

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

LE THI THOM

**THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS
OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS
MAJOR: DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM
Code: 9229002**

HA NOI - 2026

**The dissertation was completed at
Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

Supervisors: 1. Dr. Phan Manh Toan



2. Dr. Le Van Phuc

Reviewer 1:
.....

Reviewer 2:
.....

Reviewer 3:
.....

**The thesis will be defended in front of the Thesis Committee at Academy
level, at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

At..... hour..... date..... month..... year 2026

**The thesis can be found at the National Library and
the Library of Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

INTRODUCTION

1. The urgency of the theme

Confucianism is a philosophical doctrine that has exerted a profound influence on the cultures and peoples of many East Asian countries, including Vietnam. Within this doctrine, conceptions of the way of being human occupy a central position, providing guidance for human conduct in family and social relationships and outlining the path of individual moral cultivation. Under particular historical conditions, these conceptions have contributed to reinforcing such values as benevolence, respect for learning, responsibility, and a sense of moral obligation and affection. At the same time, they contain limitations associated with the feudal social order, including social hierarchy, patriarchal authority, male preference, obedience, and the underestimation of the role of the individual. This dual character necessitates examining Confucian conceptions of the way of being human from a historical-concrete perspective, distinguishing between values that can be further inherited and promoted and elements that are no longer compatible with the requirements of human development today.

In Vietnam, through a prolonged process of introduction and cultural adaptation, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have permeated family life, education, customs, practices, and social relationships, becoming intertwined with indigenous cultural values and other currents of thought. Consequently, their influence does not exist in isolation, nor do these conceptions constitute the sole source of the values and limitations found in the morality and lifestyles of Vietnamese people. Identifying and explaining this influence requires examining it in relation to historical and social conditions, processes of cultural adaptation, and the development of social institutions. This constitutes an issue of theoretical significance in studying the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

From a practical perspective, the processes of renovation, market-oriented economic development, international integration, and digital transformation are fundamentally transforming standards of conduct and cultural value systems. As noted in relevant Party documents, the cultural environment remains insufficiently healthy, social morality shows signs of

deterioration and a loss of cultural identity, while efforts to develop Vietnamese people remain one-sided, focusing primarily on the acquisition of knowledge without adequate attention to education in political ideals, morality, and lifestyles. In response to these challenges, the Communist Party of Vietnam has emphasized the coordinated development of the national value system, cultural value system, family value system, and standards for Vietnamese people, with the aim of promoting comprehensive human development. Particular importance is attached to the cultivation of human character and to prioritizing moral and cultural education at all levels of education, beginning with preschool. This requires the selective inheritance and transformation of traditional ideological and ethical values, including Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, in accordance with the requirements of developing Vietnamese people today.

In the new context, through processes of cultural adaptation and various modes of influence, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human continue to leave certain imprints on the development of Vietnamese people, in both positive and negative respects. The issue is not merely to identify the values and limitations of these conceptions, but also to clarify the content, modes, and manifestations of their influence. On that basis, it is necessary to promote their positive influences and mitigate their negative ones, thereby contributing to the development of standards for Vietnamese people characterized by patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, compassion and a sense of moral obligation, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and creativity. This process also requires a harmonious integration of traditional and modern values, as well as national and international values, contributing to the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people, social morality, and national character in the new era.

Although numerous studies have examined Confucianism, Confucian ethics, conceptions of the way of being human, and the development of Vietnamese people, certain aspects of the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today still require systematic and in-depth investigation from a philosophical perspective. For these reasons, the doctoral candidate has selected the topic ***“The Influence of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human on the Development of Vietnamese People Today”*** for the doctoral dissertation.

2. Research Objectives and Tasks

2.1. Research Objectives

On the basis of clarifying several theoretical issues concerning Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, the dissertation analyzes the current manifestations and causes of their influence on the development of Vietnamese people. It then proposes major viewpoints and solutions aimed at promoting their positive influences and mitigating their negative influences on the development of Vietnamese people today.

2.2. Research Task

First, to review the existing research related to the dissertation topic, evaluate the findings achieved, and identify research gaps and issues requiring further investigation.

Second, to clarify several theoretical issues concerning Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, the development of Vietnamese people today, and the modes through which these conceptions influence that development.

Third, to analyze and assess the current positive and negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people, together with the causes underlying these influences.

