieve those goals, one important means of countries is cultural diplomacy. Together with soft power, cultural diplomacy has come into international relations scholarship as a tool to make one country's attractiveness and achievements known overseas, especially with the cultural resources. It has also been used by countries' governments as a way to express and expand their cultural influence on others, in order to support the overall strategies of enhancing their soft power.

Vietnam is a small country in Southeast Asia. After the wars with Western countries: France and the United States, Vietnam was mostly destructed. Moreover, after the Cold War, Vietnam was considered a Soviet Union satellite and an aggressor in the war in Cambodia. It required Vietnam to have strategies to improve its image in international community. Although the concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy have appeared long before, Vietnam has just adopted those concepts in recent years. It leads to a necessity to study how those concepts are perceived in Vietnam discourse, and how the cultural diplomacy has been carried out to serve the purpose of improving Vietnam's image in particular and enhancing Vietnam's soft power in general. It leads to the main questions of the thesis below.

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[1] Nye, J. (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics.* New York: Public Affairs, p5.

1.1 Research questions

How has Vietnamese cultural diplomacy been carried out to enhance its soft power in Vietnam's discourse?

In order to support the research question, the thesis will attempt to address these following sub-questions:

How has the concept of soft power been perceived by Vietnamese policymakers and scholars in Vietnam's discourse?

How has the concept of cultural diplomacy been perceived by Vietnamese policymakers and scholars in Vietnam's discourse?

How has Vietnam carried out its cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN in order to enhance its soft power in the Association?

1.2 Research Goal

Soft power and cultural diplomacy have been studied in different countries, from the West to the East. However, to study how Vietnam conceives soft power and how it carries out its cultural diplomacy to enhance the soft power may bring about a different meaning. Firstly, this thesis is written in the hope of contributing to the literature of soft power and cultural diplomacy, especially to the literature of soft power and cultural diplomacy of a small country like Vietnam. The U.S. has been known as the great power, China is now considered the emerging great power, Japan or South Korea is told to be the rising middle powers. Therefore, works on their soft power have reached a high number. Meanwhile, there are very few studies on small countries' soft power and cultural diplomacy. This research may hopefully contribute to the scholarship of small countries soft power, particularly that of Vietnam. Secondly, the thesis helps the audience find out how a communist country like Vietnam adopts a new concept as soft power, which was believed to originate in the U.S.-a country that cherishes a very different ideology from Vietnam's and has a different government system as well as the way to carry out foreign policies. Bearing in mind the ideology of Ho Chi Minh, how policymakers and scholars of Vietnam perceive the concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy is worth investigating. It is believed that the ideas of soft power and cultural diplomacy were mentioned long before. It has not been widely recognized as those ideas were not named "soft power" or "cultural diplomacy". However, during the Ho Chi Minh time, he has created the basis of Vietnam foreign policies with the ideas of "peaceful foreign policies" or "more friends, less enemies", which later can be understood as one of Vietnam's aspects of soft power. It is interesting to see how those

ideas have been transformed to be more appropriate to the present context of Vietnam[2]. Last but not least, Asia has been told to be a very energetic region these days. Countries in the region have started to pay more attention to soft power. China, South Korea, Japan have worked their ways to achieve soft power in order to fulfill their national goals. Vietnam cannot be outside of this stream. I find this topic academically interesting as I could find out how Vietnam uses its cultural diplomacy with the sources of attraction to improve its soft power in the region. The thesis aims at giving a more comprehensive picture of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy as well as how Vietnamese scholars and policymakers conceive soft power and utilize cultural diplomacy to improve it.

1.3 Research Methodology

This research contains materials from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include documents such as speeches of leaders, documents issued by Vietnamese government, related ministries and authorities. Secondary sources include books, research works, articles and manuscript from the internet and so on. Besides, in order to have a deeper insight of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy in general and towards ASEAN in particular, interviews will also be conducted. All of the interview questions have been approved by the Human Ethics Committee of Victoria University of Wellington. The participants are the policymakers and scholars who are directly involved in or work on Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. They are mostly from the ASEAN Department and External Culture and UNESCO Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs; International Cooperation Department of Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs.

1.4 Research Structure

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the analytical framework of the thesis, the concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy.

Chapter 2 gives a brief description of soft power and cultural diplomacy in four countries: the U.S., China, Japan and South Korea in order to point out how they are conceiving their soft power as well as how they bring those concepts into the practice of cultural diplomacy.

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[2] Nguyen Thu Ha (2015) *Học theo Chủ tịch Hồ Chí Minh làm ngoại giao văn hóa (Learning after President Ho Chi Minh to Carry out Cultural Diplomacy)* Retrieved August 13, 2014 from www.tgvn.com.vn/Item/VN/Ngoaigiao/2015/2/44F1FCD1D1A8E0DC

Chapter 3 attempts to analyze the Vietnam's concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy. It will also discover the sources as well as challenges of Vietnam when trying to enhance its soft power with cultural diplomacy as a tool.

Chapter 4 illustrates Vietnamese cultural diplomacy with an analysis of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN in order to improve its soft power in the Association.

1.5 Theoretical framework

The end of the Cold War opened a new page in the world history. In the past, one country's power was usually tested through wars. Nowadays, however, the development in technology, education or economy has replaced the emphasis on military power of countries. It requires the redefining of state's power because military or population or geography is not merely the sources of one country's power. So, it is essential to go through the debates on power of countries by scholars from different theories of international relations.

In terms of measuring one state's capabilities, realism, one of the most powerful International Relations theories cannot fully explain the nature of power as it is mostly focusing on hard power. To realists, power is based on the material capabilities that a state controls. These capabilities are made up of tangible military assets and socio-economic ingredients that go into building military power, which is called latent power. Latent power is based on a state's wealth and the size of its overall population[3]. At first, this definition may appear to be comprehensive. However, power of a state has never been simple to define. As a result, the scholars of the sub-branches of realism had established new concepts on another kind of power. Carr (1939), a classical realist, once acknowledged the role of morals and beliefs in determining state behavior and theorized the importance of "power of opinion" and their close association with a nation's military and economic power[4]. Later, another realist named Hans Morgenthau (1960), came up with the idea that states should possess diverse means to confront varied threats in different sectors and be alert to international morality and world public

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[3] Mearsheimer, *'Structural Realism'*. Retrieved August 15, 2014 from:
http://www.google.co.nz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&sqi=2&ved=0CDcQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fmearsheimer.uchicago.edu%2Fpdfs%2FStructuralRealism.pdf&ei=hX1PVJv8LYXh8gW4zoCYDQ&usg=AFQjCNGjjOssbIJOsJN5YWcvFPIbKrVpew&sig2=l0T7oKd3sOntvbD7GFeFcw
[4] Carr, E.H. (1939) *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

opinion in order to maintain their international status[5]. And the famous neorealist, Kenneth Waltz (1979) claimed that the most efficient way to achieve a nation's ultimate goals is not always the exercise of material power[6]. The scholars above seemed to have set out a quite complete framework for the concept of soft power, there is not yet an empirical ground for the concept to be built on. There are evidences showing that when it comes to a nation's power in today world, it is never enough to mention its military, wealth or population. Why is the anti-China sentiment growing in Japan despite its rising power? Why are there different reactions from countries to the act of developing nuclear weapons of the U.S. and North Korea, for example? From the definitions above, we can tell that constructivism would best fit in the framework of soft power. Constructivism, in the simplest meaning, highlights the importance of ideas and how states think of each other or think of what happens in the world. So, if a state power is taken into consideration, it is important to not only mention about their prosperity or military power but also its identities Wendt (1994) defined identities as "sets of meaning that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, that is, as a social object"[7]. According to Wendt (1992), the constructivists have a cognitive and intersubjective conception of how endogenous the identities and interests to interaction are[8]. A state's identities are constructed not just by its own government, but more importantly, by the people and government of other countries. Through those angles, many authors have defined soft power in their own ways:

Steven Lukes (2005) suggested that soft power was the power to shape, influence or determine others' beliefs and desires, thereby securing their compliance[9]. According to Pilko (2012), soft power could be considered the attractiveness of a country's international image. A country's image is a set of integral parts, such as their value system, political system, economic order, culture, traditions and customs, historical heritage, ideology, religion, etc[10]. However, it would be incomplete not mentioning the

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[5] Morgenthau, H. (1960) *Politics Among Nations*, 3rd ed. New York: Alfred A.Knopf, p.158-163 and p.227-271

[6] Waltz, K. (1979) *Theory of International Politics*. Reading MA: Addison-Wesley

[7] Wendt, A. (1994) *Collective Identity Formation and the International State*. The American Political Science Review, 88: 384-96 In Guillaume, X. (2011). *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*. Routledge, p.12

[8] Wendt, A. (1992). *"Anarchy is What State Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics"* International Organization. Vol. 46, No 12, 391-425

[9] Lukes, S. (2005) *Power and the Battle for Hearts and Minds*. Millenium-Journal of International Studies, p.486

[10] Pilko, A. (2012) *What is Soft Power and How Russia Should Use it?* Retrieved September 3, 2014 from

scholar who is known as the "founding father" of soft power: Joseph Nye. He first defined soft power as getting others want the outcomes you want – co-opts people rather than coerces them[11]. He explained that the reason one country may achieve the outcomes it wanted in world politics was because other countries-admiring its values, emulating its examples, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness-want to follow it. In this sense, it is also important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only to force them to change by threatening military force or economic sanctions[12]. Then, he developed this concept into another level when he wrote that a state's soft power is its ability to attract others to a set of shared values and justness and duty of contributing to those values[13]. Nye stressed in his work that it is important to win hearts and minds, but it is even more so in a global information age[14]. Information, in the today world, has become a very powerful force as it can be spread more widely and quickly than ever before. Of course, there are definitely different sources of information that one can get, however, the source that reaches the people first may have the strongest impression. There should have been more particular definitions of soft power of different countries discussed in the field. One can argue that the definitions would vary from state to state as each one has their own perception of soft power and how to enhance it. Nye's definition has been criticized to spin around the U.S. soft power only. Another example is, when writing about China's soft power, Breslin (2011) suggests that we should conceive of passive, externally given soft power defined as attraction as somewhat different from state-led projects deliberately constructed to promote a preferred national image overseas. The reason for this is there are clear lessons that can be learnt from the way in which China engaged the global economy, the attraction of the Chinese system and values may be less important than the idea of China as a metaphor for 'doing it your own way' or an example of what can be done[15]. Or in a more simple way, we can understand that according to Breslin, one's soft power lies in the eyes of the beholders.

In addition to Nye's concept, there is Ford's concept of soft power which can back it up. Looking at soft power through the resource-based lens, Ford (2012) mentioned soft

http://valdaiclub.com/politics/49480.html

[11] Nye, J (2004) *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization*. Routledge, p.5

[12] Nye, J. (1990) *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 2

[13] Nye, J (2004) op. cit. note 11

[14] Ibid

[15] Breslin, S. (2011) *The Soft Notion of China's Soft Power*. The University of Warwick. Retrieved July 14, 2014 from http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/4342/

power was often used to refer to the collective influence of a country's combined weight in the realms of economic, cultural, and political affairs—indeed, in effect, all facets of its national strength except the "hard power" associated with military coercion[16]. This has broadened Nye's concept of soft power in terms of the resources of soft power. In the scope of this flow of ideas, soft power is not used to force the outcomes on others, but it stressed on a dense network of interdependent economic and socio-cultural interactions to help bring about psychologically-driven political change, which would serve one's own purposes. In this prism, we can find critical aspects of a state's power. They appear to be every good thing but the real military power. They could be the foreign aid programs, the attraction of one's popular culture, the prestige of higher education, or the fast-growing economy, or the compelling of political systems and so on. In more simple words, the concept of soft power was not controversial, as no one can insist in the modern era that national power can be found exclusively in military muscle.

Taking another approach to the idea of soft power, Gallarotti (2011) suggested that soft power can be seen as a form of meta-power[17]. Meta-power depicts circumstances in which power relations themselves were implanted inside some more noteworthy constellation of social relations that made impact on those relations and accordingly influence the last results that one could get from the interactions among actors. He quoted from Hall's (1997) work that: "Meta-power refers to the shaping of social relationships, social structures, and situations by altering the matrix of possibilities and orientations within which social action occurs (i.e., to remove certain actions from actors' repertoires and to create or facilitate others)."[18] To be more specific, Gallarotti (2011) also analyzed that meta-power was often equated with agenda control. This has shift the approach to the concept of soft power into another path, the agenda-based one. Agenda control, in its more exact setting, is claimed to be one of meta-power's sub-sets. Within the formal agenda-guided bargaining process, results were circumscribed by the range of issues and the agenda-setters could design the strategic possibilities themselves. In this more confined application, the thought of agenda control has been

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[16] Ford, Christopher. A. (2012) *Soft on "Soft Power".* SAIS Review vol. XXXII no. 1 (Winter–Spring 2012) by The Johns Hopkins University Press

[17] Gallarotti, Giulio M. (2011) *Soft Power: W hat it is, Why it' s Important, and the Conditions Under Which it Can Be Effectively Used.* Division II Faculty Publications. Paper 57. Retrieved August 13, 2014 from http://wesscholar.wesleyan.edu/div2facpubs/57

[18] Hall, Peter M. (1997) *Meta-Power, Social Organization, and the Shaping of Social Action.* Symbolic Interaction20:397–418.

produced inside the scope of issue-settings, for example, constitutional design, budgetary politics, bureau sponsor situations, logrolling, political decision making structures, and majority-rule cycles. The work was entwined by a concern with the processes by which particular political issues are constructed and institutions designed among adversarial actors competing in domestic political contests[19]. According to this approach, we can understand that soft power roots in the social relationships and social structure. The concept of soft power has gone beyond state's boundaries. Soft power is also expressed by who is setting the rules for world politics agendas. The agenda setters here could be understood as states.

By making distinction between hard resources and soft resources, rather than coercive power and co-optive power as Nye did, Lee (2009) approached the concept of soft power based upon the power resources to be employed to exert influence upon others[20]. He also emphasized on the hard-resource driven power. For example, allied powers would always feel safer and more secured when their allies stand by them in any conflicts or battlefields. In this case, military power could become an attractive power when allies strike enemies with high-tech weapon. Lee has suggested this approach as he found it more appropriate for middle powers, which might not possess enough hard resources to exert their power over others. For countries like South Korea, Canada…, this could be a useful approach when they want to apply their soft power in world politics.

With a totally different lens, Mattern (2005) brought up her argument that soft power was sociolinguistically constructed through communicative means[21]. She argued that reality was not pre-given and objective, but socially constructed through an ongoing collective process. Since actors had their own different ways of interpreting, their communicative process enabled them to the diversity of multiple interpretations into one or a few socially legitimated interpretations[22]. In her work, she mentioned once again the concept of attraction, which was coined by Nye. Attraction here is understood as a strategically developed vision of a certain reality communicated by the wielder of soft power through representational force. When one is verbally fighting with others, representational force is used to limit the refusal as much as possible. So, the important

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[19] Gallarotti, Giulio M. (2011) op. cit. note 17

[20] Lee, G. (2009) *A Theory of Soft Power and Korea's Soft Power Strategy.* Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea. Retrieved November 12, 2014 from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10163270902913962?journalCode=rkjd20#.VEdz2GcrlIY

[21] Mattern, Janice B. (2005) *"Why 'Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics."* Millennium: Journal of International Studies, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 583-613.

[22] Ibid

strategy suggested here is to trap leaders or decision makers with threats to their subjectivities since it is them whose submission translates into policy and behaviors. Those are the people with great influence and can make the whole population live the experience of the attraction[23].

In the recent years, the concept of cultural diplomacy has caught the attention of the International Relations scholars and policymakers alike. The concept of cultural diplomacy is located under the umbrella concept of soft power as an instrument to establish one state's soft power. And as Thayer (1959) suggested, cultural diplomacy is one of the most important implementation of foreign policy in order to bring mutual understanding between peoples[24]. Later on, the U.S. Department of States defines cultural diplomacy as a direct and enduring contact between people of different nations (in which designed to) help create a better climate of international trust and understanding in which official relations can operate[25]. In the 21st century, works on cultural diplomacy start to bloom. Therefore, cultural diplomacy has been defined in many different ways. According to Cummings (2003), cultural diplomacy is the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding[26]. The Arts Industries Policy Forum defines cultural diplomacy as the "domain of diplomacy concerned with establishing developing and sustaining relations with foreign states by way of culture, art and education"[27]. The Demos group says cultural diplomacy is not easy to define but they take it wider to include things of mass cultural appeal – such as sport, popular culture and science. They argue that cultural diplomacy has traditionally been the relations between elites, with culture as the universal language they spoke. Now, culture is created by the masses for the masses and any sort of culture is easily and frequently and enjoyed by a large number of people[28].

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[23] Ibid

[24] Thayer, R (1959) *Cultural Diplomacy: Seeing is Believing.* Speech delivered at the University of Maine

[25] Barghoorn, F.C. (1976) *The Soviet Cultural Diplomacy: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy*, Westoort, CT: Greenood Press, pp. 10-11

[26] Milton C. Cummings' 2003 Noted by Gregory, Bruce. *Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication: Cultures, Firewalls, and Imported Norms.* Prepared for presentation at the American Political Science Association Conference on International Communication and Conflict. Washington DC: George Washington University and Georgetown University. August 31, 2005

[27]*Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest: In Search of a 21st-Century Perspective*. Arts Industries Policy Forum, the Curb Center at Vanderbilt. Retrieved January 4, 2015 from
http://www.artsmanagement.net/index.php?module=News&func=display&sid=1078

[28] Bound, Kirsten, Rachel Briggs, John and Holden and Samuel Jones (2007) *Culture is a Central Component of International Relations. It's Time to Unlock Its Full Potential…*Cultural Diplomacy by DEMOS

Time after time, the definitions of cultural diplomacy have been developed broader. It leads to the formation of three schools of thoughts on cultural diplomacy as Gienow-Hecht (2010) mentioned. The first one sees cultural diplomacy as state-led activity. In this flow of thoughts, the term propaganda and cultural diplomacy were used interchangeably. Scholars of this school also argued that culture was seen as an instrument of state policy. The second school looked at cultural diplomacy as an instrument to work at the exclusion of politics. It suggested that to carry out cultural diplomacy, there should be a combination of both state-actor and non-state actor. The last school claimed that cultural diplomacy was beyond the realm of the state. It argued that cultural diplomacy entailed either diplomatic activities by non-state actor or promotion of a culture of a country by people and was not confined by the state policies and interests[29]. It is obvious that cultural diplomacy has earned much notice of governments, scholars, think tanks and so on as it is now beyond nations' borders. Now, people can mention not only one state's cultural diplomacy, but they can also discuss political institutions' cultural diplomacy such as ASEAN[30].

Cultural diplomacy can offer states things that political, economic and military diplomacy cannot do. That is achieving their goal by persuading through culture, values and ideas and not coercing others through military, political or economic might. In a world with diffused power and states work together based mainly on interdependency, cultural diplomacy still has the capability to operate[31]. As Schneider (2006) mentioned, cultural diplomacy can allow environment for dialogues that lead to trust-building[32]. Also, it can connect people from conflicting parties even in time of negative diplomatic relations. Therefore, it may serve as the only viable solution when tension and conflict persist[33]. It can increase understanding, shatter stereotypes, and change the way people view each other, which ultimately can lead to changes in the way governments interact[34].

