



## PROMOTING THE CULTURAL STRENGTH IN CONSTRUCTION AND PROTECTION OF THE COUNTRY – THE VALUABLE PRACTICE FROM THE 1943 OUTLINE OF VIETNAMESE CULTURE

Doan Thanh Thuy<sup>i</sup>,

Dong Thi Hong

Dr.,

University of Labor and Social Affairs,

Vietnam

### Abstract:

Culture plays an important role in the socio-economic development and sustainable development of the country. It is the spiritual foundation of society, the goal and the driving force of development. The article researches and clarifies the values of the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture, the role of culture in the construction and defense of the country. From there, the article offers solutions to promote the strength of culture in the construction and development of the country in the current period.

**Keywords:** culture, the outline of Vietnamese culture, cultural strength, national construction and defense

### 1. Introduction

The 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture is likened to the manifesto, the first program of our Party on culture and revolution, which is meant to enlighten and pave the way for the Vietnamese revolution, especially in the field of ideology and culture. It shaped the basic views and principles for that period and continued to be supplemented and developed in the following years. The practical value of the Vietnamese Cultural Outline is extremely valuable, especially in promoting the strength of Vietnam to build and defend the country. At the 13th National Congress of the Party in January 2021, our Party continues to emphasize the orientation of developing Vietnam's culture to be "*advanced and imbued with national identity*", so that culture truly becomes the endogenous force for national development and defense. Accordingly, people play the role of subject and at the same time the purpose of cultural development. This is both the result of the process of absorbing, summarizing theoretical thinking and the experience of leadership

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<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [doanthuy.tn@gmail.com](mailto:doanthuy.tn@gmail.com)

activities on the cultural front of the Party since its inception, especially from the process of implementing the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture.

## **2. Research overview and methods**

### **2.1 Research overview**

Research on the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture or Vietnamese culture is a matter of interest to many scholars. There are many research works aimed at clarifying the characteristics, contents and values of the Outline of Vietnamese Culture in the nation's history. Among them, there are typical works that can be mentioned, such as *Forty years of the Outline of Vietnamese Culture*, Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1985. It is a collection of many research articles by authors with clear content, the nature and meaning of the Outline of Vietnamese Culture. Besides, there is *the Outline Of Vietnamese Culture in 1943 - 70-year lesson* by Phong Le (2013), *Journal of Party History*, No. 10, pp.31-36; *Outline of Vietnamese culture and the construction and development of an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity* by Pham Quang Nghi, *Proceedings of the scientific conference "60 years of the Outline Of Vietnamese Culture (1943-2003)"*, Institute of Culture and Information, 2004, p.43 clarified the great value and significance of the Outline on Vietnamese culture in building and developing Vietnamese culture today.

### **2.2. Research methods**

The article uses analytical and synthesis methods in document processing to ensure accuracy and scientificness in the process of researching data and information related to the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture and Vietnamese culture.

The article also uses analytical, comparative and logical methods to come up with solutions to promote the strength of culture in national construction and development in the current period.

## **3. Research results**

### **3.1. The role and strength of culture in the construction and defense of the country in the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture**

#### **3.1.1. Culture is a "front" in the fight against foreign aggression for national independence**

The 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture clearly defined the content, scope, position and role of culture in the national liberation and socialist revolution. According to the Outline, culture includes ideology, academia, art, politics and the relationship between culture and economy. The cultural front is one of the three fronts (economic, political, and cultural) in which communists must work, not only in the political revolution but also in the cultural revolution. At the same time, only the leaders of the Party's cultural movement can influence public opinion and the Party's propaganda will be effective.

In the context and hot issues of the country, General Secretary Truong Chinh embarked on drafting the Outline of Vietnamese Culture. Although it is only at the level of "outline", it clearly shows the danger of Vietnamese culture under the yoke of colonial-fascist domination. It also analyzes the relationship between political revolution and cultural revolution; affirms the Party's leadership role in the cultural revolution; maps out the right direction of struggle against the colonialists - fascists and their henchmen, builds a new cultural line of the Party, gathers culturists, intellectuals, writers and artists to participate in the cause of liberation.