Fourth, to propose major viewpoints and solutions aimed at promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

3. Research Subjects and Scope

3.1. Research Subjects

The research object of the dissertation is the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

3.2. Research Scope

Scope of content: The dissertation focuses on examining Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in two fundamental dimensions: (1) the responsibilities, obligations, and duties of individuals within five fundamental social relationships - ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers, and friends (the Five Cardinal Relationships); and (2) individual moral self-cultivation according to the standards of benevolence,

righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness (the Five Constant Virtues). On this basis, the dissertation investigates the influence of these conceptions on the formation and development of ethical values and standards, personality, lifestyles, and patterns of conduct among Vietnamese people today.

Scope in terms of space: Vietnam

Scope in terms of time: The dissertation examines the period from the promulgation of the Resolution of the Fifth Plenum of the Eighth Party Central Committee in 1998 to the present.

4. Theoretical foundations and research methodology

4.1. Theoretical Foundations

The dissertation is grounded in the theoretical foundations of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the viewpoints and guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and the policies and laws of the Vietnamese State concerning culture and human development. It also selectively draws upon relevant achievements of domestic and international research.

4.2. Research Methodology

Regarding the methodological approach: The dissertation is based on the methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, applying the principles of objectivity, comprehensiveness, development, historical specificity, and practice.

Regarding specific research methods: The dissertation employs a combination of research methods, including the historical and logical methods, analysis and synthesis, comparison, systematization, generalization and scientific abstraction, and statistical analysis and document processing. These methods are employed to clarify the formation, cultural adaptation, and modes of influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, while also elucidating the theoretical foundations, assessing the current state of their influence, and proposing solutions to the issues addressed in the dissertation.

5. New contributions of the thesis

First, the dissertation contributes to systematizing and clarifying, from a philosophical perspective, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in the unity of two dimensions: the responsibilities, obligations, and duties of individuals in social relationships, and the self-cultivation and improvement of individual morality. It also clarifies the content of the development of

Vietnamese people and the modes through which Confucian conceptions of the way of being human influence this process today.

Second, the dissertation systematically identifies and explains the dual nature of the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today, as well as the cultural adaptation and interweaving of this influence with national cultural traditions, socio-economic conditions, and other ideological and cultural currents. In doing so, it contributes to overcoming reductionist approaches that directly equate positive or negative manifestations in Vietnamese social life with the influence of Confucianism.

Third, the dissertation proposes viewpoints and solutions aimed at promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people, based on the integration of tradition and modernity, thereby meeting the requirements for developing the value system and standards of Vietnamese people in the new context.

6. Theoretical and practical significance

6.1. Theoretical significance

The research findings contribute to clarifying several theoretical issues concerning Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, the modes of their influence, and the dual nature of that influence on the development of Vietnamese people today. They thereby provide additional scientific arguments for identifying, evaluating, and selectively inheriting values embodied in Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in accordance with the requirements of developing Vietnamese people in the new context.

6.2. Practical significance

The research findings contribute to providing a scientific basis for promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in the development of Vietnamese people. They may also serve as reference materials for research, teaching, and learning in Confucianism, the history of Vietnamese thought, and philosophical issues concerning human beings.

7. Structure of the Thesis

Apart from the introduction, conclusion, list of references, and appendices, the thesis is structured into 4 chapters with a total of 10 sections.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH RELATED TO THE THESIS

1.1. RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY: SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES

Confucianism and its influence have been extensively studied by domestic and international scholars from political, social, and ethical perspectives. These studies have clarified such fundamental concepts and moral standards as benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), propriety (*li*), wisdom (*zhi*), trustworthiness (*xin*), loyalty (*zhong*), and filial piety (*xiao*); the principles governing human conduct within the Three Cardinal Bonds and the Five Cardinal Relationships; and the process of the cultural adaptation of Confucianism in Vietnam. The development of Vietnamese people has also been examined from various perspectives, particularly in relation to traditional values, spiritual values, and standards for Vietnamese people. These findings provide an important theoretical foundation upon which the dissertation builds. At the same time, they highlight the need for further systematic investigation, from a philosophical perspective, into the content and modes of influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

1.2. RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY

Existing studies have analyzed both the positive and negative influences of feudal ideology, including Confucianism, on the moral and spiritual life, personality, and social relationships of Vietnamese people. Some studies have focused on specific social groups and geographical areas, such as women, leading and managerial cadres, and residents of the Red River Delta. They have also provided initial explanations of the causes underlying these influences in relation to the cultural adaptation of Confucianism, the preservation of traditional cultural values, and the impact of socio-economic conditions.