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[29] Gienow-Hecht, J (2010) *What are We Searching for? Culture, Diplomacy, Agents, and the State. In Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy,* edited by Gienow-Hecht, J & Donfried, M. (2010) Berghahn Books, p.21-22

[30] See Ma, R. (2014) *Cultural Diplomacy in ASEAN: Collaborative Efforts.* International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 394-397

[31] Hect, C.E. and Donfried, M.C. (2010) *"The model of cultural diplomacy: power distance and the promise of civil society," Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*, New York: Berghann Books, p. 21

[32] Schneider,C.P. (2006) *"Cultural diplomacy: hard to define, but you'd know it if you saw it,"* The Brown Journal of World Affairs, Fall/Winter, vol. XIII, iss. I, p. 196

[33] Ibid

[34] Schneider, C. P. (2009) *The Unrealized Potential of Cultural Diplomacy: "Best Practices" and What Could Be, If Only…* Heldref Publications. p.276

It can be seen that the main idea lying underneath the ideas of constructivism and soft power is the state's identities and its attraction. While the main stream of scholars believe that countries use their soft power to make "others want what it wants" through its attraction, the concept of attraction suggested in this thesis would be quite different from the purpose of creating attraction of the states mentioned above. In my research, I would suggest that attraction, to small countries, can be understood as making other states attracted to their environment, landscapes, culture; so that they can get the investment or support from other countries in many fields such as politics or economy in order to get to the next higher level of development. This understanding is based upon Lee's approach of soft power, which said that states are dependent on their resources to exert influences on others. As a matter of fact, different states have different types of resources of power. To small countries, whose economic or military capabilities are not as strong as the emerging powers or great powers, they have to exploit other resources like culture. Being considered one of the main tools of soft power strategies, cultural diplomacy would be discussed in order to clarify how small countries enhance their soft power.

1.6 Literature Review

In Asia, soft power of countries like China, Japan or South Korea has caught much notice of many scholars. The works of Kurlantzick, J. (2007) named *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*[35] or *Sources and Limits of Chinese "Soft Power"* by Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) have focused on analyzing China's soft power in the new era[36]. In their researches, they especially analyzed deeply the goals of China's soft power strategies as a rising power. They suggested the ways China utilized its soft power in order to support the idea of China's "peaceful rise". They also pointed out the limits and potential consequences of China's use of soft power. Other authors, Mellisen and Lee (2011) noted that "soft power and public diplomacy are now household terms that are frequently used in discussion about international relations"[37] in this region in the book named *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia*. Together with Japan, others countries such as India[38], South Korea[39]have started considering soft

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[35] Kurlantzick, J. (2007) *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World.* A New Republic Book, Yale University Press
[36]Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) *Sources and Limits of Chinese "Soft Power".*Survival, vol 48, no.2, p.17-36
[37] Lee and Mellisen, *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia,* Palgrave Macmillan
[38] See more in Dalmia, S. (2012) *Bollywood's Soft Power.* From *Reason.;* Malone, D.M. (2011) *Soft Power in Indian Foreign Policy.* Economic and Political Weekly
[39] See more in Hong, E. (2014) *Soap, sparkle and pop; South Korea's soft power.* The Economist; Jaggi, M. (2014) *South Korea to Exert "Soft Power" Internationally through Books.*

power as one part of their comprehensive power. The authors have made important conceptual and empirical advances in analyzing the subject of soft power of countries in East Asia. With different countries, the authors pointed out their different ways of developing their soft power. Scholars have been more concentrated on the rise of those countries' soft power. However, it is really difficult to find proper scholarly materials on smaller countries like Vietnam, either in English or Vietnamese.

Following the debate on soft power, the body of literature of cultural diplomacy has also grown. According to Gilboa (2009), public diplomacy grants small countries "ample opportunities to gain influence in world affairs far beyond their limited material capabilities"[40]. Meanwhile, cultural diplomacy has long been considered one of the main tools of a country to improve its attractiveness to other countries in the broader field of public diplomacy. As Cull (2008) stated in his article, cultural diplomacy is an actor's attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad. Historically, cultural diplomacy has meant a country's policy to facilitate the export of examples of its culture[41]. However, they mainly focus on the cultural diplomacy of great powers. For example, in the U.S., cultural diplomacy has become one of the main pillars of public diplomacy. As Taylor (2013) cited Senator Fulbright writing, "foreign policy cannot be based on military posture and diplomatic activities alone in today's world. The shape of the world a generation from now will be influenced far more by how well we communicate the values of our society to others than by our military or diplomatic superiority"[42]. It would be incomplete if we talk about American cultural diplomacy without mentioning the works of Cynthia P. Schneider[43]. She has done researches on cultural diplomacy, one of which is *"Diplomacy That Works: "Best Practices" in Cultural Diplomacy"*. In this piece of writing, she mentioned cultural diplomacy as the

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[40] Gilboa, E. (2009). *The Public Diplomacy of Middle Powers.* Public Diplomacy Magazine.

[41] Cull, N. (2008) *Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories.* Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 616, Public Diplomacy in a Changing World , pp. 31-54

[42] Taylor, R (2013) *Cultural Diplomacy: the Future.* Retrieved July 15, 2014 from http://.www.biopolitics.gr/biowp/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/id-**taylor**.pdf

[43] Cynthia P. Schneider teaches, publishes, and organizes initiatives in the field of cultural diplomacy, with a focus on relations with the Muslim world. From 1998-2001 she served as U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, during which time she led initiatives in cultural diplomacy, biotechnology, cyber security, and education. Dr. Schneider publishes and speaks frequently on topic related to arts, culture, and media and international affairs, particularly the Muslim world. Her writings range from blogs for the Huffington Post and CNN.com to policy papers for the Brookings Institution. She held a Research Fellowship from the USC Center on Public Diplomacy to write a policy paper, *'Public Diplomacy and Culture in Afghanistan   and   Pakistan.'*   Information   retrieved   from http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/schneidc/?PageTemplateID=179

best tool to help countries communicate the intangibles[44]. More and more countries have taken cultural diplomacy into account to enhance their soft power. In Asia, even Japan, which has long been seen as an economic giant and political dwarf, is also establishing its cultural diplomacy in order to improve its soft power in a more competitive world. As Yasushi and McConnell (2008) mentioned in their work *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, Japan was the first country in East Asia to embrace the concept of soft power as an instrument of its foreign affairs and security policy, particularly because of its constitutional constraints on the use of military hard power[45]. Other countries have followed those steps of Japan. The academic literature on the cultural diplomacy of medium countries[46] mostly focused on analyzing aspects of each country's soft power such as South Korea's Hallyu. So, it can be said that there has not been enough to describe the whole wave of soft power in the region if small countries like Vietnam is excluded.

In Vietnam, there has been not much work on Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy. In Vietnam, the government and scholars started to realize that in this present world where power and influence belong to the many, state must make themselves known by more people in more places. There have been initial steps made by Vietnamese government in order to improve Vietnam's soft power as well as cultural diplomacy. However, the number of works on this topic is still limited.

Le (2011) has described the resources of Vietnam's soft power including Vietnamese culture, traditional values, literature, traditional music, tourism, and so on in his work: *Soft Power of Vietnam and ASEAN towards China*[47]. More importantly, the author put the traditional unity and patriotism of Vietnamese people in the context of the South China Sea dispute with China. He succeeded in giving a clear overview of Vietnam's soft power in the article. However, he did not mention the practical tools that Vietnam can improve its soft power with. Song (2014) emphasized in this work that the main part of Vietnam's soft power is its cultural soft power[48]. In his article: *Cultural*

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[44] Schneider, C.P. (2003) *Diplomacy That Works: "Best Practices" in Cultural Diplomacy.* Center for Arts and Culture

[45] Watanabe Yasushi and David McConnell (2008). *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States.* New York: M.E.Sharpe

[46] Eduard Jordaan (2003) *The Concept of a Middle Power in International Relations: Distinguishing between Emerging and Traditional Middle Powers*, Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies , p. 165-181.

[47] Le, V.T. (2011) *Sức mạnh mềm của Việt Nam và ASEAN đối với Trung Quốc. Tạp chí Thời Đại Mới (Soft Power of Vietnam and ASEAN towards China. The New Era Magazine)*

[48] Song, T. (2014) *"Ngoại giao văn hóa" với vấn đề gia tăng "sức mạnh mềm" của Việt Nam trong hội nhập và phát triển. ("Cultural Diplomacy" in Enhancing Vietnam "Soft Power" in Integration and Development).* VietStudies. Retrieved October 20, 2014 from

Diplomacy in Enhancing Vietnam "Soft Power" in Integration and Development, he mentioned Japan, Singapore, South Korea and their path of enhancing soft power for Vietnam to study. Also, like Le, he wrote about the values that can build up Vietnam cultural soft power. More than that, he also suggested some ways that Vietnam can work on to improve its cultural soft power to earn a higher position in the region political arena. In general, he emphasized that public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy are important means to establish Vietnam cultural soft power to the world.

Regarding Vietnamese cultural diplomacy, there have been not many works written on this topic. One of the well-known books on this topic is *Cultural Diplomacy: Rationale, International Experiences and Application* by Pham Thai Viet and Ly Thi Hai Yen (2012). In this book, the authors have given a quite complete picture of the theories used as the rationale of cultural diplomacy. Besides, they also mentioned the ways some other countries like the U.S. or Japan that took their first steps on the way of enhancing their soft power with cultural diplomacy. From those international experiences, they have analyzed and suggested the initiatives for Vietnam to use mass media to carry out its cultural diplomacy. They also claimed that it is important to transform culture into one of the aspects of a country's soft power. Every state would have different ways of making use of their culture or cultural diplomacy, so that learning from other countries' experiences can help Vietnam to utilize its cultural diplomacy without making major mistakes. Another important work is *Cross-Culture and Vietnamese Cultural Diplomacy* by Le Thanh Binh, Doan Van Dung, Nguyen Tuan Hiep and Nguyen Anh Thu (2012). In this book, the authors covered the knowledge of the clash of cultures in the world, its theories and application. Then they analyzed the trends that countries used to follow to establish their cultural diplomacy and more specifically, how Vietnam should carry out its own cultural diplomacy based on the lessons learnt. The authors argued that cultural diplomacy sets the basis for modern cooperation between Vietnam and other countries and it also helps increase national position in the world arena. One of very few works in English is Duong Quoc Thanh's article: *Cultural Diplomacy, the Third Pillar in the Comprehensive Diplomatic Strategy of Vietnam* in 2011. However, this article just gave a very brief look at Vietnamese cultural diplomacy with description of the concepts, goals and priorities, implementing agency of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. It shows that there is a gap in the literature of soft power and cultural diplomacy of Vietnam.

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http://www.viet-studies.info/kinhte/SongThanh_SucManhMemVietNam.htm

CHAPTER 2: SOFT POWER AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN SOME COUNTRIES (THE UNITED STATES, CHINA, JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA)

Before discussing Vietnamese concepts of soft power and its cultural diplomacy, I would like to go through some other countries' perceptions of soft power and how they used their cultural diplomacy to enhance their soft power. Nowadays, the quality of states in soft power is not explicit, but just relative. Among various types of powers in the world, I would like to mention 4 typical types of powers: a great power, a rising power, a regional power, and a middle power with the ways they enhance their soft power. With a more specific summary of the researches on soft power and cultural diplomacy of the United States, China, Japan and South Korea, I hope that I could establish a more detailed framework for my analysis of Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy. Besides the U.S., which has brought the ideas of soft power and cultural diplomacy into its foreign policies for some time, the rest of them are three countries in Asia. They shared the same regional context with Vietnam. Also, they have the same Eastern culture with Vietnam to some extents, so that by looking at those countries' concepts of soft power and the ways they have carried out their cultural diplomacy, readers can have a glimpse of Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy.

2.1 The United States

The scholars and policymakers in the U.S. have studied the U.S. soft power and cultural diplomacy in this country for a few decades. Having a good look at the U.S. soft power and how it has improved it through cultural diplomacy would give us some ideas when analyzing that of Vietnam as they could be lessons that Vietnam could follow. Most of them have defined soft power according to Nye's definition[49]. More specifically, Nye also suggested the sources of American soft power. In his works, Nye has mentioned the sources of American soft power[50]. According to Nye, there are three primary resources within a country: the country's culture (if the desired final outcome is attraction from others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as to be legitimate and having moral authority)[51]. Culture, as defined in Oxford dictionary, is the ideas, customs, and

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[49] See in Chapter I
[50] Nye, J. (2004) *Soft power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York: Public Affairs
[51] Ibid

social behavior of a particular people or society[52]. In addition to this general definitions, Nye mentioned that it would be easier to increase the chances of achieving one state's desired results due to the attraction and duty that it creates if it possesses more universal values or its policies promote the values that others share[53]. For instance, American culture expressed itself from Harvard to Hollywood[54]. American movies have spread American traditional values all over the world. Or the prestigious education system as Harvard has always been a model for other countries to imitate. Another source of soft power mentioned by Nye is the political values. In world politics today, in a more simple way, political values can be understood as the values treasured by states when carrying out its policies. Sometimes, those political values would become instruments to improve one state's image in others' eyes. Last but not least, foreign policy is also considered one source of a state's soft power. However, it is not always true that one state's foreign policy can improve its national image. An obvious example for this is American image after the Iraq war in 2003 when the U.S. managed to carry out the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq without UN approval as well as the world public support. According to a report by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press in 2004, the world witnessed a widespread discontent with America and its policies and this did not have any tendency to diminish but just intensified. As a result, initiatives of the U.S. public diplomacy after September 11 served the purpose of informing, engaging and influencing people around the world[55]. To conclude, culture, political values and foreign policy all can affect how other states perceive one state's image.

Many American scholars indicated that nowadays, cultural diplomacy has been considered one of the most meaningful components of a country's public diplomacy in order to increase its soft power. Cultural diplomacy-the branch of diplomacy that includes cultural products and encounters ranging from English-language libraries abroad to arts and student exchanges-frequently was named in Congressional hearings and policy directives as a potential antidote to ill will and fractured relationships[56]. This

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[52] See Oxford Dictionary at http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/culture

[53] Nye, J.(2005) *Soft Power and Higher Education.* Havard University. Retrieved November 2, 2-14 from https://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/FFP0502S.pdf

[54] Nye, J. (2009) *Havard Professor Joseph Nye on Hard and Soft Power: It is Pointless to Talk to Al-Quaida.* Interview conducted by Gabor Steingart and Gregor Peter Schmitz on Spiegel Online International. Retrieved January 4, 2015 from http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/harvard-professor-joseph-nye-on-hard-and-soft-power-it-is-pointless-to-talk-to-al-qaida-a-643189.html

[55] Snow, N. (2005). *"U.S. Public Diplomacy: Its History, Problems and Promise".*Readings in *Propaganda and Persuasion*. SAGE Publications. Chapter 12

[56] Croft, C. (2013) *Dance Returns to American Cultural Diplomacy: The U.S. State Department's 2003 Dance Residency Program and Its After Effects.* Congress on Research in Dance, p.23-39

proved that the U.S. has always paid good attention to cultural diplomacy. Thanks to cultural diplomacy, people of different cultures can now interact and share their cultural values and beliefs. Education and exchanges could be seen as one of the strongest activities in American cultural diplomacy. The prestige of American education has proved itself as an advantage of American cultural diplomacy. There are many political leaders having studied in one of the U.S. universities. Scholarships and exchange programs brought more and more people closer to American cultural values as they gave them chances to experience the real life and society of the U.S. As Cynthia P. Schneider[57] emphasized, "cultural diplomacy in all its variety provides a critical, maybe even the best, tool to communicate the intangibles that make America great: individual freedoms; justice and opportunity for all; diversity and tolerance"[58]. This key understanding has been frequently used in the recent publications of American researchers as well as taken into consideration of American policymakers.

The formation of United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1953 marked the beginning of the U.S. public diplomacy age. Its main function was to disseminate abroad information about the United States, its people, culture, and policies as authorized by the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948[59]. Beginning in1954, the U.S. State Department sponsored a Cultural Presentations Program that sent thousands of musicians to distant lands. The main purpose was to enhance the reputation of American culture, create a positive impression of the United States and its foreign policy. The artists performed with the hope that American cultural and information programs would pour American ideas and values into the minds of the foreign public[60]. In 1955 USIA deployed photographic exhibition as a great new tool of cultural diplomacy: a magnificent photographic exhibition originally developed for the Museum of Modern Art in New York called The Family of Man. Created by the legendary photographer Edward Steichen, The Family of Man comprised 503 pictures by 273 photographers, both professional and amateur, from sixty-eight countries including the Soviet Union. As Cull (2009) analyzed, The Family of Man was a remarkable piece of cultural diplomacy on many levels. On one hand, it was a

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[57] Schneider, C.P. op. cit. note 43
[58] Schneider, C.P. (2003) op. cit. note 44
[59] Information retrieved October 23, 2014 from
 https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people/principalofficers/director-usia
[60]Fosler-Lussier, D. (2012) *Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural Diplomacy, Globalization, and Imperialism.* Diplomatic History, Vol. 36, No. 1(January 2012). © 2012The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR).Published by Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

very emotionally successful work of art. On the other hand, the author suggested that many cultures were displayed in the work and it sought to emphasize their shared experiences. What was really worth-noticing about this exhibition was America presented the world to the world and got their praise instead of presenting America to the world[61]. It is worth-noticing that the U.S. has not waited until after the September 11 to head back to the Middle East to win "hearts and minds" there. They once started the nonprofit Franklin Book Programs in 1952. This program lasted until 1978 and helped to make possible the publication of some 3,000 titles in languages such as Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, Indonesian, and Portuguese; established both a publishing infrastructure and a market for U.S. books in areas where they had not reached to before[62]. In 1956, Edward Laroque Tinker of the New York Times Book Review for providing people of the Middle East with information of about American life and almost every aspect of American culture so that they could learn "how decent, kindly and likeable" the inhabitants of the rest of the globe are. Another example of the U.S. cultural diplomacy activities is the exchange programs. These exchanges not only help foreign publics to understand more American ideals and cultures—they also provide American students, educators, and families with valuable experience and information that can be used to improve quality of life, competitiveness and security in the United States. There are three distinct types of programs—those that facilitate international student travel to the U.S., programs for American students to travel abroad, and "traditional" programs that incorporate both American and international travel. More specifically, they have established traditional academic exchange programs, academic exchange programs specifically intended for U.S. citizen participation and Academic exchanges specifically intended for non-U.S citizens[63].

Above are the U.S. diverse cultural diplomacy activities in order to develop its soft power. In general, it is clear to see that the U.S. has invested quite a huge amount of resources, from human resource to financial resource, into telling the American story to the world. They have tried to establish an image of a free, democratic and culturally diverse America. In America, it is believed that people are free to pursue a better life.

[61] Cull, N. (2009) *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*, Published by FIGUEROA PRESS, USC Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School, University of Southern California

[62] Robbins, L. (2007) *Publishing American Values: The Franklin Book Programs as Cold War Cultural Diplomacy* Library Trends, Volume 55, Number 3, Winter, pp. 638-650

[63]Trost, K &Wallin, M. (2013). *Academic Exchange: A Pillar of American Public Diplomacy.* Retrieved September 13, 2014 from http://americansecurityproject.org/ASP%20Reports/Ref%200135%20-%20Academic%20Exchange%20-%20A%20Pillar%20of%20American%20Public%20Diplomacy.pdf.

Stories of "rags to riches", such as Presidents starting out in log cabins and highly successful entrepreneurs who came to America as penniless immigrants-not to mention the guy that dropped out of Harvard to become the richest man in the world[64]- have been told around the world through American channels. It also urged people from other countries to come to America. As a result, the American culture was formed from cultures from different parts of the world. So that the American can claim that it is a multicultural country, which can become America's attraction as people who come to America can always feel like home there. This is just one of many cultural values and beliefs that the U.S. wants to send to the people outside. Arguments have been raised on whether or not the U.S. has carried out a successful cultural diplomacy policy. As a great power, the U.S. has more advantages than other countries when carrying its foreign policies, especially the cultural diplomacy activities. First of all, the U.S. has a great financial source to fund each and every activity in order to export its culture to foreign countries. The U.S. economy has been on top of the world, so it is easy to understand that the U.S has more than enough to fund the scholarship or exchange programs Secondly, the U.S. has also been known as a multicultural country thanks to huge population of immigrants. So when one looks at the U.S. culture from the outside, he may find some of his own cultural identity in the overall American culture. This may lead to a mutual understanding and sharing among Americans and foreigners. Thirdly, the U.S., with its pace of development, has created many models that the world needs to study. One that stands out is the educational system with prestigious universities such as Harvard or Princeton, where famous political leaders had studied. Lastly, the U.S. is one of the countries that invest much in its cultural diplomacy with agencies set up to serve in this field. Also, the number of scholars studying cultural diplomacy has increased recently. As a result, more and more initiatives that the U.S. can make use of to establish new forms of cultural diplomacy are brought up to maintain the image of the U.S. as how it always wants it to be. There cannot be enough words regarding this thesis scope to include every reason why the U.S. has been quite successful in the field of cultural diplomacy. However, we can see that with its ability and resources, the U.S. can be seen as a culture exporter and it is more active in the ways of carrying out its policies.