In the Outline, before presenting the Party's views on the cultural revolution, the Outline gave two hypotheses about the Vietnamese cultural future. The first one is that *"If the fascist culture (Medieval culture and enslavement) wins, the Vietnamese national culture is poor and inferior. The second is that the Vietnamese national culture will be liberated by the victory of the democratic revolution and will be freed from its shackles and will catch up with the world's democratic culture"*. And the Outline affirms: *"The Vietnamese national revolution will definitely make the second theory real"*. Next, the Outline presented our Party's views on the issue of the Vietnamese cultural revolution. First of all, the Outline presented the inevitability and preconditions for the successful implementation of the cultural revolution: Only the cultural revolution has completed the social reform. The Cultural Revolution to be completed must be led by the Indochinese Communist Party. The Cultural Revolution can be completed when the political revolution is successful (Cultural Revolution must follow the political revolution). The methods of cultural reform proposed now only pave the way for the future radical revolution. The goal of the cultural revolution is socialist culture. Regarding the relationship between the Vietnamese cultural revolution and the national liberation revolution, the Outline emphasized: The cultural revolution in Vietnam must rely on the national liberation revolution to have the conditions for development. Vietnam's national liberation revolution is only possible in the most fortunate case to bring Vietnamese culture to a democratic level and have a completely independent national character to create a new culture. The persuasiveness and high combativeness of the viewpoints, guiding ideas, guiding organization and action of the Outline have awakened intellectuals and artists who are pessimistic, fluctuating, and disoriented. In order to liberate oneself, one must voluntarily embark on the path of national liberation, intellectuals and artists must be soldiers on the ideological-cultural front in the national liberation revolution. This historical document has really become a banner to gather, organize and encourage the actions of intellectuals, writers and artists nationwide in the fight to break the chains of fascism, colonialism and strongly promote the spiritual and cultural strength of the whole nation. The 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture and the spiritual and cultural strength created in the cultural movement since February 1943 have made a worthy contribution to the great victory of the August Revolution, establishing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first state of workers and peasants in Southeast Asia.

### **3.1.2. Culture is an "endogenous force" in national construction**

The 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture laid the foundation and orientation to build a new revolutionary culture, which should closely and skillfully combine the two tasks of "construction" and "fighting". The Outline emphasizes the urgent task of Marxist culturists, which is to fight against the fascist, feudal, regressive, enslavement, stupid, and licentious cultures; promoting democratic culture, reforming the national language. The Outline also clearly defines three principles: "Nationalization", "Massification" and "Scientificization". That is the inheritance, construction and development of the nation's thousand-year-old culture, self-respect of the national culture, overcoming the thought of inferiority and conceit; raising patriotism, heroic spirit, independence and freedom. Those are the noble qualities of the Vietnamese people: patriotism, solidarity, courage and willingness to sacrifice themselves for the independence and freedom of the Fatherland, for the happiness of the people. The Outline deeply grasps the Party's humanistic ideology, the art of being for human life, opposes the tendency of art for the sake of art away from reality, annihilates or neglects the will to fight for the revolution. The Outline ensures and enhances the scientificization in building Vietnamese culture, makes the culture unceasingly scientific and advanced, fights against what makes the culture/cultural product anti-scientific, counter-productive and counterproductive, know how to inherit and promote the quintessence of human culture.

In the years 1941-1942, many complex and reactionary trends appeared in the field of ideology and culture. The intelligentsia was wavered and divided. A part that revealed the reactionary nature was committed to being a henchman for Japan and France. A part of the group went for the revolution. A part of the group promoted the idea of ancient feudalism, superstition, mysticism, and bourgeois reform. There are parts that openly distorted Marxism-Leninism. In order to clear thoughts, "awaken" artists, intellectuals, and ideological problems were set forth in the Outline in order to "*fight about doctrines and ideas... to make dialectical materialism and historical materialism win*". Clearly defining the ideological stance of Marxism-Leninism as a guideline for the movement and development of the country as well as the whole people's goal of national independence and socialism will contribute to "fighting against the feudal fascist culture, regression, enslavement, the culture of stupidity and fooling the people.

In order to promote the strength of culture in building a new state, the Party and socio-political organizations have organized campaigns and movements to build a new life, and established the National Salvation Culture Association to raise the awareness of the people. With high spirit and determination, a week after the Declaration of Independence, President Ho Chi Minh signed a decree to establish the Office of Popular Studies. In just over a year, two million people who were illiterate learned to read and write. That shows the vision of the Party in the issue of building people in the construction and development of the country.