1.3. RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO VIEWPOINTS AND SOLUTIONS FOR PROMOTING THE POSITIVE INFLUENCES AND MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY

Existing studies have proposed and suggested orientations for inheriting and promoting the positive values of Confucian ethics while overcoming its negative limitations. These orientations primarily focus on applying Ho Chi Minh Thought concerning the selective inheritance of traditional values; integrating traditional morality with the requirements of economic, cultural, and social development; and promoting the roles of the family, educational institutions, and social organizations in human development. These findings provide valuable references. Nevertheless, further in-depth research is required to develop a coherent system of viewpoints and solutions directly linked to the content, modes, and current manifestations of the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

1.4. VALUE OF THE REVIEWED SCIENTIFIC WORKS AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION IN THE DISSERTATION

1.4.1. Research Value of Published Scientific Works Related to the Dissertation Topic

The review of existing research reveals the following major findings:

First, previous studies have clarified the historical foundations and fundamental content of Confucian ethical thought, particularly the moral standards embodied in the Five Constant Virtues and the Five Cardinal Relationships, as well as the process of their cultural adaptation in Vietnam. They have also provided theoretical arguments concerning the development of Vietnamese people in the new period.

Second, previous studies have identified manifestations of both the positive and negative influences of Confucian ethics on the morality, personality, lifestyles, and social relationships of Vietnamese people. They have also offered initial explanations of the causes underlying these influences in the course of social development and transformation.

Third, previous studies have suggested a number of viewpoints and solutions for selectively inheriting traditional ethical values while overcoming

outdated elements. They have emphasized the roles of education, the family, law, the cultural environment, and various social actors in the development of Vietnamese people.

1.4.2. Issues for Further Investigation in the Dissertation

Building upon the findings of previously published research, the dissertation focuses on three principal areas of investigation:

First, to systematize and elucidate Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in terms of the unity between individual moral self-cultivation in accordance with the Five Constant Virtues and the fulfillment of responsibilities, obligations, and duties within social relationships as prescribed by the Five Cardinal Relationships; and to clarify the process of their cultural adaptation in Vietnam and the modes through which these conceptions influence the development of Vietnamese people today.

Second, to systematically analyze and assess the positive and negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today, and to clarify the causes underlying these influences in relation to socio-economic conditions, social institutions, and processes of cultural adaptation.

Third, to formulate viewpoints and propose a system of solutions aimed at promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, on the basis of selectively inheriting and transforming traditional values in accordance with the requirements for the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people in the new era.

Chapter 1 Summary

Domestic and international research works have provided important theoretical arguments concerning Confucian ethical thought, the influence of Confucian ethics on Vietnamese people, and orientations for inheriting traditional ethical values. Nevertheless, the systematic elucidation of the content, modes, and dual nature of the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today, particularly in relation to socio-economic conditions and processes of cultural adaptation, requires further in-depth investigation from the perspective of dialectical and historical materialism. This provides the basis for determining the dissertation's research approach and developing the subsequent research contents.

Chapter 2

THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY - SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES

2.1. CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN

2.1.1. Conceptions of Human Nature as the Foundation for Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human

Confucian conceptions of the way of being human are grounded in views of human nature. Although Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi offered different interpretations of human nature, they all emphasized the roles of education, moral self-cultivation, and the practice of ritual propriety and righteousness in shaping moral character and regulating human conduct. On this basis, Confucianism established a system of moral standards and principles of conduct to guide individuals in cultivating themselves and fulfilling their responsibilities and duties within social relationships.

2.1.2. The Concept of the “Way of Being Human” in Confucianism

In Confucianism, the *Dao* encompasses both the Way of Heaven (*Tiandao*) and the Human Way (*Rendao*), with particular emphasis placed on the latter as a means of morally educating individuals and maintaining social order. Accordingly, *the way of being human refers to the path of self-cultivation and the practice of principles for living, encompassing a system of moral standards and principles of conduct within interpersonal relationships. It serves to define each individual's responsibilities, obligations, and duties and to regulate individual awareness and behavior in relation to oneself and others, within both the family and wider society.*

2.1.3. Fundamental Content of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human

2.1.3.1. Human Responsibilities, Obligations, and Duties within Social Relationships

Confucian conceptions of the way of being human are expressed through the Five Cardinal Relationships (*Wulun*), comprising five fundamental relationships: ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers, and friends. Within these relationships, individuals'

responsibilities, obligations, and duties are defined according to their respective positions and roles in the family and society.

Regarding the ruler - subject relationship: Confucianism emphasizes the moral character of rulers, their responsibility to care for the people and appoint worthy and capable individuals, as well as the loyalty and dedication of subjects. Through the process of cultural adaptation in Vietnam, this conception was enriched by an emphasis on respect for and closeness to the people, gradually evolving from loyalty to the ruler toward loyalty to the country and the people.