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[64] *American Political Culture.* Retrieved September 13, 2014 from http://www.ushistory.org/gov/4a.asp

2.2 China

At the beginning of 21st century, China has risen to become one of the major powers of the world. Everyone was paying attention to the economic power that China projects without noticing the expansion of China's soft power. However, soft power has contributed much in the comprehensive power that China tried to attain. In this section, I would draw out an overview of China's soft power and its cultural diplomacy strategies to gain more soft power in order to enhance its comprehensive power. Scholars in China have written about this topic for quite a long time. According to analysts, Wang Huning[65] is the Chinese author who first wrote about China's soft power. In his article published in 1993, he stated that culture is the main source of a state's soft power[66]. Later on, there have been more and more scholars working on this field to create schools of thoughts on Chinese concepts of soft power. There is little consensus on how China conceptualizes its soft power. So, in his work, Ying (2006) concluded that the mainstream of understanding of soft power in China was built within Nye's conceptual framework[67]. According to Ying, there were two main schools of thoughts of scholars and policymakers spinning around the discourse of soft power in China. The first one is led by sociologists and philosophers, which considered culture the core of soft power. This school of thoughts has taken up the majority of scholars. The minority idea, followed by some international relations experts, suggested that political power is the core of China's soft power[68]. As a result, when describing soft power in China, there are two main definitions following the schools of thoughts above. The first one refers soft power to Chinese culture, foreign policy, and international image, some particular ideas or policies and so on. The second definition is much alike to Nye's definition when saying that soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment[69]. From some major works on China

[65] Wang Huning is a politician of the People's Republic of China. He served as secretary of the Secretariat of the Communist Party of China Central Committee in 2007-2012, and as the Chief of CPC Policy Research Office (Information retrieved September 15, 2014 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wang_Huning)

[66] Wang,H. (1993) *"Zuoweiguojiashili de wenhua: Ruanquanli" [Culture as national power: Soft power],* Journal of Fudan University

[67] Ying, Z.(2006) *Assessing China's Soft Power Diplomacy and its Implications on Asia Cooperation.* Retrieved September 22, 2014 from http://www.google.co.nz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCEQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.waseda-giari.jp%2Fsysimg%2Fimgs%2F200908_si_st_09zhou_paper_f.pdf&ei=Bxq2VMDtFIPOmAWhz4DQCw&usg=AFQjCNHZ6omsikOg5zmOTlfnmD37SqElqw&bvm=bv.83640239,d.dGY

[68] Ibid

[69] Ibid

soft power, we can see that the cultural school-the major school of thoughts has made quite a huge impact on the governmental officials and policymakers of China. In the later part of this section, we can see it through the conceptualization of Chinese soft power goals, sources and through the ways China expands its soft power.

By the early 2000s, Chinese scholars and officials eventually developed the term "hepingjueqi", or peaceful rise[70]. With its growing economy, as well as the increasing military assertiveness, China has provoked anxiety from not only the neighboring countries in the region but also countries in the far land such as the U.S.. Because of this, Chinese leaders have to emphasize again and again that China's rise "will not come at the cost of any other country, will not stand in the way of any other country, nor pose a threat to any other country"[71]. According to Kurlantzick (2007), the main goals of China's soft power were (i) to build up its sphere of influence, make influence on world opinion that is as strong as China's international standing, (ii) to portray itself as a benign, peaceful, and constructive actor in world politics, (iii) to make others not be afraid of China's future military power, (iv) to build a ring of allies and become everyone's friend[72]. To pursue these goals, China has carried out many policies, especially those sorted as public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy.

China has been said to be one of the four great ancient civilizations of the world[73]. So, as Barr (2011) stated, culture stands at the center of China's soft power sources[74]. Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) also shared his idea by saying that culture is an essential source of China's soft power. International community was attracted to Chinese culture more in the period of reform and opening. This period also witnessed many Chinese leaders' incentives to expand the nation cultural influence[75]. President Hu Jintao once claimed: "The Chinese culture not only belongs to the Chinese but also to the whole world. We stand ready to step up cultural exchanges with the rest of the world in a joint promotion of cultural prosperity"[76]. From this, we can see that the Chinese consider their culture basically a world culture. Another source of China soft power is its

[70]Kurlantzick, J. (2007) op. cit. note 35
[71] Prime Minister Wen Jiabao-quoted in Pan, E. (2006) *The Promise and Pitfalls of China's Peaceful Rise.* Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved September 22, 2015 from
http://www.cfr.org/china/promise-pitfalls-chinas-peaceful-rise/p10446
[72]Kurlantzick, J. (2007) op. cit. note 35
[73] Wu, D. (2014) *A Panoramic View of Chinese Culture*. Simon & Schuster
[74] Barr, M. (2011) *Who's Afraid of China? The Challenge of Chinese Soft Power*.Zed Books, p.31
[75]Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) op. cit. note 36
[76] Quoted from Perlez, J. (2004) *Chinese Move to Eclipse U.S. Appeal in Southeast Asia*. New York Times. Retrieved October 25, 2015 from
http://www.nytimes.com/2004/11/18/international/asia/18asia.html?pagewanted=print&_r=0

domestic values and policies. A fast-growing pace of development has helped China become a world model for development of other countries. The Chinese has a ruthless willingness to innovate and experiment, so that they push the country into another higher level of development, based on their own characteristics[77]. Also, the domestic political system is also an important point which can create Chinese attraction. Thomas Friedman, a columnist of New York Times, said that the authoritarian Chinese political system, where leaders can, and do, just order that problems be solved, can make other countries feel jealous[78]. One main source of China's soft power that needs to be mentioned here is Chinese foreign policy. China has approached to regional and international issues in a less confrontational, more sophisticated, more confident and constructive way[79]. In China White Paper issued in 2005, Chinese officials stated that this approach seeks to support widely recognized norms governing international relations, peaceful settlement of disputes, mutually beneficial economic ties, combating non-traditional security threats, and effective disarmament and arms control[80]. Beside these ideas, Vogel (2006) claimed there are other things that make China attractive to the world outside. The first one is the economy's size and openness. China has offered a fairly open economic system that can make other countries excited when becoming trading partners with China. The second thing that attracts people to China is its idea of sovereignty and non-interference. According to Vogel, unlike the American, China does not try to sell modern machines and Confucianism together. With countries who are tired of the external interfering forces, China could be very appealing to this extent. The third pillar of Chinese attraction is that it has a different form of government. With the problems happening to democracies in the world nowadays, a government system where there are elites trying to think what is good for the country first could be charming[81].

With the attraction mentioned above, it is easy to understand that China has carried out many activities in order to employ its cultural diplomacy, under the umbrella of public diplomacy to attain the goals of creating an image of a China- "a country that works hard to give its people a better future and seeks understanding for its political system

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[77] Ibid

[78] Friedman, T.(2005) *Thou Shalt Not Destroy the Center.* New York Times. Retrieved October 16, 2014 from
http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B02E6D9123EF932A25752C1A9639C8B63)

[79] Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) op. cit. note 36

[80] *China White Paper on Peaceful Development.* Issued in 2005. Retrieved October 12, 2015 from
http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm

[81] Vogel, E. (2006) *The Rise of China's Soft Power.* Institute of Politics, Harvard University

and policies; a stable, trustworthy and responsible economic partner, a rising economic power that does not have to be feared; a trustworthy and responsible member of the international community, capable of and willing to contribute actively to world peace and lastly, an ancient culture with a long history"[82]. As many Chinese leaders and scholars claimed that culture was the main pillar of China's soft power, there have been many cultural diplomacy activities carried out by China to expand its influence. Lou (2009) argued, "if a major power cannot provide some guiding moral or cultural ideals of universal value for the international society, its major power status is unlikely to be acknowledged by other states, and even its own development is hard to be sustained"[83]. Since China wants to open itself up to the world, the goal of introducing and disseminating Chinese culture to the world has recently come into prominence in this country. With an annual budget $200 million, the China National Office for teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language has launched a language-promotion network, which aims at quadrupling the number of foreigners studying the Chinese to 100 million in around 4 or 5 years[84]. Also, cultural diplomacy in China has received a considerable financial backing from the government. According to the financial magazine Caijin, China's culture industry had a market value of 900 billion yuan (US$132 billion) in 2010[85]. In 2010, Chinese government tried to enhance the competitiveness of China's culture industry by issuing the Plan to Reinvigorate the Culture Industry. This plan set out plans to establish a fund, which would be financed by central government with the support from state-owned cultural enterprises and China's leading financial institutions. It was expected to support the performing arts, animation, film, television production and distribution, publishing, cultural exhibitions and even online media[86]. It can be said that two successes of Chinese cultural diplomacy are the cultural exchange programs and the establishment of Confucius Institutes in many countries. Right in the beginning years of improving soft power, China organized an eleven-nation performance tour entitled "Voyage of Chinese Culture to Africa"[87]. China not only increases cultural

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[82]Hooghe, I. (2005) *"Public Diplomacy in the People's Republic of China"*.The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations. Edited by Jan Melissen, pp. 93-94

[83]Luo Jianbo, *"Zhongguojueqi de duiwaiwenhuazhanlue" [External cultural strategy in China's rise]*. Quoted in Li, M. (2009) *Soft Power in Chinese Discourse: Popularity and Prospect*. In *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics,* edited by Li,M. (2009) Lexington Books A Division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, inc.

[84]Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) op. cit. note 36

[85] Barr, M. (2011), op. cit. note 74

[86] Ibid

[87]Kurlantzick, J. (2007) op. cit. note 35

exchanges with developing countries which are their main economic partners, it also aims at countries in Europe and other parts of the world. In October 2003, Paris hosted a "Chinese Culture Year," a cultural fair consisting of various programs on the three themes of: "China in History," "A Multi-Faceted China," and "China Today." A Chinese language education program was launched currently with the opening of various events of "Chinese Culture Year". In addition, during that year, China sponsored a "Chinese Cultural Festival" in Germany, a cultural exchange project with Austria and concluded inter-governmental agreements with Italy on the establishment of cultural centers in each other's country. Besides, Chinese government considers Chinese language education as another important way of promoting Chinese culture in Chinese cultural diplomacy as a whole. The China National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCEL) was established in 1987 that administers the recently created "Confucius Institute" program. The program goal is to establish Chinese language schools abroad[88]. This has led to the blooming of Confucius Institutes in the world. By late 2005, 32 Confucius Institutes had been set up by Chinese Ministry of Education in 23 countries to provide Chinese language and cultural resources to the host countries[89] and this number is still increasing. With the effects of those programs, China has attracted more and more Chinese language learners as well as scholars to come and study Chinese culture. In another word, China has brought its charm up to a higher level.

With the examples above, it is clear that China has made some good efforts and gained success in creating and developing its soft power. With available national soft power assets such as an ancient and rich culture, China can attract more countries, as well as make their influence abroad as a rising power. However, there is still doubt about Chinese soft power strategies or cultural diplomacy. It seems that China was trying to bring its culture to the outside world, but it "forgot" to bring the world to its people. With the limits of social network websites to connect global citizens in China, it is hard to say that Chinese people have a full understanding of the world outside. This may make the cultural exchange become more difficult not only for its people but also for global audience, which may limit Chinese cultural impact on others. Cultural diplomacy of China is somehow just a one-way policy. China has offered much to other countries in cultural exchange programs. However, there is still hesitation in the way China

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[88] Ibid
[89] Gill, B. and Huang, Y. (2006) op. cit. note 36

accepts others' cultural ideas and values. Most of the cultural diplomacy activities of China have been funded by the government agencies. This may cause some the lack of new initiatives which originate from the private institutions or individuals. Also, with too much governmental involvement, what China tries to set up in other countries may fall apart. The most obvious example is the closing down of Confucius Institutes in different countries. The U.S. closed down two Confucius Institutes in just a short time because of an apparent disagreement over Chinese government controls[90]. The fact that the closedown also happened in Canada or Sweden has set back China's soft power. In general, with its rich culture and fast-growing economy, China can be seen as an actor in world politics who has everything it takes to enhance its soft power. Despite some limitations, the cultural diplomacy of China's policies to develop its influence on other parts of the world is still considered the vital part of China's comprehensive soft power strategies.

2.3 Japan

When mentioning the powers of Asia, it would be incomplete without mentioning Japan. Japan has been known as one of the countries who could recover really fast after the wars and it has earned respect as becoming one of the top economies of the world despite all the aftermaths of the wars. Recently, the discussions about Japanese soft power have appeared more and more among scholars. So in this section, I will give a brief discussion on how Japan cultural diplomacy contributes to the development of Japanese soft power.

Despite the fact that other countries have looked at Japan as an economic giant, they still have doubt about Japan's political capacity. This requires Japan to think about the ways to improve its comprehensive power, including its soft power. Since the beginning of 21st century, the urge of Japan to develop its soft power has appeared in many forums. Apparently, a catalyst to Japanese intellectual and political circles embracing the "soft power" concept was Douglas McGray's article titled "*Japan's Gross National Cool*"[91]. In his article, the author argued that, although Japan unfortunately sank into economic stagnation in 1991, which was known as the "lost decade", Japan's pop

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[90] Foster, P. (2014) *China soft power set back as US universities shut second Confucius Institute in a week*, The Telegraph. Retrieved January 13, 2015 from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/11133921/China-soft-power-set-back-as-US-universities-shut-second-Confucius-Institute-in-a-week.html

[91] Lam, P.E. (2007) *Japan's Quest for "Soft Power": Attraction and Limitation.* East Asia 24:p.349–363

culture is still attractive and "cool, and has gone on to take the world by storm. Japanese manga, animation and music are all considered the nation's cultural treasures by Japanese Foreign Ministry"[92]. This idea joined the nation's mainstream discourse as one of the main concepts of Japan's soft power[93]. Despite the fact that Japan's soft power had been mentioned during the 80s, there have been limited by residual suspicion lingers abroad, especially in Asian countries after what it did in the World War II[94]. This is the reason why Japan needs a cultural makeover, to fix its image in the Asian community as well as the world. In April 2005, the Japanese government suggested in Japan's 21st Century Vision that toward 2030, Japan should become an "open, culturally creative nation" using tradition, creative power, and technology to bring out its attraction and strength[95]. From this we can see that Japan is quite determined to build up its soft power based mainly on its culture.

The sources of Japanese soft power are not only Japanese culture as Nye claimed that "Japan has more potential soft power resources than any other Asian country"[96]. Berger (2010) stated that Japan's economic power is its key source of influence in Asia. There was survey of Asian elites which indicated that the elites have an overall positive evaluation of Japan's regional economic role. It can be said that Japan's economic performance has been watched by the whole world in admiration. The fact that the nation's GDP grew from$1,075 billion in 1980 to$3,053 billion in 1990 to $4,470 billion in 2000 speaks volumes for its soft power[97]. They also agree that Japan is a market and a place to invest that can catch their attention[98]. Also, when talking about economy and trading, we cannot miss out on the needs for Japanese technology goods, especially the sophisticated ones, of Asian consumers[99]. Another source of Japanese soft power indicated by Berger (2010) is participation in international institutions, which

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[92]Sugiura, T. (2008) *Japan's Creative Industries: Culture as a Source of Soft Power in the Industrial Sector.* In McConnell, D.L. &Wanatabe, Y. (2008) *Soft Power : Superpowers –Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States.* East Gate Book.P. 149

[93] Ibid

[94] McConnell, D.L. (2008) *Japan's Image Problem and the Soft Power Solution: The JET Program as Cultural Diplomacy.* In McConnell, D.L. &Wanatabe, Y. (2008) *Soft Power : Superpowers –Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States.*

[95]Sugiura, T. (2008) op. cit. note 92

[96]Nye, quoted in Akaha, T. (2005) *"Soft Power" in Japan's Security Policy: Implications for Alliance with the United States.* Pacific Focus, Vol. XX, No. 1, 59-91. by the Center for International Studies, Inha University

[97]Akaha, T. (2005) op. cit. note 49

[98] Berger, T.(2010) *Japan in Asia: A Hard Case for Soft Power.* Published by Elsevier Limited on behalf of Foreign Policy Research Institute, p.565-582.

[99] Whitney, C. and Shambaugh,D. (2009) *Soft Power in Asia: results of a 2008 Multinational Survey of Public Opinion,* Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, pp. 18-19.

provide a vital forum in which countries can discuss and propagate their values[100]. Japan has long sought to promote the development of institutions in the Asian region, beginning in the 1960s when it proposed the creation of a Pacific Asian Free Trade Area and took the lead in the establishment of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)[101]. Last but not least, Japanese culture is considered a crucial factor of Japan's soft power. In recent years, the government has tried to tap into the country's alluring popular culture by touting a "Cool Japan" of manga, anime, cuisine, and design[102]. And as Tokyo's Diplomatic Bluebook 2006 also noted: "Japanese culture is currently attracting attention around the world as 'Cool Japan'[103]. Looking through the materials on Japanese culture, it is more likely mentioned as cultural industries. According to Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2008), the Japanese cultural industries are considered as the most advanced in East Asia[104]. As he analyzed, culture is considered a means to strengthen a country's influence. So, cultural industries play an important part in this process. Cultural values and beliefs are distributed by the powerful industries as they are driven by commerce[105]. With the publication of the manga and anime, it is not hard to find children who know of Doraemon (the robot cat) or Kitty, or detective Conan. From those comic books, there is an urge for the young people to explore a new culture where there are their favorite characters. So, it can be said that the culture factor of Japanese soft power's sources is standing under the umbrella of Japanese cultural industries as a tool to enhance Japan's soft power.

