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Collective Memory as a Strategic Resource: Political Discourse and the Construction of Vietnam–Russia Relations in the Post–Cold War Era

Vuong Quoc Khanh[1*]
[1] Thu Dau Mot University, Vietnam. Email: khanhvq@tdmu.edu.vn
* **Corresponding Author:** Vuong Quoc Khanh

ABSTRACT

This article examines the role of collective memory in the construction and maintenance of Vietnam–Russia relations in the post–Cold War era. Unlike conventional studies that primarily focus on geopolitics, military cooperation, or economic interests, this research approaches memory as a strategic resource deliberately mobilized in political discourse and public diplomacy. Drawing on theoretical frameworks of memory politics and constructivism in international relations, the article argues that the memory of Soviet–Vietnamese relations is not merely symbolic but actively contributes to reinforcing political legitimacy, reproducing trust, and reducing political transaction costs in bilateral interactions. Through an analysis of official discourse, commemorative practices, and educational–cultural cooperation, the study demonstrates how the narrative of "traditional friendship" is reconstructed as a continuous bridge between past and present. In the context of intensifying great-power competition and an evolving international order, the mobilization of collective memory helps sustain the relative stability and distinctiveness of Vietnam–Russia relations. By integrating the historical–symbolic dimension into the study of contemporary foreign policy, the article contributes to expanding analytical approaches to bilateral relations beyond purely strategic or material considerations.

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Introduction

Vietnam–Russia relations in the post–Cold War era have commonly been examined through the lenses of geopolitics, military cooperation, and the framework of a "comprehensive strategic partnership" (Britov, 2022; Luzyanin, 2022; Tran, 2025). These studies emphasize the continuity of bilateral ties in the context of Russia's renewed engagement in Asia and Vietnam's policy of diversification and multilateralization. However, a predominantly state-centric and strategic approach does not fully explain why Vietnam–Russia relations have maintained a relatively stable level of trust and continuity amid a fluctuating international environment.

This article argues that a comprehensive understanding of the durability of bilateral relations requires the integration of collective memory and political discourse into the analytical framework. The theory of collective memory developed by Halbwachs (2020), along with subsequent approaches to memory politics (Olick, 2007; Olick et al., 2011; Subotić, 2019; Mälksoo, 2023; Belavusau et al., 2025), demonstrates that memory is not merely a recollection of the past but a socially and politically constructed process. In the Vietnamese context, Grossheim (2020, 2021) shows that socialist memory has been organized and reproduced through institutional mechanisms, thereby shaping political identity and legitimacy.

At the level of foreign policy, memory is mobilized through discourse and public diplomacy (Cull, 2008; Tran, 2025). The concepts of soft power (Nye, 2004) and strategic narratives (Miskimmon et al., 2013) help explain how states employ historical symbols to reinforce image and trust. In Vietnam–Russia relations, commemorative activities and cultural–educational cooperation (Dang, 2025; Quan, 2025; The Vietnam News Agency, 2015) illustrate how the narrative of "traditional friendship" is reconstructed as a continuous foundation linking past and present.

CONTACT Vuong Quoc Khanh. khanhvq@tdmu.edu.vn Vietnam
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By bridging theoretical approaches to memory with empirical studies on Vietnam–Russia cooperation (Ponka et al., 2021; Ryazantsev & Piskunov, 2023), this article analyzes collective memory as a strategic resource that contributes to the construction and maintenance of bilateral relations within a transforming international order.

Literature Review

Studies on Vietnam–Russia relations in the post–Cold War period have largely focused on the framework of a "comprehensive strategic partnership" and geopolitical considerations. Britov (2022) questions whether this framework represents an achieved outcome or a target that still requires consolidation, while Luzyanin (2022) situates Vietnam–Russia relations within the Russia–Vietnam–China triangle, emphasizing Moscow's strategic calculations in Asia. Tran (2025), approaching the issue from the perspective of public diplomacy, highlights the continuity of the discourse of friendship over seventy-five years of relations. In addition, Ponka, Yuniushkina, and Dubrovskiy (2021) underscore the humanitarian dimension as a pillar of bilateral ties, particularly in the fields of education and cultural cooperation.

