



## Promoting Vietnamese Cultural Values in the Current Context

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### ABSTRACT

Promoting Vietnamese cultural values in the current context is important for preserving national identity and fostering sustainable development. In globalization and cultural exchange, actively and effectively promoting traditional cultural values is essential. Vietnamese culture is the soul of the nation, an undying vitality, and the source of strength that enables our people to stand firm and resilient in the face of all difficulties, natural disasters, wars, and eras. Vietnamese culture is both a product and a driving force in our nation's efforts to protect its sovereignty and resist invasions throughout thousands of years of history. Enhancing the value of cultural preservation is of immense importance in the new era. This article clarifies the distinctive values and significance of Vietnamese cultural preservation in the current mission of building and defending the nation.

## INTRODUCTION

The culture of national preservation in Vietnam embodies the core values of Vietnamese spiritual strength, including passionate patriotism, community awareness, national unity, noble humanitarian spirit, and unique warfare strategies. These values are fundamental, core, and exemplary aspects of Vietnam's national preservation culture. They serve as the "key" to deciphering the enduring vitality of our nation and are a significant spiritual motivation that drives every Vietnamese citizen to fully harness their intellect and strength in the effort to protect the country. However, the value and strength of Vietnam's national preservation culture largely depend on the ability to awaken and promote these values across generations. Studying Vietnam's national preservation culture and proposing solutions to enhance its values in the new era is crucial.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of promoting traditional Vietnamese culture in the process of international integration in Vietnam is increasingly being comprehensively recognized and has attracted the attention of many scholars. It can be summarized that the work *Primitive Culture* can be considered a foundational work marking the basic formation of the field of cultural studies. This work proposed one of the first scientific definitions of culture (Tylor, 1871). From the 19th century onwards, culture continued to be a subject of study not only in cultural studies but also in many other social sciences and humanities such as philosophy, ethnology, anthropology, etc. The work *'The Preservation of Culture and Cultural Expression'* focused on analyzing traditional and global cultures, the ability to preserve and promote cultural heritage (Salemink, 2002). Based on the research of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983), the concepts of *'invention of tradition'* and *'construction of tradition'* were introduced. The author pointed out the principles and the relationship between culture and tradition."

The book *The Clash of Civilizations* addressed several issues regarding national cultural identity and the factors that identify the cultural identity of each country, as well as the necessity of preserving and honoring the cultural identity of different ethnic groups. The work *Riding the Waves of Culture* analyzed the development process of modern Western society from a cultural perspective, focusing on cultural identity and highlighting the significant disparities not only in poor, underdeveloped, and developing countries but also in developed countries. These disparities include oppression, exploitation, injustice, wealth inequality, and environmental destruction (Fons & Charles, 2006).

In Vietnam, notable works such as *Preserving, Enriching, and Promoting the Unique Values of Traditional Vietnamese Culture in the Context of Renewal and Integration* have analyzed the distinctive values of traditional Vietnamese culture, including folk culture, customs, traditions, festivals, and rituals. The work also proposed solutions to preserve and promote these unique cultural values and heritage in the context of renewal and integration (Thin, 2010). The *Vietnamese Value System from Tradition to Modernity and the Path to the*

Future focused on academic concepts, theoretical methods, and tools related to common cultural values. The book also highlighted the good qualities of the Vietnamese people, such as moderation, optimism, cheerfulness, love of life, gratitude, respect for honor, and respect for women. At the same time, the author discussed 'The Transformations of the Traditional Vietnamese Value System in the Modern Era, noting that the rapid and powerful changes in space, time, social context, and the speed of economic change have revealed many 'unpleasant' characteristics of the Vietnamese people.

It can be said that the above studies have addressed issues related to the topic of this article from different perspectives, with various approaches, research methods, and content regarding traditional culture and the inheritance of traditional cultural values in building a new lifestyle. Based on the achievements of previous scholars' research, this article strives to study the promotion of traditional culture in the process of integration in Vietnam in a more in-depth and systematic manner.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research is conducted based on the worldview and methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, the thoughts of Ho Chi Minh, and the views of the Communist Party of Vietnam on preserving and promoting culture during the process of integration. The study also combines specific research methods such as historical, logical, comparative, analytical, synthetic, inductive and deductive methods, as well as sociological surveys to support the research and presentation of the article.