There are many activities carried out to strengthen Japanese influence in the region as well as the world. Japan's economic power has given it the confidence and ability to get involved in boosting its soft power. The most important tool, regarding economic advance, is Japan's Overseas Development Aid (ODA) program. During the 80s and 90s, Japan emerged as one of the world leading providers of foreign aid[106]. Broader ideological goals including environment protection, disarmament and democratic values are all promoted through Japanese foreign aid[107]. Moreover, to another extent, Japanese

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[100] Berger, T.(2010) op. cit. note 98
[101] Ibid
[102] Ibid
[103] Lam, P.E. (2007) op. cit. note 98
[104]Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2008) *Contesting soft power: Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia.* International Relations of the Asia-Pacific Volume 8 ,p.73–101
[105] Ibid
[106] Berger, T.(2010) op. cit. note 98
[107] See Dennis D. Trinidad (2007) *''Japan's ODA at the Crossroads: Disbursement Patterns of Japan's Development Assistance to Southeast Asia",* Asian Perspective31:2), pp.95–125.

foreign aid has become a tool to improve diplomatic relations with key Asian countries—especially South Korea and China, which received substantial sums of foreign aid in lieu of reparations for the damages inflicted by Japan during World War II and the colonial period[108]. Regarding the scope of this research, I would like to take a deeper look at Japanese cultural diplomacy which takes a crucial portion in the Japanese strategies to enhance its soft power. In November 2006, the Council on the Movement of People across Borders, an advisory council to Foreign Minister Also, proposed that Japan should tap on the rising popularity of manga and anime especially among the young abroad[109]. This rise in Japanese pop culture did not catch the attention of the government at first; however, the effect that this culture wave can make on foreign people was way beyond the expectation. This made Japanese government take more serious consideration on this source of nation's treasures. Headed by Cho Fujio, the chairman of Toyota Motor Corporation, the Council suggested the awarding of a "Japan Manga Grand Prize" to target foreign artists, and also appoint cultural ambassadors of anime to promote Japanese pop culture overseas. Gradually, this pop culture has helped to create what is named "cultural industries" in Japan which bring much benefit to Japan's economy in general. Sixty-five percent of the world's production of animated cartoon series is made in Japan, with estimated annual sales of licensed goods worth US$17 billion[110]. In America, Anime Master Pieces is a private initiative by New York-based Gorgeous Entertainment, supported by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). In Singapore, public relations companies (Singapore's I-Promo Events Marketing, and Japan's Dentsu) organized Anime Festival Asia 2008. This was backed by the Japan Foundation and Japan Embassy, together with toy company Bandai[111]. From those activities in order to spread Japan's popular culture, we can see that besides the government, the private sector also contributes to exporting Japanese culture. As Tokyo's diplomats on the ground implementing policy on a day-to-day basis argue 'it is not public sectors but private sectors who should take the lead in promoting "soft" power'[112]. Besides, Japan also focuses on the cultural exchange programs. The JENESYS2.0 project, a youth exchange program launched by the government of Japan,

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[108] Berger, T.(2010) op. cit. note 98
[109] *"Pop culture takes center stage in Japanese diplomacy"*, (2006) Kyodo News
[110] Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2008) op. cit. note 104
[111] Heng, Y. (2010) *Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the softest of them all? Evaluating Japanese and Chinese strategies in the 'soft' power competition era.* International Relations of the Asia-Pacific Volume 10, p.275– 304
[112] Ibid

aims to revitalize the Japanese economy through introduction of Japan's attractions to foreign tourists and consumers by promoting international understanding on the nation's potential strength, allure and values, including the "Cool Japan" concept. As a succeeding version of the JENESYS project which was implemented during 2007 to 2011, 30,000 youths from countries/regions of Asia, Pacific Islands and North America are expected to be invited to Japan in this project[113]. Japan also pays much attention on programs for the youth as they aim at changing the perceptions of Japan among the future generation of the region. The Southeast Asian Youth Exchange Program is a standout program. It is a tool of Japan's public diplomacy with an aim to foster friendship and mutual understanding among the youths from Japan and ASEAN countries. Moreover, participants of this program also have the chance to visit Japan as well as to live and work with Japanese people; therefore, after the program, they may change their own perceptions about Japan[114].

It is undeniable that Japan has carried out many programs in its cultural diplomacy in order to enhance its soft power in the world. However, it seems that the main target in projecting a great soft power of Japan is to achieve its economic goals. As Nissim (2012) explained, the officials fear that if they introduced too much Japanese culture to the outside, it might resurrect old wartime grievances. There were also concerns about the cultural exports which might undermine Japan's important commercial and industrial interests in this region[115]. It can be said that Japanese government has been taken cautious steps on the way of carrying out its cultural diplomacy. The cultural diplomacy is said to be more "inward-looking" than other countries[116]. Another worth-noticing thing of Japanese cultural diplomacy is that the government is quite responsive, rather than active in carrying those policies. Only when following and accommodating the success of the private sector in producing and exporting culture can Japanese government promote its cultural values and beliefs overseas successfully[117].

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[113]Anonymous, Information retrieved October 14, 2014 from
http://www.joca.or.jp/english/activities/jenesys20/
[114] Duong, Thu (2013) *Japan's Public Diplomacy as an Effective Tool in Enhancing its Soft Power in Vietnam - A Case-study of the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Exchange Program.* A Thesis Submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington
[115]Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2008) *Contesting soft power: Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia.* International Relations of the Asia-Pacific Volume 8 ,p.73–101
[116] Ibid
[117]Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin (2012) op. cit. note 104

2.4 South Korea

The reason that South Korea is mentioned in this chapter is that it shared something in common with Vietnam in terms of the country's context. South Korea stepped out of the civil war in the Korean Peninsula as an impoverished country in the region. The destructive images of this nation have lingered there for decades. However, until it made its reappearance as "the Miracle on the Han" and hosted the 1988 Seoul Olympics was it considered an economic leader in Asia thanks to its rapid economic development[118]. South Korea has risen as a middle power in the region, set free from being too influenced by the agenda set by major powers and now gets on its own way. As Hjalmarsson, D. (2013) stated, in spite of its miraculously fast-growing economy, and being the fifteenth largest economy in world and home to some of the most famous brands, South Korea is still not known and understood much in the world[119]. So, it is the time South Korea stepped out of the shadows of powerful neighbors, made its values seen by the whole world.

Scholars have noticed South Korea's soft power for years. However, the way that Korean government approached to the concepts of soft power is not much discussed. In those materials on South Korea's soft power, this concept has been mentioned mostly under the umbrella of the available definitions of Nye's[120]. However, the way that South Korea projects its soft power is different from the U.S. or China or Japan above. South Korean government approaches to this concept through two different ways: cultural policies and nation branding. Nation branding can be understood as a means by which smaller and lesser-known countries like South Korea can increase their soft power and become more visible in the global community[121]. Also, they emphasized on the culture of the nation and used culture as a tool to upgrade South Korea's image internationally. The reason why South Korean government took cultural policies and nation branding as new approaches to soft power had rooted from the sources of what they call South Korean's soft power. The first one is the fact that South Korea's has experienced a successful modernization in a very short period of time. The second one is the "Korean-

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[118]Yun, Y. (2012) Public Diplomacy and South Korea's Strategies. *The Korean Journal of International Studies, Vol. 10, No. 2 (December 2012), 275-296.*

[119]Hjalmarsson, D. (2013) *South Korea's Public Diplomacy: A cultural approach. The acquirement of soft power.* Södertörn University | Institution of Social Science

[120] See Chapter I

[121]Kim, R. (2011) *South Korean Cultural Diplomacy and Efforts to Promote the ROK's Brand Image in the United States and Around the World.* .Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies

wave" or Hallyu in many parts of Asia[122]. Exploiting those two sources will help South Korea earn the soft power that it deserves and wants to improve. Being considered the middle power of the world, South Korea is trying to spread its influence in order to gain two main goals. One is to enhance the country's international political and diplomatic power, which is weak compared with its hard power. The other goal is to find in soft power an alternative source of strength that will enlarge South Korea's "footprint" in both the region and the world. It is not easy for South Korea to compete with the giants in the region like China or Japan in terms of hard power. However, when it comes to soft power, it is not impossible to say that South Korea has its own impact on many countries in the region, which is not easy to be overcome by other major powers. One example of this idea can be the great success of the drama "Autumn in my Heart" shown in Egypt. After the screening of this drama, South Korean embassy in Egypt claimed that this drama had helped reverse the significant undermining of South Korea's reputation in the region[123].Or in 2011, a survey conducted by the Korea International Trade Association (KITA) reported 28.6% of 1,173 participants from Japan, China, Taiwan and Vietnam said that Hallyu had enormously influenced their decisions to purchase Korean products. 75% of participants said they had purchased South Korean products since coming into contact with the 'Korean wave'[124]. From this we can see how great the impact of Korean culture is. Being aware of the strength of its soft power's sources, South Korean government has carried out many policies to enhance its influence abroad, naming cultural diplomacy.

It can be said that South Korean government has carried out state-sponsored, outward-projecting cultural policies[125], unlike those of Japan. Cultural industries have played an increasingly important part in the state economic planning since 2001, when the Korea Culture and Contents Agency (KOCCA) was established to oversee and support its development[126]. Many agencies have been set up since then to carry out the activities that can bring South Korea closer to the world such as Korea Foundation or President

[122]Lee, G (2005) op. cit. note 20
[123] Anonymous, Information retrieved December 28, 2014 from "Autumn in my Heart Syndrome in Egypt", KBS News http://english.kbs.co.kr/hallyu/entertainment_news_view.html?No=1382
[124] Mumford, R. *Globalisation and Popular Culture: To what extent does South Korea's domestic popular culture have the potential to strengthen South Korea's 'soft power'?* Data retrieved December 14, 2015 from
http://global.kita.net/_engapp/board_view.jsp?grp=S2&no=914&code=S2001
[125]Joanna Elfving-Hwang (2013) *South Korean Cultural Diplomacy and Brokering 'K-Culture' outside Asia.* Korean Histories 4.1, p.14-26
[126] Ibid

Council on Nation Branding under the direct control of the President. The cultural diplomacy of South Korea also received a huge financial investment. In February 2013, the Export-Import Bank of Korea announced that it would provide loans of 1 trillion won (£604 million) to businesses involved in the expansion and promotion of Hallyu abroad[127].

To enhance the understanding of South Korean cultural values overseas, it is important to support the studying of Korean language. This has led to the formation of King Sejong Institute. Korean government set up this kind of institutes with 3 main goals: to promote the Korean language, to vitalize cultural exchange based on culture reciprocity, and to promote and spread the Korean language as a representative brand[128]. The Korean government has opened 91 new institutes around the globe since 2010, amounting to a total of 113 institutes. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism has announced plans to establish an additional 500 King Sejong Institutes overseas by 2015[129]. The establishment of King Sejong Institutes can be put into comparison with Confucius Institutes of China, American Corners of the U.S. or Japan's Cultural Centers in different countries in Asia. It can totally compete with them in order to attract foreign public to Korean language and culture. A note-worthy strength of South Korean cultural diplomacy is the Hallyu or "Korean wave" in Asia. Thanks to the attraction of Korean music, and dramas, Korean culture can be brought to even every family in the far away land. Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and Arirang TV both ensure that Korea is represented among on international airwaves[130]. Moreover, the government has managed to get popular Korean television dramas to be aired in remote countries such as Paraguay, Swaziland, Iran, Peru, and Morocco[131]. When looking at this aspect of South Korean cultural diplomacy, we may see that the promotion of South Korean culture is mostly in the hands of private actors such as entertainment companies. However, South Korean government also becomes very supportive to complement them, like sending Korean celebrities to other parts of Asia to spread their work[132]. In

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[127]Na Jeong-ju (2013), *Eximbank to Finance Hallyu Business*. Retrieved December 10, 2015 from http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/biz/2013/02/602_130133.html
[128]Hjalmarsson, D. (2013) op. cit. note 119
[129] Kim Hee-sung(2009) *Hangeul Day to boost Korea's pride.* Retrieved November 13, 2014 from http://www.korea.net/news/news/NewsView.asp?serial_no=20091008011.
[130] Cull, N. ( ) *'Bulging Ideas': Making Korea's Public Diplomacy Work.* The ASAN Institute for Policy Studies
[131]Kim, R. (2011)op. cit. note 121
[132]*MOFAT, 2007 Diplomatic White Paper;* p. 290; Retrieved December 12, 2014 from http://www.mofat.go.kr/english/political/whitepaper/index.jsp.

2009, the South Korean government started a campaign to make Korean cuisine go global. Their main goals are making Korean food more accessible in other countries, raising awareness of its health benefits and improving its reputation of its taste. With a huge amount of money invested in the campaign of $40 million, the South Korean government hoped that they could make Korean cuisine one of the world's top five favored cuisines by 2017[133]. Another standout activity is every year South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) sends performance troupes abroad and organizes Korean art exhibitions and film festivals in many different countries for foreign exposure. In 2009 a total of 77 events pertaining to the South Korean arts were held in 47 countries with the support of MOFAT[134].

Those above are just a few examples of South Korean ways of enhancing its influence on other countries, especially countries in Asia. We can see that the activities are diverse and cover almost every aspects of Korean culture such as language, music, ways of living, cuisine and so on. The strongest pillar in the South Korean soft power strategies should be the Korean culture. The cultural source has helped push the nation's economy forward. It is not difficult to find a young person who can name some Korean television dramas or celebrities. It is not hard to find visitors to South Korea bringing back cosmetics and fashion products that are similar to what they saw on Korean channels. The Korean Wave has been well managed by the government and contributed much to the enhancement of South Korea's soft power. What makes the cultural diplomacy of South Korea more distinguishable may be the way the government and private actors work together in order to gain the same goal. With the initiatives coming mostly from the private sector and the political, diplomatic or financial support from the government, it can be said that South Korea has made a role model for middle powers to successfully pursue soft power.

This chapter includes the cases of four countries that have put developing soft power into their comprehensive strategies for quite a long time which are the U.S., China, Japan and South Korea. Each of them has different sources of soft power, so that the ways they carry out cultural diplomacy also differ from each other. However, they have shared the common source, culture. They all highlighted the attraction of their culture as one of the main sources of their soft power. Besides, the U.S. established its political

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[133]Hartvig, N. (2009). *Korea aiming to refine image abroad.* Retrieved December 13, 2014 from http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2908409.

[134] *South Korean Diplomatic White Paper* (2009); ch. 3, sec. 3, "Overseas Performances, Exhibitions and Movies Introducing Korean Culture".

values and foreign policies as other sources of its soft power; China took advantage of its economy size and openness, the idea of sovereignty and non-interference and distinguishable form of government; Japan was proud of its advanced technology, high participation in international institutions and South Korea impresses others with its successful modernization as well as the "Korean-wave". Besides the similarities of exchange programs or institutions such as cultural centers, those countries still have their own way of enhancing their soft power through cultural diplomacy. Unlike the U.S., the three countries in Asia have focused on their culture industry. So, in short, the ways countries implement their cultural diplomacy mostly depend on what kind of sources of soft power they have. This could explain the ways Vietnam carry out its cultural diplomacy and the difference in its methods. It all depends on what sources of soft power Vietnam can project, as well as its economic capabilities and so on. It is undeniable that the four countries above have strength and weakness in establishing cultural diplomacy, however, they still have successful stories and achievements that other countries have to look up to and learn from them. Those cases have created a detailed framework of soft power and cultural diplomacy of different typical types of powers. This would help to form the basis for analyzing Vietnam's soft power and its cultural diplomacy as a tool to further develop its soft power.

CHAPTER 3: VIETNAM'S SOFT POWER AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

3.1 Vietnam: A Small Power or a Middle Power?

Before analyzing further the soft power and cultural diplomacy of Vietnam, it is necessary to know if Vietnam is considered a small power or a middle power by other countries and by itself. As there are different goals of different types of powers, understanding this of Vietnam would help provide a more in-depth look into Vietnam's soft power and cultural diplomacy. Also, there are ways to apply these ideas to the nation's diplomacy in order to make it most effective. So, it is important to allocate where Vietnam stands for it to figure out the most appropriate ways to develop cultural diplomacy and get the best benefits.

There have been many definitions of small power. Keohane (1969) defined a small power as a state whose leaders consider that it can never act alone or in a small group to make a significant impact on the system. They cannot affect the international system alone but with some concerted effort they can have an impact on the way the system works[135]. Another scholar, Neumann (1992), suggested that small states were all those states that were not considered great powers and that did not consistently claim to be middle powers like Australia, Canada, and South Africa etc[136]. Those two definitions just touch on the surface of defining a small power. One different way to conceptualize small power is to put it in the comparison with middle powers or great powers. From this approach, a small power is seen as a state which ranks low in the context where it is acting. In addition, many expect them to behave in a given way, to have different roles from that of middle or great powers. Lastly, they have dissimilar interests from the other two classes of powers'[137]. Later on, a young author, Rabby, began to identify small powers by their characteristics. He claimed that a small state is a nation state that has a nominal territory with population of any size, a hardly effective or no military power, limited natural resources, and emerging or struggling economy[138]. To be more specific,

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[135] Keohane,R. (1969) *'Lilliputian's Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics'*, International Organization, No. 2, pp. 295-7.

[136] Neumann, Iver B &Gstöhl, Sieglinde (2012) *The Development of the Small States Category.* Retrieved December 26, 2014 from

http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Special-Feature/Detail/?lng=en&id=146319&tabid=1452512739&contextid774=146319&contextid775=146523

[137] Vayrynen, R. (1971) *On the Definition and Measurement of Small Power Status.* Cooperation and Conflict, VI, p.91-102

[138] Rabby, F. *Small states in international relations: rearranging the puzzle of defining the 'Small State".* Retrieved December 14, 2014 from

Toje (2010) in his article has concluded different characteristics of small power found out by different scholars[139].

There are four main points that help defining a small power. First, small powers' strategic behavior is indicated by dependence. A small power is always aware that it cannot gain security just by relying on its own capabilities[140]. Second, small powers do not have ability to obtain power on a global scale in terms of military capabilities. Their establishing priorities are forced on them by their limited resources, location and also the international system. Small powers primarily benefit from international institutions, and are considered "lovers of the law"[141]. Third, minimizing the costs of conducting its foreign policy is always a need of a small power. It will also engage in concerted efforts with other actors to increase the weight lying beneath its policies. This fact leads to a high level of participation and support for international organizations.[142] And fourth, small powers are defensive by nature. This can be understood that small power does not challenge the status quo, either singly or in groups. They can see dangers more easily than they do with opportunities in international politics. Therefore, their main goal is becoming defensive[143].

It is clear to see that Vietnam also shares some of those characteristics above. It has a quite small territory as it covers the total area of about 128.000 square miles[144]. Meanwhile, its population ranks as the 13th largest in the world. It is also known as a large emerging economy in Southeast Asia. Those fit the definition of Rabby above. Another aspect is Vietnam has been quite defensive for a long history of struggling to earn its national independence. As a developing country, Vietnam's motto in foreign policies in recent decades has always been: "Vietnam wants to be a friend and reliable partner with all nations in the international community, striving for peace, independence and development"[145]. Its increasing involvement in international and regional institutions has been proven through the times when it became ASEAN Chair, a non-

http://www.academia.edu/3809483/Small_states_in_international_relations_rearranging_the_puzzle_of_defining_the_Small_State_--Md._Fazle_Rabby

[139] See Toje, A. (2010) *The European Union as a Small Power*, Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol.49, No.1, p.43-60

[140]Rothstein, R.L. (1968) *Alliances and Small Powers* New York: Columbia University Press.

[141]Wivel, A. (2005) *'The Security Challenges of Small EU States'.*, Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. 43, No.2, pp. 393–412.

[142]Russett, B. and Oneal, J.R. (2001) *Triangulating Peace*. New York: Columbia University Press.

[143]Aron, R. (1966*) Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

[144] Information retrieved December 30, 2014 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam

[145] Pham Quang Minh (2012) *Chính sách đối ngoại đổi mới của Việt Nam 1986-2010 (Vietnam New Foreign Policy: 1986-2010)* The World Publishing House

permanent member of UN Security Council and so on. Vietnam is now a member of various groupings such as ASEAN, APEC and the WTO.[146] It seeks to cooperate with nations and organizations to strengthen the nation as well as solve the conflicts arising. The features of a small power have been reflected in Vietnam, so that many other countries consider it just a small power in Asia.

On another hand, some can argue that Vietnam is not a small power anymore as it has become a middle power in the region. First of all, we need to see how scholars define a middle power. Keohane (1969) suggested that middle powers are countries whose leaders think that it is more effective to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution than to act alone.[147] Despite the fact that some authors claimed that middle powers are countries with military capabilities, demographic and economic basis or economic potential or potential nuclear power, countries seen as middle powers like India, Brazil…are well aware of their limited ability to compete with the established great powers. Instead, most scholars seem to go on the right tracks when defining middle powers based on their international behavior.