Regarding the father - son relationship: Confucianism upholds the principle of “benevolent fathers and filial sons,” emphasizing parents' responsibilities for nurturing and educating their children and children's filial respect for their parents. In Vietnamese Confucianism, filial piety underwent cultural adaptation, extending beyond familial responsibilities to encompass obligations toward the community and the nation.

Regarding the husband - wife relationship: Confucianism emphasizes affection, moral obligation, and mutual responsibility between husband and wife within the family. At the same time, however, it establishes a patriarchal order that requires wives to be subordinate to their husbands. Through its cultural adaptation in Vietnam, this conception both retained patriarchal elements and underwent modifications that placed greater emphasis on women's roles within the family.

Regarding the relationship between siblings: Confucianism upholds the principle that elder brothers should be kind and caring, while younger brothers should show respect and deference. This principle emphasizes the responsibility of elder siblings to care for and guide their younger siblings and the duty of younger siblings to respect their elders. Its reception in Vietnam has contributed to strengthening affection, responsibility, and solidarity among family members.

Regarding friendships: Confucianism attaches importance to trustworthiness in friendships, emphasizing sincerity, honesty, and fidelity to one's word. These values have continued to be inherited and preserved in Vietnamese traditions of interpersonal conduct.

2.1.3.2. Moral Virtues Cultivated through Individual Self-Cultivation

Confucianism regards self-cultivation as the foundation for the perfection of moral character and the fulfillment of social responsibilities. The core content of moral self-cultivation is embodied in the Five Constant Virtues (*Wuchang*): benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), propriety (*li*), wisdom (*zhi*), and trustworthiness (*xin*). Among these, benevolence occupies a central position, guiding the cultivation of moral virtues and the formation of the ideal of the *junzi* (exemplary person).

Throughout its development from pre-Qin Confucianism to Han and Song Confucianism, the system of the Five Constant Virtues was supplemented and modified in response to changing historical conditions and the requirements of maintaining social order. Following the introduction of Confucianism into Vietnam, these moral standards underwent further cultural adaptation in interaction with indigenous traditions of patriotism, compassion, respect for moral obligations and human relationships, and communal consciousness. Consequently, they contributed to the cultivation of positive moral values while also retaining certain historically conditioned limitations.

Thus, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human represent the unity between individual moral self-cultivation according to the Five Constant Virtues and the fulfillment of responsibilities, obligations, and duties within social relationships according to the Five Cardinal Relationships. These two dimensions are closely interconnected and constitute the theoretical foundation for examining the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

2.2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND THE MODES OF INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THIS PROCESS TODAY

2.2.1. The Development of Vietnamese People Today

2.2.1.1. Perspectives on Human Beings and the Development of Vietnamese People Today

On the basis of applying the perspectives of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, the Communist Party of Vietnam identifies human beings as both the goal and the driving force of development. The comprehensive

development of Vietnamese people is regarded as a central task in the national strategy for cultural, human, and national development.

2.2.1.2. Fundamental Content of the Development of Vietnamese People Today

First, to promote the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people in terms of morality, intellect, physical well-being, and aesthetic sensibility.

Second, to promote the development of Vietnamese people in association with the improvement of the system of values and standards for Vietnamese people. In this regard, eight fundamental standards are identified for Vietnamese people in the current period: patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, compassion and a sense of moral obligation, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and creativity.

2.2.2. Modes of Influence of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human on the Development of Vietnamese People Today

First, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human exert an indirect influence through customs, traditional practices, and inherited patterns of social mentality.

Second, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human influence Vietnamese people today through education and family traditions.

Third, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human influence Vietnamese people today through family and lineage precepts, village conventions, and community cultural institutions.

Fourth, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human indirectly influence the development of Vietnamese people today through processes of selective inheritance and institutionalization in certain guidelines and policies of the Communist Party of Vietnam and in the policies and laws of the State.

Through these modes, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human continue to influence the awareness, behavior, and social relationships of Vietnamese people, with varying degrees and manifestations. This influence is dual in nature and is conditioned by historical and social circumstances and processes of cultural adaptation. Whether such influence is positive or negative must be assessed according to the extent to which Confucian values and

standards are compatible with the requirements for the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people today.

Chapter 2 Summary

Chapter 2 has clarified the foundations, fundamental content, and process of cultural adaptation of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in Vietnam. It has also identified the principal requirements for the development of Vietnamese people today and the modes through which these conceptions exert their influence. On the methodological foundations of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, the dissertation affirms that the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human is dual in nature and undergoes continuous development and transformation under the impact of socio-economic conditions, social institutions, and processes of cultural adaptation. These findings provide the theoretical basis for analyzing the current manifestations and causes of this influence in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY - CURRENT STATE AND CAUSES

3.1. POSITIVE INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY AND THEIR CAUSES

3.1.1. Positive Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human on the Development of Vietnamese People Today

3.1.1.1. Regarding Virtues Cultivated through Individual Moral Self-Cultivation

i). Confucian moral standards have exerted certain positive influences on, and remain relevant to, individual moral self-cultivation.