Alongside this strategic line of inquiry, another body of scholarship examines the Soviet–Vietnamese legacy and socialist memory in contemporary Vietnam. Grossheim (2020, 2021) argues that socialist memory in Vietnam is organized through an institutionalized "memory machine," in which the past is selectively constructed and reinterpreted to serve political purposes. At the theoretical level, Halbwachs (2020) laid the foundations for the study of collective memory, while Olick (2007) and Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy (2011) expanded this approach to encompass historical responsibility and the politics of memory. Subotić (2019) and Mälksoo (2023) further developed research on memory in post-socialist contexts and identity competition, whereas Belavusau et al. (2025) emphasize the role of memory laws in structuring political discourse. In the broader field of Vietnamese foreign policy history, Ninh (2024) observes that existing studies predominantly approach bilateral relations from political–diplomatic or strategic perspectives, while the dimensions of memory and discourse remain insufficiently examined in a systematic manner. This assessment reinforces the need for the multi-layered approach proposed in this article.

Regarding soft power and foreign policy discourse, Nye (2004) conceptualizes soft power as a non-coercive instrument of influence, while Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle (2013) propose the framework of strategic narratives to analyze how states construct meaning in the international environment. Cull (2008) underscores the importance of public diplomacy in maintaining image and trust. Recent studies on Vietnam–Russia cultural and educational cooperation (Dang, 2025; Quan, 2025) further demonstrate how historical memory and symbolic resources are mobilized as elements of soft power.

Finally, research on communities and migration (Ryazantsev & Piskunov, 2023; Ryazantsev et al., 2022; Pismennaya & Nioradze, 2022) highlights the role of transnational social networks in sustaining bilateral relations. However, most existing works analyze individual dimensions—strategy, memory, or community—separately, without fully integrating these layers into a unified theoretical framework. This gap provides the foundation for the present study, which approaches collective memory as a strategic resource in the construction of Vietnam–Russia relations in the post–Cold War era.

Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

Theoretical Framework

This study places collective memory and political discourse at the center of the analysis of Vietnam–Russia relations, drawing upon a combination of collective memory theory, memory politics, and approaches to soft power and strategic narratives in international relations.

First, the foundational theory of collective memory developed by Halbwachs (2020) posits that memory does not exist solely at the individual level but is constructed within specific social frameworks. Olick (2007) and Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy (2011) further extend this perspective by emphasizing the "politics of memory," understood as the process through which communities and states select,

interpret, and institutionalize the past in order to serve present objectives. In post-socialist contexts, Subotić (2019) and Mälksoo (2023) demonstrate that memory becomes a site of identity competition and strategic positioning. Belavusau et al. (2025) add a legal dimension, highlighting how "memory laws" function as instruments for shaping political discourse.

Second, the study employs analytical frameworks related to soft power and strategic narratives. Nye (2004) argues that soft power rests on the ability to attract and persuade through culture, values, and policies. Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle (2013) develop the concept of "strategic narratives," underscoring the role of storytelling in constructing meaning and shaping international perceptions. Cull (2008) identifies public diplomacy as a key mechanism for transmitting such narratives. In the context of Vietnam–Russia relations, public diplomacy activities and discourses of traditional friendship (Tran, 2025; Dang, 2025) illustrate how historical memory is mobilized as a soft resource.

Finally, empirical studies on Vietnam–Russia relations (Britov, 2022; Luzyanin, 2022; Ponka et al., 2021) provide the strategic context within which the analysis of memory is embedded in the broader structure of bilateral relations.

Research Methodology

Methodologically, the study employs a thematic literature review combined with discourse analysis. The selected sources include theoretical works on memory and narratives, empirical research on Vietnam–Russia relations, and official publications reflecting political discourse (Duong, 2009; Quan, 2025; The Vietnam News Agency, 2015). The literature is categorized into three groups: (1) memory theory; (2) soft power and strategic narratives; and (3) empirical studies on Vietnam–Russia relations. This approach enables the analysis of collective memory as a strategic resource that links the past to contemporary foreign policy practice.

Empirical Analysis

The Memory of "Traditional Friendship"

In the political discourse of both Vietnam and the Russian Federation, the phrase "traditional friendship" appears with notable frequency as a central motif in references to bilateral relations. However, this concept is not merely a ritualistic diplomatic expression; rather, it constitutes a memory structure that is constructed, maintained, and reproduced within a specific political–social space. From the perspective of collective memory, Halbwachs (2020) argues that memory is always shaped within social frameworks, in which communities select and organize the past in accordance with present needs. In the Vietnam–Russia case, the memory of the Soviet–Vietnamese period functions as a symbolic foundation for maintaining continuity in relations in the post–Cold War era.