As Cooper, Higgott and Nossal (1993) stated, middle powers tend to pursue multilateral solutions to international problems, embrace compromising in international disputes, and embrace notions of "good international citizenship"[148]. Cooper (1993, 17-19) classified four approaches in determining a middle power. The first one is the positional approach, which locates a middle power at the middle of a range of population, economic power and complexity, military capability from the smallest to the greatest. The second one is a geographic approach, physically or ideologically, which puts a middle power between the system's great powers. The normative approach looks at a middle power as a potentially wiser, more virtuous and trustworthy actor in creating and maintaining the global order. The last one is behavioral approach. It simply identifies a middle power by that state's behavioral tendency to get involved in "middlepowermanship"[149]. To some extent, besides South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia

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[146] Retrieved from The International Relations and Security Network on January 4, 2015 at http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?ots777=4888caa0-b3db-1461-98b9-e20e7b9c13d4&lng=en&id=51909
[147]Keohane, Robert O. (1969) op. cit. note 135
[148]Cooper, Andrew F., Richard A. Higgott, Kim Richard Nossal. (1993). *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.,p.19

[149] Ibid

and Thailand, Vietnam is also considered a middle power in East Asia[150]. Vietnam, despite all the difficulties caused by wars, Vietnam has been perceived as a "middle power" with commensurate influence in Southeast Asia[151] due to the progress it has made. Up to now, this country's population of 87 million has had a median age of 27 years, and over 60 million of its people are between the ages of 15 and 65,[152] which bears the potential for a growing labor pool as well as a wider market for other economies. Vietnam's nominal GDP *per capita*, according to the World Bank, has been growing rapidly over the past decade thanks to steady growth in GDP, including a 6.8 percent growth rate in 2010[153]. In terms of integration, Vietnam also proves that scholars can be right to put it in the category of middle powers as it has tried to become a good "global citizen". During the time Vietnam was elected to be the non-permanent member of UN Security Council, it contributed much to the world affairs, especially in July 2008 as it held the position of President of the Security Council. During this month, Vietnam had completed the responsibility for coordinating all the activities of the Council. Particularly, Vietnam had actively got much involved in the discussion on Children and Armed Conflicts with its initiatives[154].

Although it does not possess as great resources as other great powers, Vietnam has made international duty one of important points of its foreign policy. Vietnam determined that it has the responsibility to make Southeast Asia a region of peace, without nuclear weapons, stability, cooperation and development. International obligations encompass many different factors from the security, political, economic issues to social and defense ones. Specifically, Vietnam will participate in solving global issues, transnational issues within the region such as: cooperating to solve traditional security issues (such as border disputes, marine and territorial disputes) and non-traditional security issues (such as environment, disease, natural disasters). Vietnam will become more proactive and positively do its duty. Vietnam also participates in regional forum or organizations such as the ARF, ASEAN[155]or AEC,

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[150]Lee, Sook-Jong (2012) *South Korea as New Middle Power Seeking Complex Diplomacy.* The East Asia Institute(EAI) Working Paper, SungKyunKwan University, p.11

[151]Manyin, M.E. (2013) *U.S.-Vietnam Relations in 2013: Current Issues and Implications for U.S. Policy.* Congress Research Service (CRS Report for Congress)

[152]Auslin, M. (2012) *Why U.S. Should Embrace Vietnam*. The Diplomat. Retrieved January 3, 2015 from http://thediplomat.com/2012/04/why-u-s-should-embrace-vietnam/

[153] Ibid

[154] Le Luong Minh (2008)*The Role of Vietnam as President of United Nations Security Council.* Retrieved December 26, 2014 from http://www.mofahcm.gov.vn/vi/mofa/nr140319210702/ns140319123257
Le Luong Minh was Head of Vietnam's permanent mission to the United Nations 2008 and 2009

[155] Pham Quang Minh (2012) op. cit. note 145

TPP. That increases the position, role and prestige of Vietnam in the region and in the international arena. In short, it is undeniable that Vietnam has a few features of a middle power.

On the whole, there is no right or wrong in Vietnam being perceived as a small power of middle power. However, I would say that an understanding of Vietnam power status would create a framework for better analyzing its foreign policy as it helps explain the choice of one's policy. Vietnam, before, was considered a small power, damaged by wars and had to struggle hard to step into the international political arena. Now, Vietnam is projecting a fast pace of developing and is earning a more important status in the region as well as the world. I would argue that Vietnam is in the middle of the process of transforming from a small power to a middle power in the region. To make it happen, it is essential for Vietnam to carry out a foreign policy which not only increases its hard power but also its soft power, in order to increase its comprehensive as well as influence in the region. In the next part of the research, I would like to analyze the cultural diplomacy that Vietnam has been implementing in order to increase its soft power, for a further purpose of contributing to the comprehensive development of the country's power.

3.2 The Soft power of Vietnam

3.2.1 Vietnamese government and scholars' conceptualization of Vietnam's soft power

As Pham Huy Ky (2011) previously stated, Vietnam did not pay much attention to "soft power" when mentioning its comprehensive power. The first data that come to the assessment usually includes the factors of "hard power" such as the size of the economy or military capability, technology development and so on[156]. The factors like the development model, traditional beliefs and values, and culture were not considered serious. However, these days, when the new century began with both opportunities and challenges, which have required Vietnam to integrate more into the global environment to develop in a more competitive world, Vietnam starts to notice more the importance of "soft power". As mentioned in the first chapter, there have been not many scholars doing research on the topic of soft power in Vietnam. Nevertheless, there are still

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[156]Phạm, Huy Kỳ (2011) *Vấn Đề Nâng Cao "Sức Mạnh Mềm" Văn Hóa ở Việt Nam Hiện Nay.* Báo Văn Hóa. (*Improving Cultural Soft Power in Vietnam Today.* Culture Magazine.) Retrieved December 12, 2014 from http://vanhoanghean.com.vn/van-hoa-va-doi-song27/cuoc-song-quanh-ta46/van-de-nang-cao-suc-manh-mem-van-hoa-o-viet-nam-hien-nay
Associate Prof. Pham Huy Ky is the Vice Rector of Vietnam Academy of Journalism and Communication

scholars working in both political and academic field showing their interest in Vietnam's soft power. Their researches have formed the basis for the development in Vietnam's soft power strategies and cultural diplomacy. This topic has also caught the attention of many policymakers in Vietnam recently.

In those works on Vietnamese soft power that I have been going through, the definition of soft power which is used the most by researchers is the definition by Joseph Nye[157]. He stated that soft power can be understood as the ability to make others want the outcomes you want. Most of the scholars used this definition to explain the concept of soft power. Among those, there is one standout way of conceptualizing soft power of Nguyen Thi Thu Phuong (2014) of Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. In her work, she claimed that Vietnam's soft power should be regarded more exactly as "cultural soft power". And "cultural soft power" can be understood roughly as attraction, the ability to influence, and appeal of a country to another country with the cultural, spiritual, ideological values, through forms of cultural exchanges, foreign policy channels, education, films, and mass media and so on. In the simplest words, cultural soft power of Vietnam is nothing else but its attraction.[158] This definition, although was mentioned last year (2014), has become the core of the soft power concept. Based on this definition, scholars have developed their research on Vietnam's soft power goals and resources, from which they can create a source references for policymakers to carry out Vietnam foreign policy.

3.2.2 Goals of enhancing Vietnam's soft power

As soft power has just earned more notice recently, politicians and scholars began to focus more on finding the goals of soft power of a developing country like Vietnam. Due to the fact that they mostly used the framework published by Nye on the definition, the objectives of soft power, there has been no specific aim mentioned until Pham Huy Ky's work (2011). He stated that we need to clarify one point that, the basic aim of improving Vietnam's soft power is to create a good international environment for the development of Vietnam[159]. This has more than one simple meaning. Vietnam should consider ways to create a positive national image, which can attract more investment

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[157]See more in Chapter I

[158] Nguyen Thi Thu Phuong (2014) *Phát huy sức mạnh mềm văn hóa của Việt Nam*. Viện Hàn lâm Khoa học Xã hội Việt Nam (*Promoting Vietnam Cultural Soft Power*. Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) Retrieved December 12, 2014 from
http://baotintuc.vn/doi-song-van-hoa/phat-huy-suc-manh-mem-van-hoa-cua-viet-nam-20140512224947574.htm

[159] Pham Huy Ky (2011) op. cit. note 156

and good will from others. As one of the countries stepped out of wars and decided to follow the path of Communism, Vietnam has not yet overcome the doubt of other countries about the way that it has chosen. There was even time when Vietnam was considered enemy of the neighboring countries in the region. Lee (2000) mentioned that North Vietnam, together with China and the Soviet Union had backed the communist threat in guerillas and insurgencies[160]. There has been hesitation to cooperate with Vietnam as nations do not trust the fact that the model Vietnam was trying to build up would do any good in developing this country or the development of the region. It is obvious that the number of representatives of Communism that succeed in world politics and economy is less than other models. We can only count on Russia or China which is making progress with China's successful economic growth or Russia's stronger voice in world political arena. The rest of Communist community is still trying to reach to a higher level of development, and Vietnam is not an exception. So, the goal of improving Vietnam's comprehensive power, which includes soft power, is to build a trustworthy model that can make other countries believe and accept its values and want to cooperate with it. Once Vietnam becomes a trustworthy partner, it could have many more opportunities to cooperate with other countries in so many fields such as economy, technology, education, tourism and so on. This will lead to growth in the country's economy and a higher level of development. Moreover, Vietnam is believed to have a stronger voice in the political arena if being able to earn more respect from other countries. In short, the goals of soft power, perceived in Vietnam's context, are not only to create a favorable environment for Vietnam development, but also to earn a higher position for Vietnam in political arena as well as to make it a trustworthy partner for other countries.

3.2.3 Sources of Vietnam's soft power

The general understanding of soft power sources here may belong to Nye. He claimed that the three sources of soft power of a country is its culture, its political values and its foreign policies. On his trip to Vietnam, he looked closer to the country and gave specific comments on Vietnamese sources of soft power. According to Nye (2007), every country, every individual has "soft power". "Soft power" is the ability to attract and entice through having ideas and values that others want to copy. Vietnam has many

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[160] Lee K. Y. (2000) *From Third World to First –The Singapore Story: 1965–2000,* Singapore: Singapore Press Holdings. Quoted from Jones, L. (2010) *ASEAN's unchanged melody? The theory and practice of 'non-interference' in Southeast Asia*, The Pacific Review, 23:4, 479-502

things that can attract, entice other countries: the reputation of the struggle for independence, the successful transformation into a booming economy, a long history, rich culture, etc. These things have helped increasing "soft power" of Vietnam.

Firstly, "soft power" of Vietnam lies in the national independence and economic development[161]. In terms of changes in economic policies and economic growth, Vietnam has made an impression on other countries. The Sixth Congress (1986) of the Communist Party of Vietnam decided to conduct national renewal, and to transform the economy into socialist-oriented market economy. Over nearly thirty years of implementing comprehensive reforms to the country economic and social development strategy, Vietnam's economy has made impressive achievements, and increasingly integrated further into the international economy[162]. This is highly appreciated by the international community. This has become an attraction for many countries in the region and in other continents. Besides, Vietnam has gained some noteworthy economic achievements after *Doimoi* in 1986. Previously, the country was going through hyperinflation, with a rate of 774.7 percent in the year 1986. Since 1991, economic growth in Vietnam has remained more or less consistent. The GDP increased to 8.2 percent from 3.25 percent from 1987 to 1995. Vietnamese trade has been equally held responsible for achievement of Vietnam economic reform[163]. Consequently, Vietnam's export/GDP ratio also rose. The import/GDP ratio increased from 13.7 percent in 1987 to 31.57 percent in the year 1999. This further increased to 40.27 percent in the year 1995[164]. From a food-deficit country which had to import from 50 thousand to 1 million tons of food each year, Vietnam has become a major food exporter in the world. In 2005, it became the world's number one exporter of pepper; the second largest export commodities: rice, coffee, cashew nuts; the fourth largest exporter of rubber products, etc. Those numbers has shown that Vietnam's economy has been growing quite steadily despite the fact that the world economy has undergone financial crises.

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[161] Nye, J. (2007) *Vietnam has many Advantages to Create Soft Power.* In an online interview with Vietnamese audience on his trip to Vietnam in 2007. Retrieved December 27, 2014 from http://www.tuanvietnam.net/gs-joseph-nye-vn-co-nhieu-loi-the-tao-nen-suc-manh-mem

[162] Đỗ Thị Thảo & Nguyễn Thị Thu Hiền (2014) *Chính sách phát triển kinh tế - yếu tố tạo nên sức mạnh mềm của Việt Nam (Policies to Develop the Economy-The Factor that Made Vietnam's soft power)* Retrieved January 15, 2015 from http://www.tapchicongsan.org.vn/Home/Nghiencuu-Traodoi/2014/27707/Chinh-sach-phat-trien-kinh-te-yeu-to-tao-nen-suc.aspx

[163] Ibid

[164] *Finance, Maps of World* (2013) Retrieved December 28, 2014 from http://finance.mapsofworld.com/economy-reform/vietnam/achievements.html

Some may argue that economic power should fall into the category of hard power. However, in the particular case of Vietnam, I would argue that the economic achievements and development are important parts of Vietnam's soft power. In my opinion, at first glance, Vietnamese economic and trade accomplishment is not directly a source of soft power, but its overall reform process could be seen as a model for others, and soft power could come from that. The country has had to go through a tough time of reconstructing the country after the wars. However, it has a steady growth in economy, earned its place in the list of top rice exporters of the world. So this, on the other hand, can be seen as soft power source as it demonstrated that a country facing tough reforms still can succeed. Those show the potential and capabilities of Vietnam very clearly. It could attract more investors and give them more faith in cooperating with Vietnam. It also could better the national image of Vietnam, displaying a peaceful country that has risen from the ashes of wars and gained some important successes in its economic reforms.

Another factor that can contribute to the attraction of Vietnam is the political values and beliefs when establishing and carrying out its foreign policies towards other countries[165]. In the past, the Vietnamese people were very tolerant with stories of giving their enemies a way out when they lost in invasions in Vietnam. Today, for example, with an emerging and quite aggressive neighbor, China, Vietnam has persistently sought to resolve disputes through peaceful negotiations, respected the legitimate interests of the involved countries and respected the cultural values of humankind. Vietnam always seriously negotiates and solves problems based on international law[166]. This fact has contributed to the increasing "soft power" of Vietnam in international relations, creating a more equal status and power for Vietnam in the handling of international as well as regional issues in recent years. Nowadays, the world has to face many security issues, from traditional ones to non-traditional ones. It requires a given country to have proper foreign policies to respond whenever needed. The ideas of peaceful means of solving problems of Vietnam can help them understand more about the traditions and the nature of this nation. Or in another word, the values of peaceful strategies of Vietnam have been highly appreciated and helped it gain a friendlier attitude from other countries. So, they have made an essential source of Vietnam's soft power.

[165]Le, V.T. (2011) op. cit. note 47
[166]Trieu Viet Anh (2013) *"Sức mạnh mềm" của Việt Nam. (Vietnam's Soft Power)* Retrieved January 17, 2015 from http://mattrantoquoc.hoabinh.gov.vn/index.php/tin-th-i-s-trong-nu-c/723-s-c-m-nh-m-m-c-a-vi-t-nam

Last but not least, the factor that is considered the most important and richest source of Vietnam's soft power by scholars and policymakers is Vietnamese culture. Pham Huy Ky (2011) stated that culture is the most important resource and cultural competitiveness is the core content of "soft power"[167]. This can also be used to illustrate the idea of national dependence that Nye mentioned above. In terms of culture, we can see it as cultural independence. Vietnam has a long history being ruled by the Chinese and the West. However, the Vietnamese people always preserve their own culture no matter how hard the Chinese or the Western people tried to assimilate their cultures into Vietnamese society. Firstly, as a nation that is very creative in localizing the cultural factors from the outside, Vietnam has created an outstanding cultural identity with achievements in culture and arts. Folk literature, the birth of the *Nom* script in order to resist the cultural assimilation from China in the past, the "*ao dai*" of Vietnamese women, the taste of "*pho*"…are all considered charms of Vietnamese cultural identity[168]. The *Nom* script is one remarkable proof of Vietnamese ability to resist foreign rulers. When the Chinese empire wanted to assimilate Vietnamese culture by the Chinese script, its small neighbor, Vietnam, did not accept that, and tried to create its own style of writing. I would take this as cultural independence. The combination and intentionally spread of culture and literature (folklore, *Chu Nom* script, modern literature…) arts, technology, traditions, religion of Vietnamese nation can have the ability to influence other nations and countries[169].

Secondly, the strong notion of justice or being tolerant of the enemy is one of the elements of Vietnam's soft power used throughout history[170]. Vietnam is known by the international community for the image of a heroic nation, which is also peace-loving, friendly and flexible. Those are the cultural values imbrued with national identity, both pervasive and appealing to the international community. Besides, the Vietnamese have a rich culture that it can be very proud of. Those factors are the bases of Vietnam's soft power and must be promoted through cultural diplomacy activities[171]. Lastly, Vietnamese martial arts, the tea ceremony, traditional music, costumes, traditional folk medicine…are the factors which can increase the attractiveness of Vietnamese history

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[167] Pham Huy Ky (2011) op. cit. note 156
[168] Nguyen Thi Thu Phuong (2014) op. cit. note 158
[169] Le, V.T. (2011) op. cit. note 47
[170] Ibid
[171] Nguyen Thi Thanh Thuy (2010) *Ngoại Giao Nhân Dân Trong Quan Hệ Việt-Mỹ*. Đại học Khoa Học, Xã hội và Nhân Văn *(Public Diplomacy in Vietnam-the U.S. Relations.* University of Social Sciences and Humanities)

of national defense. Vietnam cuisine is known as nutritious, full of fruits and vegetables, minerals and so on. This is very appropriate for the healthy diet movement nowadays, so, it should be a representative for Vietnam's soft power[172].

All of those values and elements have formed a rich culture of Vietnam, which has become the core source of Vietnamese soft power. The available rich and diverse culture of Vietnam could be the root of the concept "cultural soft power" mentioned by scholars above. As a small power with rudimentary financial capabilities, a model of Communism which may not catch much international attention, culture is considered the strongest source of Vietnamese soft power. With culture, the promotion of Vietnam's national image could cost less than other sources. Within the region of Asia, it can be said that Vietnamese culture can stand out, as it has not many similarities with other cultures. For example, the traditional costumes of Thailand and Laos can be quite the same, the writing of the Chinese and Japanese share some common characters. Meanwhile, those of Vietnam are totally different. It makes the Vietnamese culture more attractive to the outsiders with distinguishable traditions and cultural values.

When looking at the sources of Vietnam's soft power, we can see that the economic growth is known as one source of the soft power under the country's context. It is the factor that can create attraction for Vietnam in order to call for more investment to develop its own economy. Vietnam does not use economy to develop influence on other countries as its economic capability is not as much as other countries in the region. However, the political values, and especially the cultural factors are the ideas perceived to be the strongest part of Vietnamese soft power. From this perception of policymakers and scholars, Vietnam has established its cultural diplomacy in a way that can exploit most of the cultural sources to improve its soft power.

3.3 Vietnamese Cultural Diplomacy

It is obvious that the main source of Vietnamese soft power is its rich and diversified culture. Meanwhile, Nguyen Dy Nien[173] suggested that diplomacy brought profound cultural connotations. Cultural diplomacy is the exchange and clashing of cultural values. Diplomacy is a forum of cultural activities to serve national interests. At the

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[172]Le, V.T. (2011) op. cit. note 47

[173] Nguyen Dy Nien is the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam from 2000-2006. worked for more than 50 years in the diplomatic field, underwent multiple positions and participated in many international negotiations. He has strongly developed guidelines that diplomacy should serve the purpose of economic development, contributing effectively to the industrialization and modernization of the country. He was the first of the diplomat who has summarized the thoughts of Ho Chi Minh in the field of diplomacy and built these ideas into a system of "Diplomatic Thoughts of Ho Chi Minh" in order to contribute to the teaching and researching on Vietnam.

same time, culture is also the motivation and goals of diplomacy[174]. Or as Pham Cao Phong *et al*. talked about the link between cultural diplomacy and soft power, cultural diplomacy is a boat load of political messages and thereby represents a "soft power" of a nation[175]. Today, cultural diplomacy not only is an effective tool to support soft power, but also occupies an increasingly important position in the power that is created under the direction of the impact of globalization, exchanges and interdependence[176]. Since the main source of Vietnamese soft power is culture, it is undeniable that cultural diplomacy plays an essential part in the enhancement of Vietnam's soft power. With those in mind, the scholars and policymakers of Vietnam have changed their perceptions of cultural diplomacy as well as the ways to carry it out, which will be analyzed in the next sections.