Confucian conceptions of the way of being human emphasize self-cultivation, regarding conscious moral cultivation as the foundation for developing moral character and fulfilling responsibilities toward the family and society. Through their cultural adaptation and influence in Vietnam, these conceptions have contributed to reinforcing the importance attached to moral

values, self-reflection, self-regulation of conduct, and exemplary responsibility. They thus remain relevant to fostering honesty, responsibility, and a commitment to self-improvement among Vietnamese people today.

ii). Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have exerted certain positive influences on, and remain relevant to, the development of moral character and desirable lifestyles among Vietnamese people today.

The positive elements of benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), propriety (*li*), wisdom (*zhi*), and trustworthiness (*xin*) have been received and transformed through their interaction with Vietnamese cultural traditions, thereby contributing to reinforcing compassion, a sense of moral obligation and affection, trustworthiness, integrity, and responsibility. These qualities are not products of Confucianism alone, but have emerged through the interaction of multiple sources of values and historical and social conditions.

3.1.1.2. Regarding Human Responsibilities, Obligations, and Duties within Social Relationships

i). Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have exerted certain positive influences on, and remain relevant to, the formation of a sense of community responsibility among Vietnamese people.

Confucian conceptions of the way of being human establish a system of moral standards in which the fulfillment of familial duties is regarded as the foundation for extending responsibilities toward the community and the nation. Although the sense of community responsibility among Vietnamese people has developed primarily from socio-economic foundations and indigenous cultural traditions, the positive values of Confucianism, through their cultural adaptation and localization in Vietnam, have contributed to reinforcing social responsibility, dedication, and commitment to the community. These values are consistent with the requirements for developing Vietnamese people as outlined by the Communist Party of Vietnam, particularly patriotism, responsibility, compassion and a sense of moral obligation, civic consciousness, and aspirations to contribute to national development.

ii). Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have exerted certain positive influences on, and remain relevant to, strengthening parent-child relationships.

Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, particularly the standards of filial piety, parental benevolence, respect, and harmonious conduct,

have contributed to strengthening parent-child relationships and providing a foundation for the stability and sustainability of Vietnamese families. Parents bear responsibilities for giving birth to, nurturing, educating, and setting an example for their children, while children are expected to show filial respect, gratitude, and care for their parents and preserve positive family traditions. In the present context, characterized by changes in family structures and population ageing, the positive values of filial piety continue to be relevant to strengthening emotional bonds between parents and children and enhancing intergenerational responsibilities within the family.

iii). Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have exerted certain positive influences on, and remain relevant to, marital relationships and family stability.

The dissertation demonstrates that although Confucian conceptions of marital relationships bear the imprint of patriarchal ideology and gender inequality, the positive core of Confucian marital ethics nevertheless emphasizes harmony, fidelity, affection, mutual support, and shared responsibilities between spouses in family life. Through cultural adaptation and selective inheritance, these values continue to be promoted in Vietnamese family life. In the context of the market economy, international integration, and changing family values, these positive standards remain relevant to strengthening the moral foundations of the family, enhancing bonds among family members, and contributing to the development of prosperous, progressive, happy, and civilized Vietnamese families.

iv). Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have exerted positive influences on strengthening relationships among siblings and extended family members.

Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, particularly the principles of kindness among elder siblings and respect among younger siblings, have contributed to cultivating affection, consideration, mutual support, and a sense of responsibility among members of families and lineages. Through cultural adaptation and localization in Vietnam, these values have become one of the factors contributing to the preservation of family traditions, the strengthening of filial and familial obligations, and closer intergenerational bonds.

In the present context, although traditional extended-family structures are gradually giving way to nuclear families, relationships among siblings and extended family members continue to be maintained through mutual assistance, care, shared responsibilities, and support in everyday life. These values continue to contribute to strengthening family solidarity, preserving cultural identity, and developing a humane social environment.

3.1.2. Causes of the Positive Influences

First, the need to integrate tradition and modernity in the development of Vietnamese people today.

Second, the interaction and cultural adaptation between Confucian conceptions of the way of being human and traditional Vietnamese culture.

Third, the viewpoints of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State concerning the inheritance of national traditions and the selective assimilation of the cultural achievements of humanity.