Studies on the politics of memory emphasize that the past does not exist as a neutral entity but is reinterpreted to serve political purposes (Olick, 2007; Olick et al., 2011). Grossheim (2020) demonstrates that in Vietnam, socialist memory is organized through an institutionalized "memory machine," encompassing history education, commemorative activities, and official media. Within this space, the image of the Soviet Union is highlighted as a symbol of support during wartime and postwar reconstruction. Grossheim (2021) further argues that post-1975 memory is not solely concerned with preserving history but also serves the purposes of social integration and political legitimation. This helps explain why the memory of Soviet–Vietnamese relations has been sustained as an integral component of contemporary political discourse.

At the level of foreign policy, "traditional friendship" is expressed through public diplomacy activities and historical commemorations. According to Cull (2008), public diplomacy plays a crucial role in maintaining image and trust between states. Tran (2025) shows that throughout seventy-five years of Vietnam–Soviet Union/Russian Federation relations, commemorative events, cultural exchanges, and official statements have consistently emphasized the special and enduring character of the relationship. The Vietnam News Agency (2015) and Duong (2009) illustrate how official media reproduce the memory

of Soviet assistance as evidence of long-standing solidarity. Such discourses not only honor the past but also establish a symbolic foundation for contemporary strategic cooperation.

From the perspective of strategic narratives, Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle (2013) argue that states employ narratives to construct meaning and position themselves within the international environment. In Vietnam–Russia relations, the narrative of "traditional friendship" operates as a discursive strategy aimed at reinforcing trust and reducing political transaction costs in bilateral cooperation. Britov (2022) and Luzyanin (2022) both underscore that Vietnam–Russia relations unfold within a complex geopolitical context, where Russia seeks to sustain its influence in Asia while Vietnam pursues diversification and multilateralization. In this environment, historical memory becomes a factor contributing to the relative stability of the relationship.

The concept of soft power advanced by Nye (2004) also provides a useful analytical lens. Emphasizing "traditional friendship" carries not only symbolic significance but also generates attraction and goodwill at the societal level. Dang (2025) notes that cultural, educational, and linguistic cooperation between the two countries is promoted as part of a soft power strategy amid intensifying geopolitical competition. Quan (2025) highlights cultural cooperation in the 1991–2012 period as evidence of the continuity of the historical foundation. These activities contribute to the reproduction of shared memory and the maintenance of a positive image of bilateral relations.

Moreover, studies on migration and communities indicate that the memory of "traditional friendship" is not confined to the state level but is also reproduced within social space. Ryazantsev and Piskunov (2023), together with Ryazantsev et al. (2022), show that the Vietnamese community in Russia actively participates in cultural and commemorative activities, thereby sustaining symbolic connections to the Soviet–Vietnamese past. Pismennaya and Nioradze (2022) document the reverse flow of migration, reflecting increasing two-way social interaction.

Taken together, the memory of "traditional friendship" constitutes a multi-layered structure that combines historical symbolism, political discourse, and social practice. As Subotić (2019) and Mälksoo (2023) argue, in post-socialist societies memory can become a site of identity competition; however, in the Vietnam–Russia case, this memory has largely been mobilized as a resource of continuity and stability. Belavusau et al. (2025) suggest that in a volatile international context, the institutionalization of memory—through law, education, and ritual—can reinforce political structures.

Accordingly, the memory of "traditional friendship" is not merely a recollection of the past but a deliberately mobilized strategic resource. It contributes to maintaining the distinctiveness of Vietnam–Russia relations and provides a soft foundation for political and diplomatic cooperation within a transforming international order.

Memory and Strategic Partnership

If "traditional friendship" represents a symbolic memory structure, then the framework of the "comprehensive strategic partnership" can be understood as the institutionalization of that memory within the contemporary political–diplomatic sphere. Vietnam–Russia relations in the post–Cold War era have been shaped not only by strategic calculations of interest, but also by a historical memory foundation reinterpreted as political capital accumulated over decades.

