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- Individual paper abstract submission -

Paper Title: From War to Cultural Exchange: The Evolution of Korea-Vietnam Relations as Symptom of Geopolitical Transformation

Abstract: This paper examines the transformation of Korea-Vietnam relations from military confrontation to cultural partnership as a reflection of post-Cold War geopolitical realignments. Through analysis of diplomatic archives, economic data, and cultural exchange programs, we identify three distinct phases in bilateral relations: military conflict (1960s-1975), cautious normalization (1992-2000), and strategic partnership (2001-present). This evolution exemplifies the broader transition from ideological confrontation to pragmatic cooperation in East and Southeast Asia. We argue that South Korea's substantial economic investment in Vietnam, coupled with the soft power influence of the "Korean Wave" (Hallyu), has created effective mechanisms for reconciliation and relationship-building. This case study illuminates how middle-power nations navigate changing regional dynamics while addressing historical grievances. The findings demonstrate how economic interdependence and cultural diplomacy have become essential tools for overcoming historical animosities in the post-Cold War landscape. By tracing this bilateral relationship's development, we contribute to understanding how former adversaries can transform historical trauma into constructive engagement—offering valuable insights for other nations with complex historical legacies in an increasingly multipolar world.

---Short Biography---

Nguyen Trung Hiep serves as a full-time lecturer at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University-Ho Chi Minh City (USSH, VNU-HCMC). His academic foundation was established with a Bachelor's degree in Oriental Studies, specializing in Korean Studies, from USSH, VNU-HCMC. He subsequently pursued postgraduate studies in Asian Studies (2013-2016) at the same institution, completing his Master of Arts degree with a thesis entitled "Understanding Ancient Korean Buddhist Culture in *Samguk Yusa*". He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in International Studies (Korean Studies major) at Seoul National University. As a scholar bridging traditional and contemporary Korean studies, his research interests focus on Korea's cultural industry policy and the development of Korean webtoons. Through his academic work, he contributes to the growing field of Korean cultural studies in Vietnam, fostering deeper understanding of both classical and modern Korean cultural expressions.