Fourth, the relatively universal character of certain values embodied in Confucian conceptions of the way of being human and their adaptability to the modern context.

3.2. NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY AND THEIR CAUSES

3.2.1. Negative Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human on the Development of Vietnamese People Today

3.2.1.1. Regarding Virtues Cultivated through Individual Moral Self-Cultivation

i). The tendency to absolutize morality in Confucian conceptions of the way of being human may lead to insufficient recognition of individual competence, talent, and practical effectiveness.

When the Confucian emphasis on governance through virtue and moral self-cultivation is absolutized, it may foster a tendency to value outward manifestations of morality over competence, talent, and work performance. In the context of accelerated industrialization, modernization, the development of a knowledge-based economy, and international integration, this tendency may become an obstacle to the requirements for developing Vietnamese people today. It is therefore necessary to inherit the humanistic values of the Confucian

emphasis on morality while overcoming the tendency to absolutize moral qualities, ensuring that individuals are evaluated through a harmonious combination of virtue and talent, moral character, competence, practical effectiveness, and contributions to society.

ii). The tendency to absolutize morality may lead to the undervaluation of law and insufficient respect for legal discipline in addressing social issues.

The absolutization of morality and personal relationships may contribute to perpetuating a mentality of excessive deference and prioritizing personal and familial ties over legal principles. Interacting with characteristics of traditional village culture and shortcomings in law enforcement, this tendency adversely affects respect for the rule of law, fairness, and civic responsibility.

iii). The tendency to absolutize moral standards may foster and perpetuate formalism in social life.

When moral standards are absolutized and detached from practical requirements, they may become merely formalistic, undermining their substantive ethical significance. Concepts such as benevolence, righteousness, and propriety may be reduced from standards guiding human conduct to slogans, rituals, or instruments for concealing personal interests, thereby prioritizing appearances over substantive effectiveness. Under present conditions, this tendency may contribute to the persistence of achievement-oriented formalism, superficial lifestyles, and an excessive concern for outward appearances. It may also weaken the willingness to think independently, take initiative, act decisively, and assume responsibility, while hindering the cultivation of honesty, responsibility, creativity, and integrity among Vietnamese people.

3.2.1.2. Regarding Human Responsibilities, Obligations, and Duties within Social Relationships

i). Hierarchical and status-based conceptions of social relationships may perpetuate patriarchal attitudes, status consciousness, authoritarianism, and arbitrary exercise of authority.

Hierarchical and status-based elements within Confucian conceptions of the way of being human, through processes of cultural preservation and adaptation, may continue to influence certain family and social relationships.

In social relationships, these influences are manifested in patriarchal leadership styles that prioritize authority over democracy. Some cadres and civil servants continue to exhibit excessive deference, reluctance to confront disagreements, and insufficient willingness to engage in critical discussion. Meanwhile, in certain areas of social life, dependence on authority persists, contributing to the maintenance of the discretionary “asking-giving” mechanism and reducing individual initiative and equality in the exercise of civic rights and obligations.

In parent-child relationships, the absolutization of parental authority may lead to authoritarian approaches to upbringing, interference in children's important decisions, and the identification of filial piety with unconditional obedience. This not only widens intergenerational gaps but also restricts the development of independent thinking, critical reasoning, autonomy, and creativity among younger generations.

In marital relationships, hierarchical conceptions contribute to perpetuating patriarchal attitudes, emphasizing husbands' authority and placing women in subordinate positions. Although significant progress has been made toward gender equality, manifestations of gender inequality and domestic violence continue to exist in some families, adversely affecting the goal of developing progressive, equal, and happy Vietnamese families.

ii). The emphasis on one-sided obligations and duties within social relationships may restrict individual freedom and hinder comprehensive human development.

First, the development of women may be constrained by the ideology of male preference and female subordination.

Second, the Confucian emphasis on the authority and status of elders may create certain barriers to the development of younger generations.

Third, the emphasis on order and harmony within social relationships may create certain obstacles to the development of self-reliance, independent thinking, and creativity.

3.2.2. Causes of the Negative Influences

First, the inherent limitations of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human.

Second, the persistence of characteristics of the small-scale peasant economy and traditional social structures under present conditions.

Third, the enduring influence of residual psychological attitudes and cultural practices shaped by Confucian conceptions of the way of being human.

Fourth, the adverse effects of the market economy and globalization.

Fifth, shortcomings in integrating moral education with education in legal awareness, as well as in promoting democracy in social life.

Sixth, the failure of certain segments of the population to adapt promptly to the rapid transformations of modern society.