3.3.1 The Significance of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy

3.3.1.1 Changes in the Country's Context

According to Vu Khoan (2008), Vietnam has gone through major changes both inside and outside of the country. Firstly, Vietnam has moved from war time to peace time; from the isolated time to the extensive integration with the world outside. This poses new requirements to change the fundamental content and methods to carry out "cultural diplomacy"[177]. Once a country opens up to the world outside, it is crucial to expand its cultural influence if it does not want to be left behind in the competition of making influence. As the new era of information and technology has long begun, cultural values flow from countries to countries at a very fast pace, it made countries think harder of new foreign policy to develop its cultural power. Second, global cultures as well as the needs to enjoy cultures of humanity have changed. If so, the demands for exploring and experimenting new cultures in the world have urged the "culture-suppliers" like

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[174]Nguyen Dy Nien (2002) *Tư tưởng ngoại giao Hồ Chí Minh*. Nxb Chính trị quốc gia (*Ho Chi Minh Ideology of Diplomacy*, National Political Publishing House) p.322-323

[175] Pham Cao Phong, Vu Tuan Hai, Le Ha Anh Tho, Pham Viet Anh, Nguyen Anh Tuan, Truong Ngoc Trang, Nguyen Nam Khanh (2012) *Ngoại giao văn hóa trong giai đoạn hội nhập quốc tế toàn diện (Cultural Diplomacy in Comprehensive International Integration)* A Research at ministerial level. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

[176] Hoang Vinh Thanh (2009) *Ngoại giao văn hóa: bắt đầu từ khái niệm*. Nghiên cứu quốc tế, số 76, (*Cultural Diplomacy: Starting from the Concepts,* International Studies, No 76,)p 17-32

[177]Vu Khoan (2008) *Quan điểm về ngoại giao văn hóa (Thoughts on Cultural Diplomacy)* National Conference on "Cultural Diplomacy for A Vietnamese Identity, Peace, Integration and Sustainable Development", Hanoi.

Vu Khoan is the former Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam. He was in charge of Vietnam foreign economic relations. He is famous for his career as a great diplomat, politician and his contribution to Vietnam's achievements in foreign economic affairs.

Vietnam to find an appropriate way to respond[178]. As above, culture has always been considered the strength of Vietnam. So, this is also an advantage for Vietnam to make full use of its rich culture to develop its socio-economy. Third, many methods to convey the cultural values have changed in a fundamental way, requires Vietnam to approach promptly[179]. As analyzed in chapter two, many countries have deployed their cultural diplomacy for many different purposes. Based on what they have as advantages, they have tried to enhance their soft power as much as they can with cultural industries (J-Pop, anime, etc.) in Japan, the "Hallyu Wave" in South Korea and so on. Fourth, competition, or we can even call it the struggle, on the cultural front was very intense; and Vietnam will have to face some very strong opponents in the region. It can be said that globalization has provided a large arena for different cultures to develop. This requires Vietnam to have good strategies to make its culture stand out and can increase its cultural soft power.

The Vietnamese Communist Party has new assessment and evaluation of the world and regional context, characteristics and trends such as the reduction in external military commitments of great powers, intense competition in economy and trade, in science and technology, etc. Along with these trends, peace, stability and cooperation for development become urgent demands of the peoples and nations all over the world. The process of globalization and regionalization occurs faster, which leads to the growing interdependence between economies. Those emerging characteristics and trends have created the multilateralism, diversity in international relations and even in foreign policy of countries including Vietnam[180].

3.3.1.2 The Significance of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy

With the changes in the world context of cultural soft power, Vietnamese scholars and policymakers have gradually changed their perception of the significance of cultural diplomacy in the enhancement of Vietnam's soft power. Vu Duong Huan[181] (2007) claimed that with the fast pace of globalization, countries have both opportunities to cooperate, integrate close together and challenges including the risk of cultural assimilation. So, dialogues and cooperation are among the best ways to protect and

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[178] Ibid

[179] Ibid

[180] Hoang Phong Ha (2012) *Hỏi-Đáp về tình hình thế giới và chính sách đối ngoại của Đảng và Nhà nước ta.* Nxb Chính trị quốc gia (*Questions and Answers: The World Politics and the Foreign Policies of Our Party and Government.* National Politics Publishing House)

[181] Associate Prof. Vu Duong Huan is former Vietnam Ambassador to Poland and Ukraine, former Rector of Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. He has many works in Vietnam foreign policies

develop one nation's culture. In international relations, culture has become more and more important as it is related to soft power of one country's comprehensive power[182]. Therefore, states have to pay more attention on multiculturalism, dialogues between cultures or civilizations. Cultural diplomacy has been used as a helpful tool to push the political, security or economic relations among countries[183]. This is the point of view of one of the most famous scholars in Vietnam on foreign policies in general and cultural diplomacy in particular. He shared the same view of the ideas of Communist Party of Vietnam on cultural diplomacy. In a research work entitled *The Policies of Vietnam Communist Party and Government on Cultural Diplomacy from 1986 to 2011* by Le Thi Duyen (2013), she has given a more specific picture of how the Party perceived the importance of cultural diplomacy in the overall Vietnamese foreign policy. In the globalization today, along with political diplomacy and economic diplomacy, cultural diplomacy was identified as one of the three pillars of modern diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy *was seen as "soft power"*. It is understandable, as the concept of soft power mentioned in Vietnam has been mostly interpreted as "cultural soft power". It can be seen that the core of Vietnam's soft power or cultural diplomacy is culture and culture only. This carries a different meaning when we look at how the Party defined Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. As a result, they have considered cultural diplomacy as soft power. An overlap between soft power and cultural diplomacy can be easily seen here. The fact that they do not distinguish clearly between soft power and cultural diplomacy may lead to ineffective foreign policies like other countries as they may not make full use of other sources of soft power besides Vietnamese culture.

From this, it is clear to see how the Party emphasized the role of culture in Vietnam's soft power. Cultural diplomacy has the ability to spread persistently. However, we can look at cultural diplomacy from political perspective, economic perspective or the perspective of national cultural identity enrichment[184]. To the political extent, cultural diplomacy is an important tool to enhance mutual understanding, the "glue" to strengthen political ties among countries. Political roles of cultural diplomacy were reflected consistently and thoroughly in the whole process of the Vietnam Revolution. It

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[182]Vu Duong Huan (2007) *Vài suy nghĩ về ngoại giao văn hóa*. Tạp chí nghiên cứu quốc tế, *(Some thoughts on Cultural Diplomacy,* International Studies) No.71, p.13-19
[183] Ibid
[184] Le Thi Duyen (2013) *Chủ trương của Đảng và Nhà nước Việt Nam về ngoại giao văn hóa từ năm 1986 đến năm 2011,* Đại học khoa học và xã hội nhân văn Hà Nội *(The policies of Vietnam Communist Party and Government on Cultural Diplomacy from 1986 t0 2011,* University of Social Sciences and Humanities)

started from the campaign for the world public support to Vietnamese struggle for national liberation (1945 -75), then the period of "icebreaking", "paving ways" for the normalization of relations with other countries and international integration (1945-1986 and 1986-1995), finally to deepening and strengthening relations with partners today. From an economic perspective, cultural diplomacy has an important role in the promotion of economic growth because primarily, culture is itself an important industry. The promotion of image, country, and people of Vietnam has also contributed to increase foreign investment in some areas of economic development. To the role of enriching national cultural identity, as one of culture's characteristics is dynamic, cultural diplomacy played an important part in absorbing the world cultural values and adding them to the national culture, make it a rich and diversified culture. This way of perceiving the importance of cultural diplomacy has shown the recognition of the interdependence among politics, economy and culture. It also gives a more detailed analysis on the role of cultural diplomacy. I would argue this is one of the best ways to realize the role of cultural diplomacy. It provides a more comprehensive look on the part that cultural diplomacy has taken in the general foreign policies of Vietnam. It also creates a link among political diplomacy, economic diplomacy and cultural diplomacy, for those three pillars to complement each other. This is an important point for policymakers to remember as only since the 2000s has cultural diplomacy been considered as important as the other two pillars of Vietnamese foreign policy.

Taking another different angle when mentioning the role of cultural diplomacy in Vietnam's soft power, Pham Gia Khiem (2008), former Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, saw cultural diplomacy as a tool for Vietnam to enhance its soft power and become the regional power. He stated that generally, we can see that if a country wanted to become a regional power, or a world power, its culture had to have an appeal across the region and the world. As for the small and medium countries, to survive and develop, they needed to promote national cultural identity more and more, thereby need to multiply its strength to build and protect the country as well as to earn the respect of other countries and a rightful position in the international arena[185]. There is also idea about the classification of the powers in the world and how cultural diplomacy plays its role in those countries. Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Bui Thanh Son sees Vietnam as a small power thriving to

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[185]Pham Gia Khiem (2008) *Opening Speech* at National Conference on "Cultural Diplomay for A Vietnamese Identity, Peace, Integration and Sustainable Development", Hanoi.

become a middle power, he put it in the comparison with other types of powers of the world in terms of making use of cultural diplomacy. He found that the great powers (US, China, etc...) are implementing cultural diplomacy with the primary objective is to expand the influence and show their powerful positions in the world. For example, America's top goal is to extend the value of democracy and human rights to the outside in order to create dominance and pervasiveness of America in the world. Chinese culture is identified as a component of national power to increase China's influences abroad. China has set up hundreds of Confucius Institutes for teaching the Chinese language and culture in all continents. France advocated expanding French cultural values outward through the dissemination of culture and the French language[186]. The middle powers (South Korea, Mexico, Australia...) tend to consider the objective of strengthening the influence and of development through cultural diplomacy equally important. South Korea considered the 21st century is the century of culture. The Korean used culture to improve their influence abroad, develop its cultural industry and see cultural diplomacy as a key to political-economic relations with other countries[187]. The small powers clearly take development objective into serious consideration by the deployment of cultural diplomacy because of their limited resources. These countries tend to be associated with the promotion of cultural tourism development, attracting foreign investment and foreign skillful workers to work in their countries, or absorbing the culture, civilization outside to enrich the local culture, contributing to the development of the country and consolidate traditional friendship-with other countries.[188] We can see that different powers will deploy their cultural diplomacy for different purposes. For a small country or small power like Vietnam, the country's development has always been the target of its policies. Throughout the guidelines of scholars and political leaders of Vietnam have drawn out for the purpose of enhancing Vietnam's soft power, it is clear that Vietnamese cultural diplomacy has been used to achieve those goals.

With those approaches to the role of cultural diplomacy, scholars and policymakers in Vietnam are well aware of how significant the state's cultural diplomacy could be. They have realized the interconnection among culture, economy and politics. Also, having a

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[186]Bui Thanh Son (2008) *Vai trò của ngoại giao văn hóa trong chính sách đối ngoại của Việt Nam trong giai đoạn hiện nay. (The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Vietnam Current Foreign Policy),* National Conference on "Cultural Diplomay for A Vietnamese Identity, Peace, Integration and Sustainable Development", Hanoi.
[187] Ibid
[188] Ibid

clear idea of what type of power Vietnam is could be a good way to help them point out more specific roles of cultural diplomacy. The policymakers and scholars in Vietnam can be said to have perceived the significance of cultural diplomacy in the most complete ways they can. This also leads to various ways of defining cultural diplomacy in Vietnam's discourse.

3.3.2 Conceptualization of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy

In fact, the work of "cultural diplomacy" has been a longstanding concern. There was a time when Vietnam had a Cultural Foreign Policy Committee at a ministerial-level agency. That committee had in hand a number of important tools such as the Foreign Languages Publishing House, the French newspapers, English newspapers, photo journalism in several languages, a few Cultural Houses overseas ... The system of "cultural diplomacy" has made certain contributions in introducing Vietnamese culture abroad, aiming at making many people understand the country, people and culture of Vietnam better. However, the system had been narrowed down; parts of it were incorporated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, and so on. In a considerable period of time, especially during the years of socio-economic crisis, and Vietnam was isolated, cultural diplomacy was neglected[189]. However, with the changes in the context of the world as well as the country, Vietnamese scholars and policymakers have gained a new and different perception of the role of cultural diplomacy. As a result, their conceptualization of cultural diplomacy has changed.

In contemporary history, cultural diplomacy is part of the Vietnam's diplomatic process, used to enlist the support of the world public opinion for the country's previous struggle for national liberation and unification. It is also a tool for paving the way towards the normalization of Vietnam's international relations and implementing a more open and multilateral and diversified foreign policy of Communist Party and State of Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh believed that in Vietnam national construction, there were four issues of equal importance which must be considered seriously: politics, economy, society, culture and "culture, arts and other activities cannot stand outside, but within the economic and political arena"[190]. We can see that from very early days, since Vietnam gained back its national independence, cultural diplomacy has been taken under consideration. However, Vietnam did not start to focus more on cultural diplomacy until

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[189] Vu Khoan (2008) op. cit. note 177
[190]Pham GiaKhiem (2009) *Ngoại giao Việt Nam hiện đại trong thời kỳ hội nhập.* Nghiên cứu quốc tế số 76 *(Vietnam Modern Diplomacy in the Era of Integration,* Internaitonal Studies, No 76) p. 9-16

the end of the Cold War, when the new trends of cooperation and globalization appeared. As a result, there are more and more Vietnamese policymakers and scholars trying to define cultural diplomacy within the country's context.

According to Tran Trong Toan (2008), the Deputy Head of the State Committee for Overseas Vietnamese, cultural diplomacy is a form of diplomacy through cultural tools to establish, maintain and develop external relations in order to achieve the goal of gaining fundamental national interests such as development, security and expansion of international influence[191]. This way of defining cultural diplomacy points out a long-term, or possibly the most important national interest of Vietnam, the development. In his work, Bui Thanh Son (2008) also suggested another simplest way to understand cultural diplomacy: cultural diplomacy is a part of diplomacy which involves establishing, maintaining and developing relationships through cultural exchange in order to achieve specific domestic and diplomatic goals[192]. Under the umbrella of foreign policies, Vu Duong Huan (2007) claimed that cultural diplomacy is part of the foreign policy of the Party and the country of Vietnam. It is a combination of information activities, communicating activities promoting Vietnamese culture, cultural cultivation or exchanges, cultural cooperation in order to facilitate the support for political and economic cooperation and to enhance the reputation and position of Vietnam in the international arena, to acquire the world cultures, to serve the development of national culture, to contribute to the socio-economic development and the international integration process, and to serve the purpose of industrialization and modernization of the country[193]. Or as Hoang Vinh Thanh (2009) suggested, cultural diplomacy can be considered as one of the three pillars of diplomacy, a tool to reach the objectives of foreign policy, especially the goal of building the country's image, enhancing understanding and friendly relations with the outside world, thus helping to enhance the role, position, and the attractiveness of the country, the nation and the country's products in the international market.

At the same time, cultural diplomacy is also a bridge for Vietnam to connect with the world cultures and civilizations, so that it can enrich and complement its national

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[191] Tran TrongToan (2008) *Góp thêm một số ý kiến về xây dựng chính sách ngoại giao văn hóa Việt Nam (Contributing Ideas on Building Vietnamese cultural diplomacy),* National Conference on "Cultural Diplomay for A Vietnamese Identity, Peace, Integration and Sustainable Development", Hanoi.
[192] Bui Thanh Son (2008) op. cit. note 186
[193] Vu Duong Huan (2007) op. cit. note 182

culture[194]. From a dissimilar angle, Pham Sanh Chau (2008), Head of the Foreign Ministry's Department for External Cultural Affairs and UNESCO, looked at cultural diplomacy in terms of its main actors. In his opinion, cultural diplomacy is a diplomatic activity, organized, supported and sponsored by the state. This is implemented in a certain period of time, in order to achieve the political goals. It is determined by cultural forms such as: arts, history, ideology, traditions, cuisine, films, publications, literature and so on. The target subjects of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy are foreign people and governments[195]. In recent years, the scholars and policymakers of Vietnam have focused more on cultural diplomacy.

From their conceptualization of cultural diplomacy, it is not difficult to see that the role of cultural diplomacy is becoming more and more important. The definitions above come from comprehensive to specific ones. However, from those definitions, we can also see their commonality, which is the fact that the final goal of the enhancement of Vietnam's soft power is to develop the country's power in terms of political status and economic capability in the region and in the world. However, at this important period of the transition from a small power to a middle power of the region, it is crucial for Vietnam to not only uses its cultural diplomacy for the purpose of development, but it also has to start working on strengthening its influence outside of the country, at a regional level.

From the conceptualization above, policymakers of the Communist Party of Vietnam have pointed out the guidelines for Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. Vietnam has to cherish the idea of the nation's friendliness. This idea derives from the traditions of flexible social behaviors, balanced and harmonious lifestyle, winning without showing off or humiliating the enemies and so on. To be more specific, we need to keep in mind these directions when discussing Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. First, it is important to carry out cultural and artistic activities in order to introduce to the people and to the world the image of a beautiful country of Vietnam, which has a long traditional history and rich and diversified culture. Second, through cultural diplomacy, the Vietnamese can not only introduce the cultural identity of Vietnam to the world, but also learn, collect and refine good values and essence of world culture to enrich the cultural nuances Vietnam. Third, cultural diplomacy aimed at the Vietnamese community living,

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[194] Hoang VinhThanh (2009) op. cit. note 176
[195] Pham Sanh Chau (2008), *Ngoại giao văn hóa Việt Nam: Những khởi đầu thuận lợi để hướng tới tương lai (Vietnamese cultural diplomacy: Good start towards the Future),* National Conference on "Cultural Diplomay for A Vietnamese Identity, Peace, Integration and Sustainable Development", Hanoi.

studying and working abroad through cultural activities to form a united community, arouse national pride and love of the motherland, give them more knowledge about the development of Vietnam and call for their positive contribution to the process of nation building[196].

Along with these guidelines, Vietnam also emphasized the main actors of its cultural diplomacy. The main subject of cultural diplomacy is the State, as the main actor who can make foreign policy in general and the one that plans and implements cultural diplomacy in particular. The second actor is the people. One of culture's characteristics is the exchange and cooperation between the people to people. Moreover, with the Party's emphasis on socialization of cultural activities, the Vietnamese increasingly become the main subject of many cultural activities[197]. This has reflected the principles of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy, especially when all the Vietnamese, no matter where they are, are said to be actors in the country's cultural diplomacy. However, there may be another important actor, which I found quite necessary, that they forgot to mention in today context, that is companies and enterprises. In comparison with other countries, Vietnam has not given enterprises the attention that they deserved. The role of those enterprises has been neglected until the past few years. In the official documents of the cultural diplomacy from *Doimoi* in 1986, it is not easy to find a place for enterprises outside the field of economic diplomacy. If Vietnam wants to become a regional middle power with more influence abroad, it is necessary to work with enterprises. For instance, the tourism companies can carry out their own campaigns to attract more tourists to Vietnam. At first glance, these campaigns may be seen as individual activities of those companies to get more profits. However, they have indirectly brought the image of Vietnam to the outside world. The first reason is to strengthen its culture industry like other middle powers. The second one is to make the owners of those enterprises understand the importance of branding their products in the company with Vietnam cultural values. In short, in order to put their conceptualization of cultural diplomacy into practice, policymakers need to keep in mind the guidelines of the Party as well as how they include the main actors of cultural diplomacy, for the purpose of enhancing Vietnam's soft power.