## **RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Typical Values of Vietnamese National Defense Culture**

The culture of national preservation is deeply rooted in the history of the formation, existence, and development of the Vietnamese nation. It is a culmination of the heroic and resilient struggles against natural disasters and foreign invasions throughout our history. In many battles against foreign aggression, the Vietnamese people, through their deep reflections and proactive measures, achieved remarkable success and created a unique cultural identity, exemplified by the culture of national preservation. Vietnam's culture of national preservation consists of traditional spiritual values formed and refined during the struggles to defend national independence. It embodies values such as patriotism, self-reliance, resilience, solidarity, the integration of nation-building with national defense, unique warfare strategies, and a noble humanitarian spirit. Since the leadership of the Communist Party, these admirable values have been revitalized and elevated to new heights, contributing to the overall strength of the nation, especially in the current era.

### ***Patriotism, Self-Reliance, and Self-Improvement***

Patriotism and the will for self-reliance and self-strength are the most prominent values of Vietnam's national preservation culture. They serve as a guiding thread, influencing and directing the development of other values.

Patriotism has been nurtured through the harsh conditions imposed by natural disasters and enemy invasions, particularly through the rich history of resisting foreign aggression. President Ho Chi Minh emphasized: "Our people have a passionate love for their country. It is a precious tradition. From ancient times to the present, this spirit becomes vibrant whenever the Fatherland is invaded. It forms a tremendous, powerful wave that overcomes all dangers and difficulties, sinking all traitors and invaders" (Minh, 2011, vol.7, p.38). Among all the people of Vietnam, "except for a very few traitors, our compatriots all have a love for their country" (Minh, 2011, vol.5, p.516).

Patriotism stems from the nation's will for self-reliance and self-strength, manifesting in courage and sacrifice to protect the territory "determined to die so the Fatherland may live." History has shown that, alongside armed struggle, our ancestors have persistently fought culturally to preserve the unique national cultural identity. Notable examples include the struggle against "Sinicization" during the Northern domination period and resistance against the cultural suppression policies of French colonialists and Japanese fascists. This demonstrates that cultural struggle is also very intense; it is not just physical suffering but a blow to the spirit and soul. Patriotism, along with the will for self-reliance and self-strength, has always been a powerful current in the process of building and defending the Fatherland. It is also the core value of Vietnam's national preservation culture.

Recognizing the power of patriotism, hostile forces have exploited this issue to undermine the Vietnamese revolution through increasingly sophisticated methods and tactics. They distort history, twist the truth, and incite extreme patriotism to create conflicts within society and erode public trust in the Party and the State. Particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated the challenges of a rapidly integrating world, the environment is more conducive for hostile forces to intensify their sabotage. Therefore, the Vietnamese people must "actively grasp the situation, promptly detect and prevent the schemes of 'peaceful evolution,' riots, terrorism, and sabotage by hostile and reactionary forces" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.57) to ensure that patriotism is not exploited by enemies.

Solidarity Vietnam, with its 54 ethnic groups, represents a rich tapestry of diversity yet remains unified, as each ethnic group possesses its unique cultural identity while sharing a common love for the country. Therefore, from the dawn of its nation-building era to the present, our compatriots have always been united and steadfast. Solidarity is the "golden key" that unlocks the strength of the Vietnamese people and is the root of all success: "Solidarity is our invincible force to overcome difficulties and achieve victory" (Minh, 2011, vol.9, p.177).

*"Solidarity, solidarity, great solidarity*

*Success, success, great success"* (Minh, 2011, vol.10, p.350).

The spirit of national unity holds immense spiritual value and is a decisive soft power that leads to every victory, bringing "great success" to the country. This spirit is evident in various historical periods: during the feudal era, the unity of "king and subjects, and harmonious relationships among

brothers" was prioritized, overcoming daily internal conflicts. In modern times, "Regardless of whether one is male or female, old or young, without regard to religion, party, or ethnicity... Those with guns use guns. Those with swords use swords; if there are no swords, then use hoes, shovels, or sticks" (Minh, 1946). Whenever the Vietnamese people face invasions, the spirit of unity transforms into boundless strength to fight and defeat any adversary.