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 has analyzed the dual nature of the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today. Positive values contribute to cultivating morality, moral character, and social responsibility, whereas historically conditioned limitations may hinder the development of autonomy, equality, respect for the rule of law, and creativity. These influences do not operate in isolation but evolve through the interaction of cultural traditions, socio-economic conditions, and social institutions.

Chapter 4

VIEWPOINTS AND FUNDAMENTAL SOLUTIONS FOR PROMOTING THE POSITIVE INFLUENCES AND MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY

4.1. VIEWPOINTS ON PROMOTING THE POSITIVE INFLUENCES AND MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY

4.1.1. Thoroughly Applying Ho Chi Minh Thought on the Selective Inheritance of Values Embodied in Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human to the Development of Vietnamese People Today

Inheriting Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in accordance with Ho Chi Minh Thought does not mean restoring traditional moral patterns

in their original form. Rather, it involves selecting, transforming, and developing their rational elements on the basis of a new system of values consistent with the goals of human emancipation and development. By inheriting positive values concerning moral self-cultivation, individual responsibility, and social relationships while rejecting outdated elements, Ho Chi Minh developed a new system of ethical values appropriate to the goals of national liberation, human emancipation, and the building of a new society. This viewpoint is of methodological significance, providing guidance for promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today.

4.1.2. Promoting the Positive Influences and Mitigating the Negative Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human in Association with the National Development Strategy and the Development of Vietnamese Culture and People in the New Era

Efforts to promote the positive influences and mitigate the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human must be situated within the overall strategy for the country's economic, cultural, and social development and the requirements for developing Vietnamese culture and people in the new era. Accordingly, the inheritance of positive Confucian values should be closely linked to the coordinated development and implementation of the national value system, cultural value system, family value system, and standards for Vietnamese people. At the same time, appropriate humanistic values, such as compassion, a sense of moral obligation and affection, responsibility, integrity, and community consciousness, should be promoted in combination with modern values, including democracy, the rule of law, equality, creativity, and international integration.

4.2. FUNDAMENTAL SOLUTIONS FOR PROMOTING THE POSITIVE INFLUENCES AND MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF CONFUCIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE WAY OF BEING HUMAN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TODAY

4.2.1. Creating a Favorable Economic, Cultural, and Social Environment for Promoting the Positive Influences and Mitigating the Negative Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human

First, improving the institutions of the socialist-oriented market economy.

(1) Improving economic institutions and enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of state management, ensuring openness, transparency, and fair competition in economic relations.

(2) Promoting economic development in association with improving material and spiritual well-being and expanding equal opportunities for individual development.

(3) Integrating economic development with the promotion of social progress, social justice, and social security.

(4) Promoting the values of trustworthiness, respect for moral obligations, and responsibility in developing business culture and entrepreneurial ethics.

Second, preserving and promoting positive customs and traditions while fostering a progressive cultural way of life.

(1) Gradually eliminating outdated customs and practices that are no longer compatible with the requirements of social development.

(2) Preserving and promoting positive customs and traditions and fostering a progressive cultural way of life.

(3) Developing a healthy cultural environment through the harmonious integration of traditional values and the cultural achievements of humanity.

(4) Developing a healthy, humane, and educationally enriching digital cultural environment.

4.2.2. Promoting the Roles of Relevant Actors in Enhancing the Positive Influences and Mitigating the Negative Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human on the Development of Vietnamese People Today

First, promoting the pioneering and exemplary roles of leadership and management actors, as well as cadres and Party members.

Second, promoting the roles of educational institutions and socio-political organizations in education, communication, and the orientation of values concerning the way of being human.

Third, promoting the role of the family in selectively inheriting and transforming traditional ethical values and cultivating moral character.

Fourth, promoting each individual's initiative, self-consciousness, and creativity in receiving, selecting, and practicing ethical values.

4.2.3. Strengthening the Role of Law in Guiding and Regulating Human Conduct, Thereby Promoting the Positive Influences and Mitigating the Negative Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human on the Development of Vietnamese People Today

First, continuing to improve the legal system toward greater coherence, openness, and transparency, while ensuring human rights, citizens' rights, and equality before the law.

Second, enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement, strengthening mechanisms for controlling the exercise of power, and overcoming the tendency to prioritize personal relationships and sentiments over legal principles.

Third, strengthening the enforcement of laws on gender equality, marriage and family, and the prevention and combating of domestic violence in order to protect the rights and dignity of every individual.

Fourth, promoting legal education in close association with moral education, thereby fostering conscious compliance with the law and a culture of respect for the rule of law.