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[196] Le Thi Duyen (2013) op. cit. note 184
[197] Pham Sanh Chau, Le Thi Hoang Cuc, Pham Viet Anh, Tran Manh Thang, Cung Duc Han, Nguyen Thi Thanh Binh. *Hoạt động ngoại giao văn hóa Việt Nam trong hai thập kỷ đầu của thế kỷ XXI (Vietnamese cultural diplomacy in the first two Decades of 21st Century)* Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In conclusion, we can see that the policymakers and scholars' perceptions of cultural diplomacy may be different in specific details, but they all share the same point that the most important final goal of cultural diplomacy is the country's development. For a small power like Vietnam, it is obvious that the most crucial goal is to develop to a higher level. The guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam also show that Vietnam does not have the ambition to exert its influence on other countries with any other purposes rather than seeking for a more friendly relationship and better cooperation in many fields.

3.3.3 Vietnamese cultural diplomacy Activities

Since the blooming of cultural diplomacy in Vietnam, policymakers have carried out many activities to serve the main purpose of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy: improving Vietnamese soft power. Those activities initiated from the concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy given above, as well as following the guidelines of Communist Party of Vietnam.

3.3.3.1 Information dissemination

Vietnam has introduced and promoted national culture in foreign languages through books, documents and through the mass media such as newspapers. It is important to let the outside world know that Vietnam is not a country torn by wars anymore. There is the need to inform foreign public of the development and the achievements that Vietnam has gained after the wars. There are channels such as the publication of the World Publishing House, Vietnamese Studies, VTV4 television channel, Radio channel the Voice of Vietnam VOV, the electronic media, the travel documents of Vietnam Airlines[198]. Those have been considered the main channels for disseminating Vietnam culture. With the changes in technology as well as the birth of social network, there are more channels for Vietnamese government to choose to get access to foreign people. There are here and there websites or Facebook pages advertising Vietnam tourism and Vietnam's charms or attraction. However, most of them belong to some private tourist companies or individuals. In the activities of disseminating information about Vietnam culture, the Vietnamese government does not seem to have strong ways of promoting the national culture through information channels. This proves a point mentioned above that the government has not paid much attention to enterprises in private sector to get

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[198] Vu Duong Huan (2007) *op. cit.* note 182

involved in the cultural diplomacy process. This may cause some limitations in the disseminating the information about the country.

3.3.1.2 Cultural and arts group exchanges

Organizing cultural and arts group exchange is one of the important activities of cultural diplomacy. Every year, Vietnam has about thirty cultural and arts troupes going abroad to participate in the activities which introduced the country and people of Vietnam on the occasion of major national holidays[199]. In addition, the country also organized exchanges through the treaties, agreements, cooperation programs, cultural exchanges, education, science, technology, youth exchanges between our country and other countries. Vietnam has been strongly promoting the beautiful image of the people and culture of Vietnam through the introduction of the culture imbued with national identity by organizing cultural programs on the occasion of major political events. Besides, cultural and diplomatic activities are focused on building a cultural national message to send to international friends.

Abroad, the majority of cultural diplomatic activities are cultural programs integrated in visits of senior leaders such as performing Hue Royal Court Music in Japan during the official visit of President Nguyen Minh Triet to Japan (11/2007), Vietnamese film week in France, Vietnam's cultural program in the UK during the official visit of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung(3/2008) to the UK, Vietnam Day in Northern Europe during the visit of Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Sinh Hung (6/2008) and Vietnam Festival in Singapore during the visit of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Gia Khiem (5/2008). Besides these visits, a number of other cultural activities that celebrate the establishment of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and other partners such as Vietnam Festival in Malaysia or Vietnam Week 2008 in Japan held to celebrate 35th anniversary of the establishment of relations between Vietnam and the two countries[200]. Vietnam also made efforts to construct Vietnamese historic facilities and promote Vietnamese cultural figures abroad. Vietnam is focusing on promoting the national image through honoring cultural figures such as Nguyen Trai, Nguyen Du, Ho Xuan Huong, Ho Chi Minh[201]. Vietnam has developed a number of cultural, historical works overseas: Relic of Uncle Ho in Thailand, traditional house in the village of

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[199]Ibid
[200] Pham Sanh Chau (2008) op. cit. note 195
[201] Those are the famous cultural figures of Vietnam, known by the world as Hero of National Liberation or World Cultural Celebrity of Vietnam.

ASEAN (Malaysia), monument of president Ho Chi Minh in Madagascar, started to build cultural centers in Paris, France, in Moscow, Russia[202].

Those activities reflect the characteristics of a small power or potentially middle one with rich and diverse culture like Vietnam. Throughout the history, policymakers and scholars have always highlighted the importance of Vietnamese culture. So, there is no doubt that Vietnamese government has taken every chance to introduce the culture to foreign governments and public. The fact that cultural activities carried out along with the official visits of Vietnamese leaders has shown that the government has managed to carry out cultural diplomatic activities very wisely. It shows the support as well as the sponsor of the government for the cultural activities. The appearance of cultural activities along with the high level visits of Vietnamese leaders to different countries proves that Vietnamese policymakers have taken cultural diplomacy into serious consideration as an important part of foreign policies. However, as a small power with limited financial resources, Vietnam does not have many opportunities to send as many cultural troupes to foreign countries as it wants. So, managing to combine cultural activities in the visit programs of the leaders is also a good way to export Vietnamese culture with a limited budget.

3.3.3.3 Co-organizing cultural events and participating in international cultural cooperation

Vietnam often organizes cultural events on the occasion of special anniversaries of our country and partner countries such as Independence Day, the anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. In addition, it also conducted the films and cultural services such as: Indochina, Nguyen Ai Quoc in Hong Kong and so on. Vietnam also joins music festivals, film festivals, international art exhibitions, and artwork in different countries. In addition, cultural diplomacy serves to promote the image of local beauty such as to campaign for Ha Long Bay to be in the list of the new world Seven Natural Wonders, for Lang Co to enter the list of the club of most beautiful sea bays, Da Lat Flower Festival, Hue Festival or some new activities with international stature, such as the international fireworks Competitions in Da Nang, Miss Universe 2008. In its relations with UNESCO, the role of cultural diplomacy is supporting the making of records of "Hoang Thanh Thang Long" Imperial Citadel, "Ca tru", "Quan ho" to add them to the list of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage[203].

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[202] Vu Duong Huan (2007) op. cit. note 182
[203] Pham Gia Khiem (2009) op. cit. note 190

Besides these activities, it can be seen that Vietnam is focusing more on cultural diplomacy. In *Cultural Diplomacy Strategies to 2020*, issued by the Government of Vietnam in 2011, the government has pointed out the strategies for Vietnamese cultural diplomacy in the next ten years as followed.[204] Firstly, it is essential to promote the training and retraining of human resources for cultural diplomacy. Having professional staff in the field of cultural diplomacy is necessary to meet the requirements of the new era. Second, it is essential to ensure resources for cultural diplomacy, ensuring the financial condition and materials for cultural diplomacy can work effectively with the funds to be allocated from the state budget. The strategies suggest that Vietnam would promote socialization, attract enterprises, private donors to contribute to the cultural diplomacy. Another part of the strategies is to associate the cultural diplomacy with the Vietnamese community abroad, support them to maintain and promote the cultural identity of the people of Vietnam among people of the host countries. Fourth, cultural diplomacy needs to be associated with political and diplomatic economic diplomacy. Fifth, it is important to promote the image of Vietnam, to introduce the unique features cultural essence of Vietnam-a beautiful country with hardworking and friendly people. Finally, the government also aimed at diversifying the types of campaigns for international titles. Vietnam must complete and evaluate the impact of the titles of international culture of Vietnam to support the introduction and promotion of scenic, historic, cultural figures of the country. These strategies have shown that the Communist Party and the State of Vietnam are now having clear ideas about the importance of cultural diplomacy and how to carry it out. Vietnam brought up these strategies not very soon in comparison with other countries in the region. However, those proved that Vietnam has taken the first few steps of enhancing its soft power very firmly when the strategies can cover almost every aspect that Vietnam can reach to.

In general, it is undeniable that Vietnamese cultural diplomatic activities are now blossoming. With the state-led and state-sponsored activities, Vietnamese cultural diplomacy seems to get on the right track to improve the country's soft power. Vietnam has tried to make full use of its culture as it is considered the major source of Vietnam's soft power. With the cultural activities held in some cultural cities of Vietnam, it promoted the cultural cooperation between Vietnam and other nations.

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[204] *Vietnamese cultural diplomacy Strategies To 2020* (Issued in 2011 according to the Decision of Vietnam Prime Minister). Quoted from Pham Thai Viet and Ly Thi Hai Yen (2012) *Cultural Diplomacy: Rationale, International Experiences and Application*. Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam.

Also, due to its limited financial resources, Vietnam has wisely made use of every chance to carry out cultural exchanges, especially through the diplomatic visits of the country's leaders. Another worth-noticing point of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy is that it can mobilize every class of people to take part in the country's policy, no matter where they are, in Vietnam or abroad. In recent years, we can see that the government has cared more about the role of the Vietnamese community overseas through some official documents or researches by the policymakers as those were considered important actors or ambassadors to expand Vietnamese culture in other countries. All in all, Vietnamese cultural diplomacy is carried out in the purpose of creating a beautiful image of Vietnam, not a country damaged by wars about fifty years ago. This can create Vietnam's influence in other countries in the region as it has shown a model of developing the country's soft power through cultural diplomacy. However, Vietnamese cultural diplomacy, despite all the advantages, still has some challenges need to be overcome.

3.3.4 Advantages and Challenges of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy

It is obvious that cultural diplomacy has never before had favorable conditions to develop today. The more peaceful and stable international context with cultural exchange as the main trend is the basis for the increasing application of cultural diplomacy[205]. About Vietnam, with a higher position in the region and a rich, diversified culture, many tangible and intangible cultural heritages, we have quite good advantages to deploy cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy also has the strong support from the political leaders of the country. In a later research at ministerial level, Pham Sanh Chau and his colleagues have explained more specifically about the advantages of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. They mentioned three main ideas: a better recognition of cultural diplomacy, the increasing power and strength of Vietnam, and rich traditional culture[206]. Firstly, the recognition of the role of culture has become more accurate. Culture is seen as "the spiritual foundation of society, both the goal and driving force to promote economic development and society". For cultural diplomacy, the role of this sector is gradually becoming more worth-noticing to our leaders. Secondly, the increasing power and strength of Vietnam is another advantage to facilitate the development of cultural diplomacy. The diplomatic relations opened when Vietnam has normalized relations with other nations in the world; Vietnam has increasingly integrated to become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO)

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[205] Pham Sanh Chau (2008) op. cit. note 195
[206] Pham Sanh Chau et al. op. cit. note 197

and have an important role in a number of international issues such as the position of non-permanent member of UN Security Council, Chair of ASEAN. Thirdly, an indispensable element for the deployment of cultural diplomacy is traditional culture. Thanks to its rich cultural tradition and the cultural heritages, Vietnam is seen as a beautiful, peace-loving and friendship country with a unique culture instead of a damaged country that just stepped out of the wars.

Alongside with those advantages, Vietnamese cultural diplomacy still needs to face challenges in order to improve the country's soft power. For Vietnam, the greatest challenge of its cultural diplomacy is the lack of resources, both human and financial ones[207]. Vietnam still lacks personnel working in cultural diplomacy who can both master the specialist skills and language skills. The staff working in foreign affairs, diplomacy generally qualified with firm political knowledge, initially equipped with the knowledge of economics, but knowledge of the culture, (the culture of Vietnam and the world) is still limited. Proactive creativity of the governmental officials who are involved in cultural activities is also not high, not taking advantage of all the opportunities and resources for foreign cultures[208]. The budget for cultural diplomatic activities is limited and not enough to implement the common cultural activities.

Secondly, awareness of the position, importance, and content of culture in general and cultural diplomacy in particular in the innovation and development of the country is not yet complete. Cultural diplomacy is often overlooked in comparison with the task of political and economic diplomacy[209]. Sharing this point is Pham Gia Khiem (2009) when he stated that awareness of the role of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy in the integration period is not sufficient[210]. Another challenge for the policymakers is handling the relationship among politics, economy and culture[211]. For years, despite the fact that cultural diplomacy has been considered one of the main pillars of Vietnam's diplomacy, it gains not as much attention and investment as the other two pillars. The reason can be easily understood as being a developing country, the most important goal of Vietnam now is to maintain a peaceful political environment to push its economy forward. Cultural diplomacy has to come at second place. Despite the fact that Vietnamese government has announced 2009 was the "Year of Cultural Diplomacy"-

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[207]Duong Quoc Thanh (2011) *Cultural Diplomacy, the Third Pillar in the Comprehensive Diplomatic Strategy of Vietnam*.International Studies, No.25, p.5-16
[208] Pham Sanh Chau et al. op. cit. note 197
[209] Ibid
[210] Pham Gia Khiem (2009) op. cit. note 190
[211]Duong Quoc Thanh (2011) op. cit. note 207

when there were many cultural diplomatic activities carried out at various levels- and gained some successes, it was said to lack consistency in the whole foreign policies. This leads to the fact that Vietnam does not have a strategy for cultural diplomacy as well as the lack of long-term plans for each period, each area to guide cultural exchanges and cultural cooperation, or to build the image of the country, people and culture of Vietnam.

Another disadvantage could be the fact that there is no mechanism to direct and manage cultural diplomacy activities. Vietnam still has a hard time establishing a mechanism for coordination among agencies working in cultural diplomacy. Even in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, cultural diplomatic activities have not been paid adequate attention[212]. Besides, there are other factors that can cause difficulties for Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. Although the number of cultural diplomatic activities in recent years has increased more than before, the effect has not kept pace with today requirements. The products put out still are very limited in both quantity and quality. In general, the work of cultural diplomacy lacks depth, centralized and consistent direction as well as sustainability. The efficiency is not on par with the requirements and demands of the country's transformation, especially when Vietnam is integrating with the rest of the world[213]. Moreover, there are not many activities held on great scale, so that they cannot unleash the full potential of Vietnam. There is also lack of linkages inside and outside the country. There are few activities received the support of the government, ministries and agencies in terms of policies, guidelines and associated support and sometimes finance. In addition, enterprises and social organizations are limited in institutional capacity, relations, and financial capacity, so there is no ability to organize regular activities and sometimes even due to the lack of knowledge and complete understanding of culture, plus the limited financial capacity leads to counterproductive activities[214].

With the purpose of development and improving the comprehensive power, one of main objectives of Vietnam foreign policies is enhancing its soft power. Despite all the challenges, with the timely changes in the perception and policymaking, Vietnam has paid more attention to its cultural diplomacy, made it a more useful tool to enhance its influence abroad. At the moment, Vietnam is going through the important transition

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[212] An anonymous interviewee, who is a governmental official and did research on Vietnamese cultural diplomacy, said.

[213] Ibid

[214]Nguyen Xuan Hung (2008) *Tổ chức các sự kiện văn hóa Việt Nam ở nước ngoài (Holding Vietnamese Cultural Events Abroad)*, National Conference on "Cultural Diplomacy for A Vietnamese Identity, Peace, Integration and Sustainable Development", Hanoi.

from a regional small power to a middle power, projecting more soft power would help Vietnam achieve its goals more easily. This is the reason why cultural diplomacy has become more and more essential in Vietnam's foreign policies. To illustrate for this, the next chapter of this research will give a brief case study of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy.

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY - VIETNAMESE CULTURAL DIPLOMACY TOWARDS ASEAN

The cultural diplomacy of Vietnam has been analyzed by many Vietnamese authors in the field of international relations. However, there is no such in-depth analysis on Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN as an organization, nor towards separate member countries of ASEAN. Within the scope of this research, I would like to give a small analysis on Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN as a case study.

4.1 Vietnam and ASEAN

After the Vietnam War ended, doubts and unassertiveness are essential characteristics of the Vietnam-ASEAN relations. Although originally, there was no relationship between Vietnam and ASEAN as an organization, since 1976, member states of ASEAN and Vietnam made some progress in bilateral relations as the basis for future cooperation. In 1978, Vietnam signed a trade agreement with Malaysia. Relations with the Philippines were launched in 1976; relations with Thailand also have a certain number of steps. In January 1978, Vietnam and Thailand signed cooperation agreements in civil aviation and trade and economic relations[215].

However, prospects for dialogue and cooperation after 1975 were prevented by a backlash within the ASEAN countries due to the phenomenal refugee flow into Vietnam began to increase rapidly from mid-1978. The fact that Vietnam helped the people of Cambodia overthrow the PolPot regime ended the initial efforts of the ASEAN countries in establishing relations with Vietnam. In 1988, the 13th National Parliament of the Communist Party of Vietnam adopted a resolution to have 'more friends and fewer enemies'[216]. In 1989, Vietnam decided to withdraw its troops from Cambodia. On 16/09/1991, Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam has sent an official letter to his counterparts in ASEAN expressing Vietnam's readiness to admit the principles of ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation[217]. Just in the second half of October 1991, up to three times did the leaders of Vietnam: Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam, Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet and Vice Foreign Minister Vu Khoan emphasized that Vietnam wanted to become an ASEAN member in front of foreign

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[215] Chauhan, S. (2013) *Vietnam's Role in ASEAN*. East Asia Forum, Retrieved January 3, 2015 from http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2013/10/23/vietnams-role-in-asean/
[216] Ibid
[217] Pham Quang Minh (2012) op. cit. note 145, p.44

press[218]. This has shown the determination of the Party and State of Vietnam to join in ASEAN at this time. The ASEAN countries welcomed the decision of Vietnam and made preparation together with Vietnam for necessary procedures for Vietnam to join in ASEAN. July 28, 1995, in Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam officially became the seventh member of ASEAN[219]. This event was a milestone on the road to regional and international integration of Vietnam, which has taken the country forward on the path of building a prosperous nation, a strong country and an equitable, democratic and civilized society.

According to a report by the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, shortly after joining ASEAN, with the determination to fulfill obligations of a member state, we have taken the initiatives and actively participated in all activities of cooperation in from politics-security, economy, trading to commerce. Since then, Vietnam has promoted its role and position in the Association. As a founding member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) created in 1994, Vietnam has actively participated and contributed to the ARF process, contributing to the development of ARF to make it become a forum for dialogue on security of the region. With its active participation since the first days, we can see that the role of Vietnam has increased time after time in ASEAN[220].

The peak of this process may be the year of 2010, when Vietnam became the Chair of ASEAN. In this year, Vietnam performed the tasks of the Chairman of ASEAN with the motto "positive, proactive and responsible", which has enhanced the role and international position of Vietnam. Vietnam has set out and promoted appropriate initiatives, creating a high consensus and collective commitment of ASEAN to promote extensive cooperation in various fields, to achieve concrete progress, best expressed through the joint Declaration of the Summit as well as the establishment or enhancement of the value of regional cooperation mechanisms. Vietnam has organized and run smoothly and important events such as two phases of ASEAN Summit (ASEAN-16 andASEAN-17), the activities of the ASEAN Inter Parliamentary Assembly, more than ten conferences and the ministerial-level meeting on 20 officials related to the political-security, economic and socio-cultural, and activities of the people's organizations (ASEAN People's Forum) and business (the Summit of ASEAN

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[218]Thayer,C. (2004) *Vietnam in ASEAN: Multilateralism and Relations with the Great Powers*. Paper presented at the Second Vietnamese Studies Conference, Ho Chi Minh City

[219] Information retrieved January 3, 2015 from http://baotanglichsu.vn/portal/vi/Tin-tuc/Theo-dong-lich-su/2013/07/3A9239BA/

[220] Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Retrieved December 27, 2014 from http://www.mofahcm.gov.vn/vi/mofa/nr040807104143/nr040807105001/ns050726100210

business and Investment). Besides, bilateral relations between Vietnam and other ASEAN countries are also strengthened. In recent years, Vietnam has actively organized talks and bilateral meetings where leaders of many countries (including the Summit and Ministerial) occasionally attended to discuss measures to strengthen bilateral relations, achieved many important agreements. Moreover, Vietnam has enlisted the organization of the Conference of ASEAN to promote the country, people, history, culture and development potential of Vietnam. Vietnam has carried out many different actions, from the activities in the framework of the conference to be held in many provinces and cities, to the cultural performances, receptions, exhibitions, information, press and so on[221]. Witnessing those activities, leaders, delegates and international media can gain better understanding of the country and its people as well as the potential of development of Vietnam, contributing to strengthening relations and cooperation between countries and Vietnam.