The spirit of solidarity is also demonstrated through "sharing the good with those in need," showing compassion, love, and empathy towards those facing difficulties and hardships, embodying the tradition of "loving others as oneself." This tradition forms a solid foundation for the Vietnamese people to continue building and developing a prosperous and happy nation. Today, the spirit of "mutual support and affection" is demonstrated during the nationwide fight against COVID-19. It is reflected in the dedication of medical professionals; the decisive and urgent actions of the Party and the State; and the support and assistance from philanthropists and the people throughout the country in combating the pandemic. According to the website of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Vietnam Electricity Group (EVN) donated 400 billion VND to the Vaccine Fund for COVID-19 prevention and control, contributing to the Government's overall policy of mobilizing community resources to combat and overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Building the Nation and Defending the Nation Go Hand in Hand". The concept of "nation-building and defending the nation" is a dual and equally significant task in the effort to construct and safeguard the homeland, embodying a fundamental truth for the nation. Nation-building is both a long-term goal and a prerequisite for defense. In other words, nation-building is primarily about ensuring existence and later serves as the foundation and condition for defense. Defending the nation involves preserving the "land and people" of Vietnam—protecting the independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and the interests of the people and the nation. In a speech delivered to officers and soldiers of the Vanguard Division at the Hung Kings Temple on September 19, 1954, President Ho Chi Minh emphasized: "The Hung Kings laid the foundation for our nation, and we must protect it" (Minh, 2011, vol. 7, p. 502). This statement reflects gratitude towards the predecessors who "built the nation" and serves as a reminder for future generations to "protect the nation" and preserve what has been achieved, ensuring the nation's continuity and development. Nation-building and defending the nation are closely interlinked, forming a cohesive relationship that drives the nation's survival and progress amidst various contemporary challenges. This dual focus is not only about achieving national peace and security but also about ensuring comprehensive development. According to the Communist Party of Vietnam, the strategy is: "Economic and social development is central; Party building is crucial; Cultural development is the spiritual foundation; and National defense and security are vital and ongoing" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p. 324).

Today, in the face of the negative impacts of market economy dynamics, globalization, and international integration, it is imperative to strengthen and

adapt the relationship between nation-building and defending the nation. This is one of the most urgent tasks—to integrate with global advancements while preserving Vietnamese identity, ensuring that the country “integrates without being absorbed.” To achieve this, the Party must adeptly manage the relationships: “Between building and protecting the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; and between independence and international integration” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p. 245).

### **Solutions to Promote the Cultural Values of Preserving Vietnam in the New Era**

The negative impacts of the market economy and globalization have posed a threat to the preservation of cultural values essential to national defense, leading to their potential distortion, degradation, or erosion. Concurrently, our Party and State face attacks and sabotage from hostile forces and deceitful individuals. Therefore, enhancing the values of Vietnamese cultural heritage in the renewal period is an objective necessity. The 13th Congress (2021) of the Communist Party of Vietnam instructed: “To awaken the spirit and determination to develop a prosperous and happy nation; to ensure the nation's strength and longevity; to promote cultural values and the strength of the Vietnamese people in the cause of building and defending the homeland” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.46). To successfully carry out this mission and foster the values of cultural heritage, several measures need to be implemented:

**Adhering to and Implementing Important Resolutions on Culture: Build on the achievements of the resolutions of the 8th Central Committee, the 11th Central Committee on “Building and developing advanced Vietnamese culture with strong national identity” and “Building and developing Vietnamese culture and people to meet sustainable development needs.”** In addition, preserving and promoting cultural heritage, and creating new cultural values are essential. “Build an advanced Vietnamese culture rich in national identity to make culture a true internal strength and driving force for national development and defense. Increase investment in cultural development. Create a favorable social environment and conditions to inspire national pride and patriotism” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.330). Additionally, developing individuals comprehensively, combating negative elements, and guiding people toward truth, goodness, and beauty are crucial.