4.2.4. Transforming and Supplementing Confucian Moral Standards in Accordance with the New Requirements for the Development of Vietnamese People

First, selectively inheriting and promoting the positive values embodied in Confucian conceptions of the way of being human in accordance with the requirements for developing standards for Vietnamese people today. This involves promoting the values of benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), propriety (*li*), wisdom (*zhi*), and trustworthiness (*xin*), together with positive values embodied in family and social relationships, in association with the development of Vietnamese people characterized by patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, compassion and a sense of moral obligation, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and creativity.

Second, transforming and overcoming elements of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human that are no longer appropriate, while supplementing moral standards to meet the requirements of modern social development. This involves overcoming hierarchical and patriarchal attitudes, male preference and female subordination, and one-sided obedience, while transforming traditional

ethical relationships toward equality, respect for human rights, greater emphasis on civic responsibility, autonomy, independent thinking, and creativity.

4.2.5. Selectively Applying the Experiences of Regional Countries in Promoting the Positive Influences and Mitigating the Negative Influences of Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Being Human

The experiences of China, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore demonstrate that the inheritance of traditional ethical values should be closely associated with human education, the reform of social institutions, and the requirements of modern development. Vietnam should selectively draw upon experiences appropriate to its historical, cultural, and institutional conditions and national development goals, while avoiding the mechanical imitation of foreign models or the restoration of outdated moral patterns.

Chapter 4 Summary

On the basis of the theoretical foundations and current situation analyzed in the preceding chapters, Chapter 4 identifies two guiding viewpoints and proposes five groups of solutions aimed at promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today. These solutions focus on improving the socio-economic environment, promoting the roles of relevant actors, strengthening the role of law, transforming moral standards, and selectively applying international experiences. They seek to integrate traditional and modern values in promoting the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people.

CONCLUSION

Confucianism is a political and ethical doctrine that has exerted a profound influence on many East Asian countries, including Vietnam. Through a prolonged process of introduction, cultural adaptation, and localization, Confucian conceptions of the way of being human have become part of Vietnam's traditional culture, contributing to the formation of numerous ethical values and standards of conduct among Vietnamese people. At the same time, they have left historically conditioned imprints that require objective identification and evaluation in the context of the country's new stage of development.

On the methodological foundations of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the viewpoints of the Communist Party of Vietnam concerning the development of Vietnamese people, the dissertation has systematized the fundamental content of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human. It has clarified the process of their cultural adaptation in Vietnam, their modes of influence, and the current manifestations and causes of their influence on the development of Vietnamese people today. The research findings affirm that the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human is dual in nature. Values such as compassion, a sense of moral obligation and affection, respect for learning, trustworthiness, responsibility, and commitment to moral self-cultivation remain relevant to the development of Vietnamese people when appropriately inherited and promoted. By contrast, elements such as patriarchal attitudes, hierarchical relations, excessive reliance on personal relationships, formalism, and the tendency to absolutize morality must be identified and overcome in accordance with the requirements of modern society.

Based on these findings, the dissertation proposes a system of viewpoints and solutions aimed at promoting the positive influences and mitigating the negative influences of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human through selective inheritance and the harmonious integration of traditional and modern values. These orientations are closely associated with the development and implementation of the national value system, cultural value system, family value system, and standards for Vietnamese people in the new era of development.

The research findings not only contribute to enriching the theoretical foundations for understanding the influence of Confucian conceptions of the way of being human on the development of Vietnamese people today but also provide scientific arguments for selectively inheriting and promoting traditional cultural values in the process of fostering the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people, thereby meeting the requirements for rapid and sustainable national development.

LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS

1. Le Thi Thom (2024), “Applying Ho Chi Minh Thought to Combating Corruption among Leaders and Managers in the Current Period,” *Proceedings of the Scientific Conference*, Institute of Political Studies, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics.
2. Le Thi Thom (2024), “The Influence of Confucian Conceptions of Kingship on Le Thanh Tong’s Principles of Governance,” *Ho Chi Minh City Journal of Social Sciences*, No. 12(321), ISSN 1859-0136.
3. Le Thi Thom (2025), “Confucian Thought on Self-Cultivation and Its Lessons for Cadres and Party Members Today,” *State Management Review (Online Edition)*, ISSN 2815-5831. <https://www.quanlynhanuoc.vn/2025/06/12/tu-tuong-tu-than-cua-nho-giao-va-bai-hoc-doi-voi-can-bo-dang-vien-hien-nay/>
4. Le Thi Thom (2025), “Confucian Conceptions of Moral Character and Their Implications for the Development of Vietnamese People’s Moral Character Today,” *Journal of Political Theory and Communication*, Special Issue No. 3/2025, ISSN 1859-1485.