The Outline has affirmed our Party's thinking, vision, intelligence and bravery on revolution and culture. It is like a floodlight illuminating the communists and the whole people to see the way they are going; encouraging, awakening, leading the intellectuals,

writers and artists, those who are deeply devoted to the country to join the Indochinese Communist Party to save the country and people, enthusiastically participate in the cultural and ideological front. The Outline affirmed: "*Vietnam's national culture will be liberated by the victory of the democratic revolution and will be freed from its chains and will catch up with the world's neo-democratic culture*". Culture is an important source of endogenous strength in the construction and defense of the country.

### **3.2. Promoting the strength of culture in the construction of the country in the current period**

#### **3.2.1. The role of culture in the current national construction**

Inheriting the views and orientations on building and developing a new Vietnamese culture mentioned in the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture, our Party has constantly supplemented and developed many new views, deepened the enrich the content and scope of cultural fields as well as the role of culture in the process of renovation, national construction and defense in the new situation. If the 1943 Outline Of Vietnamese Culture is considered as the Party's First Program on culture, then the Resolution of the 5th Central Committee of the VIII term on "*Building and developing an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity*" and the Resolution of the 33rd Party Central Committee, term XI on "*Building and developing Vietnamese culture and people to meet the requirements of sustainable development of the country*" are the new programs of the Party on culture on the basis of continuing and developing many important points of the 1943 Outline Of Vietnamese Culture. In the resolution of the 13th Party Congress, one of the six key tasks during the term was identified, namely: Arousing the desire to develop a prosperous and happy country; promoting Vietnamese cultural values and human strength in the cause of national construction and defense, and international integration.

In fact, many countries and ethnic groups are not rich in natural resources, even poor and limited, but they are rich in economy. Economic development and social progress are due to the importance of cultural and human factors, through raising people's intellectual level, training human resources and fostering talents to pave the way for development. Thus, the endogenous resources of a country's development are deeply embedded in its culture and people. The development of a nation must reach for the new, the good, the progressive but cannot be separated, ignoring the origin. In other words, development must be based on culture. The experience of more than 30 years of innovation in our country has proved that, even economic development itself is not only created by purely economic factors, but also the driving force of that economic innovation. An important part is in the culture.

For Vietnam, since independence, carrying out the work of national construction and defense, especially after more than 35 years of renovation, the good cultural values of the nation have always been nurtured and promoted by the Party, authorities at all levels and the people. The highest effect that Vietnamese culture and cultural values and people bring is to nurture the love of the country, to multiply each person's patriotism,

will and dedication of people for the development of the country, for the happiness of the people, for the longevity of the nation.

Nowadays, human resource lies in the culture, intelligence, soul, morality and personality of each individual and community. Only this resource is infinite, which has the ability to regenerate and never runs out. Other resources will not be used effectively if there are not enough intelligent and capable people to exploit other resources, even though they are rich and diverse. Therefore, the Party's policy always emphasizes the role of Vietnamese culture and people as an endogenous force, meeting the requirements of sustainable development of the country. In order to get such endogenous resources, it is necessary to pay attention to the cause of education - training, and soon revive the education of Vietnam, thereby creating new people, new socialist morality as our Party emphasized: "*Building Vietnamese people to develop comprehensively must become a goal of the development strategy. It is necessary to summarize and build a cultural value system and a standard value system of Vietnamese people in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration; creating an environment and conditions for the development of personality, morality, intelligence, creative capacity, body and soul, social responsibility, and civic duty*". The higher the knowledge, intelligence, emotions, and morality that crystallize and penetrate into all activities of human life and society, the faster and more sustainable the socio-economic development will be.

With the achievements of historical significance in the *doi moi* period, it has proven that culture in its very nature plays an important role in the socio-economic development and sustainable development of the country. It is the spiritual foundation of society, the goal and the driving force of development associated with social justice progress towards cultural development and comprehensive personal development.