**Spreading Cultural Values Across Society: Strengthen the propagation and education of patriotism and the tradition of resisting foreign invaders. “Awaken the desire for a prosperous and happy country”** (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.111). Utilize 4.0 technology and cultural industry products to disseminate positive images of Vietnam and its people, inspiring national pride. Emphasize the value of family as the foundation of personal character and ethics. Families and schools have a responsibility to educate and guide the spirit of national preservation, helping to preserve and promote cultural values in general and national defense culture in particular. Educate the youth with the principles taught by President Ho Chi Minh, especially “love the Fatherland and fellow countrymen,” to foster a strong will to learn, work, and develop

admirable qualities. This ensures that patriotism, self-reliance, solidarity, and benevolence are deeply integrated into the lives of individuals, families, and society, transforming into practical actions and collective efforts. The 13th Congress document (2021) emphasizes: "Determinedly and persistently protect independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity, maintain a peaceful and stable environment for national development" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.48). Continuing to Inherit and Innovate Cultural Values in the New Era: To cultivate the values of national defense culture, our ancestors always emphasized that national defense is primarily about preserving cultural values. These values are a source of soft power and the essence of the nation. "As long as culture exists, the nation will persist; if culture is lost, the nation will vanish." In the context of international integration, national culture, including the culture of national defense, needs to be inherited, developed, and creatively expanded to counteract the negative aspects of foreign cultures and hostile plots, building and developing an advanced Vietnamese culture rich in national identity. To achieve this, we need to:

Firstly, Love for the Country Must Include Socialism: The practical experience has shown that the Vietnamese revolution chose the path of proletarian revolution towards socialism as the only correct path. This path liberated the Vietnamese people from foreign domination, bringing independence, freedom, and happiness, and elevating the nation's position. In the current context, the values of Vietnamese national defense culture need to be inherited and developed, supplemented with content suitable to new situations. Along with patriotism, love for socialism, and the inseparable connection between national independence and socialism are essential. "Protect and maintain the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the homeland; uphold political security, social order, and safety" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.150).

Secondly, Strengthen and Promote the Unity of the Nation: Building on the tradition of unity, the Party emphasizes the importance of national unity. Therefore, it is necessary to concretize and effectively implement the Party's viewpoints, policies, and guidelines on national unity. Focus on building a peaceful, independent, unified, and territorially intact Vietnam with a goal of "rich people, strong nation, democracy, justice, and civilization" to harness all resources and creative potential of society. Harmonize the interests of all societal members; protect the legal and legitimate rights and interests of the people; respect the culture of all ethnic groups to create a great force in building and defending the nation.

Thirdly, Nation-Building and Defending the Nation Are Interconnected Laws: Today, although our country is fully independent, consolidating and protecting this independence remains a strategic and crucial task. The tasks of national independence are linked with socialism; only by successfully building socialism can we firmly protect national independence, and maintaining national independence is essential for building socialism. The Party and State must deeply understand that the relationship between nation-building and defending the nation is a rule of existence and development. Given the complex

global situation, along with many new opportunities, our country also faces new risks and challenges. Therefore, the task of protecting the homeland must be increasingly comprehensive and decisive. The 13th Congress document (2021) asserts: "Proactively prevent the risks of war and conflict early and decisively protect the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the homeland, ensure national security, order, and safety" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, p.38). Additionally, hostile forces will always "wait for the right moment" to undermine our nation. Thus, the entire Party and people must prioritize nation-building and not separate it from national defense across all aspects of social life.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Currently, the cause of defending the Fatherland in the new situation has been posing requirements to promote the combined strength of the entire nation. In particular, promoting the role and great strength of Vietnamese culture in general, and the culture of defending the country in particular, is very important. Because the cultural values of defending the country are both present through the practice of defending the Fatherland of our nation, and latent within each patriotic Vietnamese person. When aroused and promoted regularly, it will create a great spiritual motivation, urging each citizen to always promote their intelligence and strength to contribute to the cause of defending the country, firmly protecting the Fatherland of Vietnam.

## **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

This research still has limitations so further research needs to be done on the topic "Promoting Vietnamese Cultural Values in the Current Context."

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