From the brief history of Vietnam-ASEAN relations above, I would say that Vietnam's decision to become an ASEAN member has brought major benefits to the country. ASEAN helps ensure peace and security in the region. To non-member states, ASEAN is an organization of regional cooperation which has great potential for countries to take into account. ASEAN has established official and unofficial, bilateral and multilateral, from low level to high level dialogue mechanisms with a large number of countries in Asia '- the Pacific and around the world - the mechanism has contributed to maintaining and strengthening national security and peace in the region[222]. It gave Vietnam the peaceful and stable collaborative environment, especially when Vietnam was innovating and overcoming the consequences of wars, integrating into the region as well as the world. Secondly, it helped Vietnam develop its economy and attract the investment from other countries in the region. Thirdly, it improved Vietnam national image and position in the region, expand bilateral relations with not only countries in the region but the world great powers as ASEAN's

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[221] Pham Gia Khiem (2010) *Thành công năm Chủ tịch ASEAN ghi đậm dấu ấn Việt Nam (Vietnam Success in the Year of Being ASEAN Chair)* Retrieved December 28, 2014 from website of Online Newspaper of the Government-Socialist Republic of Vietnam http://baodientu.chinhphu.vn/Viet-Nam-ASEAN/Thanh-cong-nam-Chu-tich-ASEAN-ghi-dam-dau-an-Viet-Nam/52768.vgp

[222] Nguyen Phuong Binh (2012) *Vai trò của Asean đối với các nước thành viên và đối với khu vực châu Á – Thái Bình Dương (The Role of ASEAN to Member States and to Asia-Pacific),* Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. Retrieved January 14, 2015 from http://www.dav.edu.vn/en/introduction/organization-structure.html?id=470:so-34-vai-tro-cua-asean-doi-voi-cac-nuoc-thanh-vien-va-doi-voi-khu-vuc-chau-a-thai-binh-duong

partners[223]. Being a member of ASEAN also helps Vietnam to expand and strengthen ties with ASEAN's partners, especially the major powers, as well as greater opportunity for participation in the framework of international cooperation and broader inter-regional cooperation such as ASEAN + 3, the East Asia Summit (EAS), the Asia - Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Proceedings of the Asia - Europe Meeting (ASEM), the World Trade Organization (WTO), ...; thereby contributing to enhancing the role and international position of Vietnam[224].

To serve the purpose of developing the country from a small power to a regional middle power, Vietnam needs to improve its comprehensive power in the organization. Soft power also plays an important role here. As I have conducted interviews with some high governmental officials of Vietnam, who have taken part in developing the strategies and leading the deployment of Vietnam activities in ASEAN, they have raised important points on the reasons why Vietnam should enhance its soft power in ASEAN.[225] Firstly, enhancing Vietnam's soft power means enhancing Vietnam competitive advantage in comparison with other countries in the organization. Vietnam did not join in ASEAN until 1995. At this time, the economic capability of Vietnam is still less than that of other members. So, Vietnam needed to create its own attraction, to attract other countries to invest in Vietnam, so that it can further develop its economy and expand its number of trading partners. Secondly, enhancing Vietnam's soft power also means enhancing Vietnam comprehensive power in the region. We already have rich sources of soft power, especially cultural soft power.[226] So, it is important to exploit this potential to make Vietnam more powerful than some other countries in the region. It can also help Vietnam to develop its tourism and cultural industry, which can bring benefits to the economy as a whole. Thirdly, ASEAN is considered the first important step in Vietnam's broader plans for integration into the region as well as the world. It is also seen as an important platform where Vietnamese voice could be heard. So, if Vietnam can improve its soft power, it can earn respect from other member states of ASEAN.

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223 Vietnam News Agency (2014) *19 năm Việt Nam gia nhập ASEAN: Ý nghĩa tầm quốc gia lẫn khu vực.(19 Years in ASEAN: National and Regional Meaning)* Retrieved January 15, 2015 from http://www.vietnamplus.vn/19-nam-viet-nam-gia-nhap-asean-y-nghia-tam-quoc-gia-lan-khu-vuc/273257.vnp

224 Pham Gia Khiem (2010) *Việt Nam gia nhập ASEAN- bước hội nhập chiến lược. (Vietnam to Participate in ASEAN- a strategic integration.)* Retrieved January 18, 2015 from http://www.seasfoundation.org/research-documents/geopolitics/415-vit-nam-gia-nhp-asean-bc-hi-nhp-chin-lc

225 Interviews carried out with anonymous interviewees

226 See chapter III

Also, it would give Vietnam the ability to campaign for other issues. One simple example is the matter of territorial disputes in the East Sea of Vietnam (also known as the South China Sea)[227]. Vietnam, which is known as a peace-loving country, obviously would not want to seek military conflict with China. In addition, with the characteristics of a small power, which is a "law-lover", Vietnam has attempted to solve this issue through peaceful ways based on international laws. As result, Vietnam may need the support from other countries in the region. This requires a greater soft power. From those reasons, we can see that it is essential for Vietnam to increase its soft power among ASEAN nations. To achieve this goal, Vietnam has carried out many activities, especially the cultural diplomacy within the scope of ASEAN.

4.2 Vietnamese Cultural Diplomacy towards ASEAN

With cultural diplomacy as the main tool, Vietnam has carried many activities to develop its soft power from the early days when it first joined in the Association. Cooperation in the field of performing arts and exhibitions is one of important fields of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN. This is an area where Vietnam achieved many awards in the regional competition, which can be considered success of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. The 4th ASEAN Dance Festival held in Singapore in December 1996, musical and dance troupes Vietnam joined together with those from other ASEAN member states. At a workshop on ASEAN Countries' Folk Dance, Vietnam has the participation with a research on "Rural Vietnam: The Living Museum of Traditional Folk Dance". This was illustrated through the language of dance performance by dancers from Vietnam. In addition to the fact that Vietnam also sent art troupes participating in international festivals such as Xylophone Festival in Thailand, Vietnam has organized two music festivals in 1996 and 1997, called "The Golden Voice Hanoi - ASEAN '96 "and" Festival of Friend's Melodies Vietnam - ASEAN - Hanoi 97 ". At those festivals, artists, musicians of Vietnam had the chance to interact with colleagues through songs filled with solidarity and friendship. In the framework of cultural activities celebrated thirty years of the establishment of ASEAN, the first ASEAN Photography Festival was held in Hanoi. This is the first time a photography

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[227] Six parties—Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam are involved in the dispute over the Islands of the South China Sea and their associated maritime spaces. China and Vietnam both claim sovereignty over the Paracel Islands while five littoral states, Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, claim some or all of the features generally known as the Spratly Islands. Moreover, Taiwan is a party to the dispute whose claims are largely similar to those of China. See more in Schofield & Storey (2009) *The South China Sea Dispute: Increasing Stakes and Rising Tensions.*The Jamestown Foundation. Retrieved January 15, 2015 from
https://www.academia.edu/2062121/The_South_China_Sea_Dispute_Rising_Tensions_Increasing_Stakes

festival was held at great scale operation of ASEAN in Hanoi. During the 37-year anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN, ASEAN Cultural Week was opened at the Hanoi Opera House (2004) with an excellent art program represented by nearly 500 artists from ASEAN countries. ASEAN Cultural Week of Viet Nam is one of the efforts to maintain and promote culture of ASEAN and Asian values, creating a basis for promoting the principles the Association.[228] From those activities, Vietnam could not only advertise its beautiful country to the international friends, but also show that it is a country with great cultural potential. Another thing is that it can showcase the ability of Vietnamese people are unlimited. They are very talented and a promising human resource of Vietnam.

At the press meeting on year-end summation of cultural diplomacy in 2009 as well as charting the direction and tasks of cultural diplomacy in 2010, Pham Sanh Chau, Director of the Department of Culture and External Affairs and UNESCO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said the ministry in collaboration with the ministries would develop cultural diplomacy in Vietnam as ASEAN Chair in 2010[229]. At the same time, the Ministry also continues to carry out cultural activities during the visit of senior leaders to Vietnam, or anniversary events of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and its fifty partners. The greatest success of cultural diplomacy in 2009 was rated as creating a fundamental shift in the perceptions and actions of senior leaders, leaders at all levels and branches at home and abroad on the need and the importance of the cultural diplomacy work[230]. Cultural diplomacy is not only the task of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism but it belongs to all the agencies and local enterprises. Actors participating in cultural diplomacy have been diversified and could promote the coordinated deployment of cultural diplomacy between ministries, branches and localities in the country.

From then on, the activities of cultural diplomacy of Vietnam start to bloom. "ASEAN Great Unity Days–One vision, one identity, one community "with the theme "Solidarity-Cooperation-Development" took place in November 2014 at the Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture and Tourism, Dong Mo, Son Tay, Hanoi. This was a cultural exchange activity between ASEAN countries to promote understanding,

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[228] Vu Tuyet Loan ( )*Hợp tác văn hóa Việt Nam-ASEAN hướng tới một cộng đồng văn hóa –xã hội ASEAN*, Viện Nghiên Cứu Đông Nam Á (*Vietnam-ASEAN Cultural Cooperation Towards ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community*, Southeast Asian Studies Institute)
[229] Anonymous, *Đẩy mạnh ngoại giao văn hóa năm Chủ tịch ASEAN. (Enhancing Cultural Diplomacy in the Year Vietnam Becomes ASEAN Chair)* Retrieved December 12, 2014 from
http://www.vietnamembassy-turkey.org/en/vnemb.vn/tin_hddn/ns100125082857/view
[230] Ibid

cohesion among countries, contributing to building an ASEAN solidarity community with dynamic development, a peaceful and prosperous region. It was seen as an opportunity for ASEAN countries to promote and introduce their nations, their typical cultural values, their efforts in conserving and promoting the value of the cultural heritage of the ASEAN countries in general and Vietnam in particular[231].

This event included many important activities to introduce and promote tourism and the image of the country and people of ASEAN countries; introduce the cultural heritage of the ASEAN countries; introduce the traditional sports of ASEAN countries; and most essentially, to introduce the traditional culture of the people of Vietnam. This event was considered an important activity in Vietnamese cultural diplomacy. The reason is not only because it played an important part in improving the national image of Vietnam for the peoples in ASEAN. As well, it showed that Vietnam had the potential to carry out activities to strongly enhance its cultural influence. Even though this event was held in Vietnam, not abroad, it still attracted the attention with ASEAN member states and their people. As a small power, in the transition to become a middle power, it is crucial that Vietnam knows how to make use of its culture and available capabilities to enhance its soft power in an organization like ASEAN. Also in 2014, the Vietnam-ASEAN Silk Culture Festival introduced a number of products of typical silk villages of Vietnam to the silk products from Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, and Malaysia[232]. Festival was also an opportunity for the silk-weaving villages to exchange experiences on the job and get in the same direction to firmly unite to jointly produce high-quality Vietnamese silk. Another important activity is ASEAN Arts Festival2014. It was held by the Ministry of Culture and Arts of Cambodia with the participation of 10 ASEAN countries[233]. This was one of those activities which have contributed significantly to preserving and promoting the unique culture of the peoples of ASEAN. This is also an opportunity for artists of ASEAN countries to exchange experiences to preserve and promote national culture. Vietnam, of course, cannot let go

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[231]Anonymous, *Những ngày "Đại đoàn kết ASEAN - Một tầm nhìn, một bản sắc, một cộng đồng" tại Làng Văn hóa - Du lịch các dân tộc Việt Nam.(ASEAN Great Unity Days- One Vision, One Identity, One Community" at the Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture and Tourism).* Retrieved January 12, 2014 from http://www.vietnamembassy-thailand.org/vi/nr070521165843/nr070725012202/ns141125201853

[232]Quynh Anh (2014) *Ngày hội Văn hóa Tơ lụa Việt Nam - ASEAN: Hướng đến sự liên kết bền chặt. (Vietnam-ASEAN Silk Culture Festival: Towards a Firm Unity.)* Retrieved January 18, 2015 from http://vtv.vn/viet-nam-va-the-gioi/ngay-hoi-van-hoa-to-lua-viet-nam-asean-huong-den-su-lien-ket-ben-chat-20141229092245315.htm

[233]Xuan Khu (2014) *Liên hoan nghệ thuật các dân tộc ASEAN 2014 tại Campuchia. (ASEAN Arts Festival in Cambodia)* Retrieved January 14, 2015 from http://www.vietnamplus.vn/lien-hoan-nghe-thuat-cac-dan-toc-asean-2014-tai-campuchia/292588.vnp

of this chance. Representative of Vietnam in this event was the art troupe from Traditional Hue Royal Court Music Theater. The artists brought traditional court music under the Nguyen Dynasty to the festival. Through lyrics, dances, performances, the group introduced "ca Hue" (Hue traditional music) to international friends along with the famous scenic spots such as the ancient capital-Citadel, Truong Tien bridge, poetic Perfume River. They all conveyed the beauty of Hue which had been recognized the Cultural City of ASEAN at the 6th Conference of Ministers of Culture and Arts of ASEAN. Vietnam has always put much effort into those kinds of activities. With this event, it was easier for Vietnam to showcase its rich culture as well as the long history of the country. It can persuade other countries that Vietnam has a profound history and experiences through time, so that what it has done is worth noticing. It also can advertise for the famous tourist city, attract more people to come visit. It certainly led to the development of the tourist industry in particular and Vietnam economic development in general. In the period 1999-2006, the number of ASEAN tourists to Vietnam had increased over 300%, from nearly 187.000 tourists in 1999 to 573.000 in 2006[234]. This number shows that Vietnam has been able to attract more and more ASEAN tourists, which will help develop the country's tourism and gain profits for the development of Vietnam's economy.

The work of cultural diplomacy has undergone some advantages, which can help Vietnam to develop its soft power more and more. Vietnam has conducted more than 10 years of innovation and good results have been obtained. This fact has strengthened the confidence of other people that we were in the right direction when having maximum integration with the region and the world both economically and culturally. After being asked about the advantage of Vietnam when using cultural diplomacy to develop its soft power, a high governmental official answered that the traditions that our people have preserved made the unique identity of Vietnam and above, it was never in history been "dissolved". Secondly, unlike other areas of cooperation, cultural cooperation among ASEAN countries has an important source of financial support, such as ASEAN Cultural Fund. This fund was established by the Prime Minister of Japan, Takeo Fukuda, who pledged in 1977 the initial amount of US $25 million. Only dedicated to the development of cultural cooperation in the Association, the fund manager has sent the money to the bank in Singapore and Malaysia. All exchanges, cultural cooperation

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[234] Vietnam News Agency (2015) *Việt Nam hấp dẫn khách du lịch ASEAN (Vietnam Attracts ASEAN Tourists)* Retrieved January 10, 2015 from
 http://www.dulichthu-dong.com/tindulich_chitiet.php?newsID=2889

programs of ASEAN have taken money from this fund, the member states do not have to contribute more[235].

Besides those advantages, Vietnam has to face some challenges on the way of enhancing its soft power through cultural diplomacy in ASEAN. First of all, culture in particular and superstructure in general is primarily dependent on economic development. In terms of economic development, Vietnam still ranks below other member states of ASEAN.[236] This would lead to the lack of resources, both financial and human resources, to carry out the cultural diplomacy activities. As mentioned by the people who are directly involved in the cultural diplomacy activities in ASEAN of Vietnam, the national budget for cultural diplomacy is not enough to meet the demands. Also, there have been not many officials who have wide and specialized knowledge of ASEAN to carry out the work[237]. Although Vietnam has many initiatives for ASEAN, however, there are not enough resources to carry them out. This could decrease the influence of Vietnam in the institution as other country might have doubts on Vietnam's ability to lead or to become a major member of ASEAN. Another drawback of Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN is that the cultural industry is still a very new concept in Vietnam. It is hard to attract enterprises to invest in this industry. Also, to make use of every resource to implement one policy, the best way of Vietnam is to nationalize the priorities of the region, which means to turn ASEAN's priorities into national priorities. However, this is a very difficult task for the government as well as policymakers[238].

Despite all of the challenges, Vietnam now has a quite favorable environment to develop its soft power through cultural diplomacy. In this chapter, I explained the importance of Vietnam's development of soft power in ASEAN. I also have analyzed the typical activities in Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN as a tool to enhance its soft power in the Association. With those activities, Vietnam seems to get on the right track in order to improve its influence in the region, which is an important task to Vietnam if it wants to transform from a small power to a middle power in the region.

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[235] Le Dinh Tu (2012) *Quan hệ văn hóa Việt Nam - Asean: một cách tiếp cận, (An Approach to Vietnam-ASEAN Cultural Relations)* Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. Retrieved December 12, 2014 from http://www.dav.edu.vn/en/reseach/introduction.html?id=337:so-20-quan-he-van-hoa-viet-nam-asean-mot-cach-tiep-can
[236] Ibid.
[237] Anonymous interviewee
[238] Ibid

CONCLUSION

The growing popularity of soft power and cultural diplomacy in the world has called for more and more studies on these topics. This thesis is not an exception. It aims to analyze the concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy perceived and put into practice in Vietnam, a small country in Southeast Asia.

In this thesis, I suggested that Vietnam is in the middle of the transition from a small power to a middle power. In the discourse of Vietnam, there have been some differences found in the way Vietnamese policymakers and scholars perceive soft power and cultural diplomacy. In spite of the common idea of soft power, in Vietnam, they have perceived it as "cultural soft power", which means the attraction and influence that Vietnam had on other countries through cultural values and many other forms such as cultural exchanges, education, and movies and so on. The main goal of Vietnam's soft power was the development of the country. As a small power changing to a medium one, Vietnam is still having limited financial capabilities and other sources of capabilities to make influence on other countries. All this country is aiming at is developing the country to a higher level. Soft power would have much contribution to the comprehensive development of Vietnam. The thesis also pointed out the sources of Vietnam's soft power, which were suggested by policymakers and scholars in Vietnam. Vietnam can count on the achievements in the economic reforms, political values and beliefs and especially, its rich and diverse culture as sources of its soft power. From those sources, it is undeniable that Vietnamese government has been on the right track to carry out cultural diplomacy as the main tool to increase Vietnam's soft power.

There have been still some overlaps between the conceptualization of soft power and cultural diplomacy among Vietnamese policymakers and scholars. However, Vietnamese government has made it clear that cultural diplomacy is one of the three main pillars of Vietnam foreign policies. It has the interconnection with political diplomacy and economic diplomacy. Also, its main purpose is to form a firm background for the development of the other two pillars. The main actor to carry out cultural diplomacy is the government with specific strategies and policies. As Vietnamese culture has always been considered the main source of Vietnam's soft power, the cultural diplomacy activities of Vietnam mostly spin around this source. Under the umbrella of cultural diplomacy, Vietnamese government has carried out many cultural activities in order to increase Vietnam attractiveness to other countries.

Besides the favorable conditions for the development of cultural diplomacy such as the rich traditional culture or the strong support from political leaders, Vietnam has to face some major challenges in carrying out its cultural diplomacy. It still lacks human and financial resources, the awareness of the importance of cultural diplomacy and lacks mechanisms for coordinating among agencies in the field of cultural diplomacy. However, Vietnam has achieved some successes in carrying out its cultural diplomacy, especially in ASEAN. The thesis mentioned Vietnamese cultural diplomacy towards ASEAN as a case for the use of cultural diplomacy in order to enhance the country's soft power in the region. It has proved that despite some drawbacks, the higher position of Vietnam in ASEAN as well as its stronger influence in the region nowadays was earned partly by the exercise of cultural diplomacy. So, soft power and cultural diplomacy are important pieces in Vietnam's foreign policy nowadays. And it is essential to have more researches in the future on those topics, so that Vietnam can stay on the right track, on the way to develop its comprehensive power and become a middle power in the region partly by enhancing its soft power with cultural diplomacy.

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