### **3.2.2. Solutions to promote the strength of culture in national construction in the current period**

During the process of leading the revolution, the Communist Party of Vietnam has always paid special attention to the construction and development of culture and people, especially promoting the cultural values and human strength of Vietnam in the cause of national construction and defense. In order for culture to really promote its strength and become a driving force for development, it is necessary to implement the following solutions:

Firstly, it is necessary to raise awareness about the position and role of culture in the innovation and development of the country. Besides, the Party's leadership thinking and the State's management on cultural development and human development should be renovated. It is crucial to raise the awareness of all levels of party committees, authorities and the whole society about the position, role and function of culture in national renewal and development. Cultural development and human development must be paid attention in proportion to and in harmony with socio-economic development. Culture must play the role of regulating and orienting the development of the country in the context of promoting the building of a socialist-oriented market

economy and international integration with humanistic goals, a value system and cultural standards. It is necessary to renovate the education of political theory and ideology in society; strengthen propaganda, raise awareness in the direction of practicality, efficiency, respect for dialogue and social criticism.

It is necessary to enhance the leadership of the Party in both theory and practice, renovate leadership thinking in culture - art, building the Party's people in the direction of democracy and openness, promote the creativity and initiative of cultural subjects, formulate guidelines and resolutions closely following the reality of the socialist-oriented market economy and requirements for sustainable development. There is a clear decentralization between the Party and the government in implementation and increased inspection, monitoring, review and evaluation during the implementation process.

Secondly, it is necessary to build and promote Vietnamese cultural values and human strength because humans are the creators of material and spiritual values, serving their own needs and society. As the most important subject, resource and goal of human development and construction, Vietnam sets out to promote cultural values associated with preserving, protecting and perfecting the standard value system. people and arouse human potential, intelligence and creativity in the fields of social life. All cultural activities, cultural relations, and cultural institutions are aimed at supplementing and perfecting the value system, standards and fostering a person's comprehensive development in both quality and capacity; strengthen love for the homeland, country, human values, community cohesion, sense, responsibility, social ethics, live and work according to the law and determination to overcome all difficulties and challenges, especially in the context of a complicated pandemic situation. Those activities aim at *“developing a comprehensive human being and building an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity so that Vietnamese culture and people truly become an endogenous force and driving force to develop the country and defend the Fatherland”*.

Thirdly, it is necessary to continue to comprehensively renew the content and leadership of the Party, improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the State's management of culture. It is necessary to institutionalize and concretize the Party's views and guidelines on culture, continue to perfect the system of legal documents, mechanisms and policies on culture in our country to be suitable with the current situation. It is necessary to increase investment, exploit and bring into full play cultural resources in parallel with innovating contents and methods of management, overcome the situation of scattered and inefficient investment, strengthen inspection and supervision to ensure high investment efficiency in the field of culture, consolidate the organizational system of the literary management apparatus, gradually improve management capacity, innovate management methods, promote the development and limit the negatives in cultural and cultural life turmeric. It is crucial to train and develop a team of leaders, direct, manage and advise staff in the field of culture and art, especially key officials who are really knowledgeable about culture, have quality, bravery, professional capacity, meeting requirements and tasks.

Finally, it is necessary to be proactive in international cultural exchanges, selectively receiving world cultural quintessence, enriching national culture and catching up with the development of the times. It is also the content and method of increasing the internal strength of the nation by the endogenous forces of culture. Cultural values should be promoted to be imbued with an attractive national identity, effectively promoting to the international community a friendly, flexible and peace-loving Vietnam. It is necessary to promote domestic cultural propaganda and education activities in combination with expanding international cultural exchanges and cooperation, diversifying communication channels to promote the national image, as well as promoting the role of connecting and transmitting cultural values of expatriates around the world. It is important to be proactive to adapt to the development of information technology in developing culture and building people, creating a drastic change in the operation and management of the mass communication system, new media, which are both strict in principle, and open in mechanism and form, to meet the increasing demand for culture and information of the people.

#### **4. Conclusion**

80 years have passed, the 1943 Outline of Vietnamese Culture still has its theoretical and practical value, continuing to "light the way for the nation" in the process of building and developing for a "strong and prosperous" Vietnam. The role of culture in building and protecting the country nowadays with the trend of globalization and industrial revolution 4.0 has become even more important. As General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong said at the National Cultural Conference in 2021, "*Culture is the soul of the nation, expressing the identity of the nation. The culture remains, the nation remains*".

#### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

#### **About the Author(s)**

Doan Thanh Thuy and Dong Thi Hong are researchers currently working at University of Labor and Social Affairs, Vietnam. Their main field of research is Vietnamese culture and its significance in the cause of national construction and defense.

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