Britov (2022) questions whether the "comprehensive strategic partnership" constitutes an achieved outcome or a continuing objective, yet he emphasizes that the high level of political trust between the two countries rests upon a distinctive historical foundation. Similarly, Luzyanin (2022), analyzing Vietnam–Russia relations within the Russia–Vietnam–China triangle, argues that the memory of Soviet–Vietnamese cooperation provides Moscow with a "pivot" for sustaining its presence in Southeast Asia. In this context, memory does not replace strategic interests but functions as a catalyst, reducing political transaction costs in policy adjustment.

From a theoretical perspective, Halbwachs (2020) maintains that collective memory exists within specific social frameworks and is mobilized to preserve communal continuity. Olick (2007) and Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy (2011) extend this argument to the political level, suggesting that memory can serve as a tool for constructing legitimacy and strategic positioning. In Vietnam–Russia relations, the

memory of the Soviet–Vietnamese period has been transformed into an integral part of the official narrative of the "comprehensive strategic partnership," thereby providing a foundation for present-day cooperative commitments.

The analytical framework of strategic narratives developed by Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle (2013) clarifies how memory is incorporated into foreign policy discourse. According to these authors, narratives do not merely recount the past but orient future action. In the Vietnam–Russia case, the emphasis on Soviet support during wartime and national reconstruction has become a central element of bilateral strategic narratives (Tran, 2025). Cull (2008) identifies public diplomacy as a mechanism for transmitting such narratives to domestic and international audiences. Commemorative activities and official statements, reflected in state media (The Vietnam News Agency, 2015; Duong, 2009), demonstrate that memory is sustained as a symbolic foundation for current cooperation.

Nye's (2004) concept of soft power adds an additional explanatory dimension. When the memory of "traditional friendship" is embedded in cultural, educational, and linguistic cooperation, it not only reinforces a positive image but also enhances political attraction. Dang (2025) notes that amid intensifying soft power competition, educational cooperation and cultural exchange between Vietnam and Russia have become means of sustaining mutual presence and influence. Quan (2025) shows that cultural cooperation during the 1991–2012 period illustrates the continuity of the historical foundation, while Ponka, Yuniushkina, and Dubrovskiy (2021) analyze the humanitarian dimension as a stabilizing pillar of the strategic partnership.

At the societal level, the memory of Soviet–Vietnamese relations is also maintained through community networks and migration. Ryazantsev and Piskunov (2023), together with Ryazantsev et al. (2022), demonstrate that the Vietnamese community in Russia functions not only as an economic actor but also as a cultural and social bridge. Its participation in commemorative and cultural exchange activities contributes to the reproduction of shared memory within Russian social space. Conversely, Pismennaya and Nioradze (2022) record the growing presence of Russian migrants in Vietnam, reflecting the increasingly bidirectional character of social linkages. These networks strengthen the soft foundation of the strategic relationship.

In post-socialist contexts, Subotić (2019) and Mälksoo (2023) argue that memory can become a site of identity contestation and political positioning. However, in the Vietnam–Russia case, Soviet–Vietnamese memory has largely been mobilized as a resource of continuity and stability rather than confrontation. Belavusau et al. (2025) suggest that when memory is institutionalized through law and policy, it can reinforce existing political structures. This insight is particularly relevant to the upgrading and maintenance of the "comprehensive strategic partnership," in which the past is integrated into contemporary diplomatic institutions. At the institutional level, the Soviet legacy is not confined to symbolic discourse but has left concrete imprints on Vietnam's legal structure and policy thinking. Le (2024) demonstrates that even in the field of intellectual property—an area that has undergone extensive reform toward global integration—the influence of the Soviet legal model remains identifiable. This indicates that institutional memory is not merely symbolic but has substantive implications for the structure of bilateral relations.

Overall, memory should be understood not as a supplementary factor but as a constitutive component of the Vietnam–Russia strategic partnership. The interplay of historical foundations, political narratives, and social linkages generates depth and long-term stability in bilateral relations. In a volatile international environment, where strategic interests may shift, collective memory functions as political capital that sustains trust and continuity in Vietnam–Russia relations.

Memory in Public Diplomacy and Education

If the memory of "traditional friendship" is institutionalized within the framework of the strategic partnership, then public diplomacy and education constitute two key arenas in which that memory is reproduced and disseminated throughout social life. From a theoretical perspective, Halbwachs (2020)

argues that collective memory persists through social institutions, particularly education and the media. Olick (2007) and Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy (2011) further emphasize that memory is sustained through rituals, symbols, and public practices. In Vietnam–Russia relations, public diplomacy and educational cooperation function as central mechanisms of this process.

According to Cull (2008), public diplomacy encompasses cultural, educational, media, and commemorative activities designed to shape the perceptions of foreign publics. Tran (2025) demonstrates that over 75 years of Vietnam–Soviet Union/Russian Federation relations, commemorations, people-to-people exchanges, and official communications have played a crucial role in maintaining the continuity of the friendship discourse. Reports and articles in official media (The Vietnam News Agency, 2015; Duong, 2009) show that the image of the Soviet Union and Russia is frequently reconstructed in connection with memories of support during wartime and national reconstruction. These discourses do not merely recall the past but reinforce the symbolic foundation for contemporary cooperation.

From the perspective of strategic narratives, Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle (2013) argue that states construct narratives to shape the international environment in ways favorable to their interests. In Vietnam–Russia relations, the narrative of "historical companionship" is embedded in public diplomacy as a means of reaffirming bilateral trust (Britov, 2022; Luzyanin, 2022). Memory becomes the core content of this narrative, fostering a perception of distinctiveness and uniqueness in Vietnam–Russia relations compared to other partnerships.

Education represents a particularly significant space for sustaining collective memory. Halbwachs (2020) suggests that schools serve as sites where memory is standardized and transmitted across generations. In the Vietnamese context, Grossheim (2020, 2021) shows that socialist memory is integrated into educational curricula and commemorative activities, thereby reinforcing political identity. Vietnam–Russia educational cooperation thus carries not only the function of human resource development but also the role of maintaining shared memory.

Ponka, Yuniushkina, and Dubrovskiy (2021), analyzing humanitarian cooperation from 1991 to 2019, argue that education, science, and cultural exchange constitute central pillars of the strategic relationship. Dang (2025) emphasizes that amid intensifying soft power competition, the promotion of educational cooperation, tourism, and language learning has become a strategy for sustaining mutual image and influence. According to Nye (2004), soft power rests on the capacity to attract through culture and values; therefore, the integration of historical memory into educational and exchange programs represents a form of soft resource. Quan (2025) demonstrates that Vietnam–Russia cultural cooperation after 1991 reflects the continuity of the historical foundation, with education occupying a central role.

In addition, the Vietnamese community in Russia plays an important role in preserving memory through cultural and commemorative activities. Ryazantsev and Piskunov (2023), together with Ryazantsev et al. (2022), show that the Vietnamese diaspora engages not only in economic activities but also in organizing socio-cultural events linked to the history of Soviet–Vietnamese relations. Such practices reproduce memory within Russian social space and reinforce symbolic ties between the two countries. Conversely, Pismennaya and Nioradze (2022) document the presence of Russians in Vietnam, reflecting the expansion of bidirectional social and educational interaction.

At a broader level, scholarship on the politics of memory in post-socialist contexts (Subotić, 2019; Mälksoo, 2023) suggests that memory can function as a tool for strategic positioning and national identity construction. Belavusau et al. (2025) argue that the institutionalization of memory—through law, education, and public rituals—contributes to reinforcing existing political structures. In Vietnam–Russia relations, the interplay between public diplomacy and educational cooperation represents a concrete manifestation of this institutionalization process.

Overall, memory in public diplomacy and education serves not merely a symbolic function but a strategic one. Through commemorations, media representations, and educational collaboration, the memory of "traditional friendship" is transformed into a soft resource that sustains the stability and distinctiveness of Vietnam–Russia relations amid an evolving international order.

Discussion

The empirical analyses presented in Section 4 demonstrate that memory is not merely a symbolic supplementary factor in Vietnam–Russian Federation relations, but a structural component of the comprehensive strategic partnership framework. This discussion clarifies three main points: (i) memory as accumulated political capital; (ii) the interweaving of memory and strategic interests; and (iii) the stabilizing function of memory amid intensifying geopolitical competition.

First, the memory of "traditional friendship" can be understood as a form of political capital accumulated over time. According to Halbwachs (2020), collective memory is sustained within stable social frameworks; in the Vietnam–Russia case, these frameworks include education, media, and diplomatic rituals. Olick (2007) emphasizes that once institutionalized, memory can function as an instrument of political legitimation. The analyses in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 indicate that Soviet–Vietnamese memory has been transformed into the symbolic foundation of the "comprehensive strategic partnership" (Britov, 2022). This helps explain why, even when economic interests do not always correspond to their full potential, bilateral political relations continue to maintain a relatively high level of trust (Luzyanin, 2022).

Second, memory does not replace strategic interests but interacts with them. Within the framework of strategic narratives, Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle (2013) argue that states employ narratives to connect the past with present objectives. As shown in Section 4.2, references to Soviet support during wartime and postwar reconstruction are embedded in the narrative of trust and distinctiveness that characterizes Vietnam–Russia relations. Nye (2004) contends that soft power rests on the ability to cultivate positive images and attraction; in this context, historical memory functions as a soft resource reinforcing the current cooperation framework. Dang (2025) and Ponka, Yuniushkina, and Dubrovskiy (2021) demonstrate that cultural and educational cooperation is not merely ancillary but constitutes a pillar of the bilateral relationship, sustaining positive perceptions and continuity.

Third, memory serves as a stabilizing mechanism in a volatile geopolitical environment. Amid intensifying major-power competition and shifting regional power structures, Vietnam–Russia relations are situated within the complex Russia–Vietnam–China triangle (Luzyanin, 2022). While strategic interests may adjust according to circumstances, memory acts as an anchor that preserves a minimum level of trust. Tran (2025) shows that public diplomacy and commemorative activities are consistently maintained as mechanisms for reinforcing the friendship discourse. These activities, reflected in official media (The Vietnam News Agency, 2015; Duong, 2009), not only reconstruct the past but also sustain a sense of relational continuity.

At the societal level, diaspora networks and educational cooperation further contribute to bilateral stability. As discussed in Section 4.3, the Vietnamese community in Russia actively participates in cultural and commemorative activities (Ryazantsev & Piskunov, 2023; Ryazantsev et al., 2022), thereby sustaining memory within social spaces beyond the state. Pismennaya and Nioradze (2022) highlight the reverse flow of social interaction, reflecting the increasingly bidirectional nature of engagement. These networks ensure that bilateral relations do not depend exclusively on high-level political decisions.

Scholarship on the politics of memory in post-socialist contexts (Subotić, 2019; Mälksoo, 2023) suggests that memory may become a site of identity contestation. However, the Vietnam–Russia case illustrates a mode of memory mobilization that is more stabilizing than antagonistic. Belavusau et al. (2025) argue that when memory is institutionalized through law and education, it can reinforce existing political structures. This insight aligns with the Vietnam–Russia context, where Soviet–Vietnamese memory is integrated into political discourse and the strategic partnership framework.

Taken together, these findings indicate that collective memory is not merely historical background but an operational strategic resource. It sustains the distinctiveness of Vietnam–Russia relations, reduces the costs of policy adjustment, and provides a soft foundation for cooperation in a shifting international environment. This approach broadens the analysis of bilateral relations beyond a purely interest-based logic and suggests that in relationships grounded in deep historical ties, memory can play a structuring role in contemporary foreign policy.

Conclusion

This article has examined Vietnam–Russian Federation relations from a perspective that foregrounds the role of collective memory and political discourse, rather than confining the analysis to conventional geopolitical or military–economic frameworks. By integrating theories of collective memory, memory politics, soft power, and strategic narratives with empirical studies on Vietnam–Russia relations, the study has demonstrated that the memory of "traditional friendship" is not merely a symbolic remnant of the past, but an operational strategic resource in contemporary foreign policy.

First, Soviet–Vietnamese memory has been transformed and institutionalized within the framework of the "comprehensive strategic partnership," generating a symbolic foundation and a level of political trust between the two countries. This continuity does not imply rigidity or immutability; rather, it helps reduce political costs in strategic adjustments when the international environment changes.

Second, public diplomacy and educational cooperation play a central role in reproducing memory at the societal level. Through commemorative activities, cultural exchanges, training programs, and migrant communities, memory is sustained as part of a "soft infrastructure" that underpins the stability of bilateral relations. This demonstrates that memory does not reside solely within official state discourse, but is reinforced through transnational social networks.

Third, amid intensifying major-power competition and a transforming international order, collective memory may function as a form of "political capital" that sustains the distinctiveness and adaptability of Vietnam–Russia relations.

Based on these conclusions, the article suggests that integrating the historical–memory–societal dimension into the analysis of international relations not only enables a more comprehensive understanding of the Vietnam–Russia case, but also provides a research framework applicable to other bilateral relationships grounded in deep historical foundations.

Disclosure Statement

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