

# Religions In Viet Nam and Ideologies of Ho Chi Minh on Religion Roles Construction

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## Abstract

Over years the vital role of religions in Vietnam has been confirmed. Many people follow Buddhism, or Catholics, etc. And they have lived well and contribute positively for our economy. Authors therefore use observations combined with qualitative analysis including synthesis and inductive methods.

Moreover, President (Minh., 2011c) has presented ideologies on constructing roles of religions in society. Although limited negative aspects (few), they showed many more positive sides in religions and contribute to economic growth. Besides, our papers will show strengths of major religions in the nation as well.

Last but not least, study mentioned (Minh., 2011c)views has emphasized roles of religions in building stable political system. One of positive contributions of religions is that for human and society including positive thinkings for human being better life, they did a good contribution job.

**Keywords:** religion in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh ideologies, religion role construction

**To cite this article:** PhD. Vu Van Chung, MBA. Dinh Tran Ngoc Huy, and PhD. Nguyen Thi Hoa. (2021) Religions in Viet Nam and Ideologies of Ho Chi Minh on Religion Roles Construction. *Review of International Geographical Education (RIGEO)*, 11(8), 1650-1655. doi: 10.48047/rigeo.11.08.142

**Submitted:** 09-10-2020 • **Revised:** 11-12-2020 • **Accepted:** 13-02-2021

## Introduction

With the policy of free belief and religious unity, according to (Minh., 2011c), religious work must aim at uniting people with religions and non-believers, and uniting people of different faiths and religions. . With the core content of: Respecting and ensuring the people's freedom and belief, and the unity of the religion and religion, and national harmony, President (Minh., 2011c) has built a broad national unity bloc. and firmly, serving the struggle for national independence and building socialism. This is also the principle that our Party and State have implemented throughout the years.

In the current revolutionary period, our Party has determined that it is necessary to associate the consideration and settlement of religious issues with the national issue and the issue of great national unity. The settlement of religious issues in order to promote the strength of the great national unity bloc is a consistent policy in the viewpoints and policies on belief and religion of our Party and State. The perception of our Party on religious work in the new period shows that there are many new points, that is, more emphasis is placed on attaching consideration and settlement of beliefs and religions to the issue of great national unity. especially emphasize the relationship between religious work and ethnic work. The document of the 7th Central Conference (the IX session) of the Party affirmed: "Ethnic and religious issues are posed and resolved in general, according to the basic direction and content of the task of national development. mobilize the strength of the great national unity, and at the same time pay great attention to the specificity of each of these issues ("[Communist Party of Vietnam, Document of the Seventh Conference of the Central Committee of the 9th Term, "](#)").

"Understanding the Resolution on religious work concurrently with the Resolution on promoting the strength of the great national unity and the Resolution on ethnic work" is one of the synchronous solutions to solve the population problem. race-religion. The 12th Congress of the Party affirmed: "... promote the good cultural and moral values of religions. Facilitate conditions for religious organizations to live based on their charters and charters, which have been recognized by the State, according to the provisions of law, and actively contribute to the cause of building and preserving defend the country. At the same time, proactively prevent and resolutely fight against acts of taking advantage of beliefs and religions to divide and sabotage the great national unity bloc or activities of belief and religion in contravention of the law.

(Source: Communist Party of Vietnam, Documents of the 12th Congress of Deputies, Office of the Party Central Committee, 2016, p.165).

### Research questions

Question 1: What are views of Ho Chi Minh in constructing religion roles?

Question 2: What are strengths of some religions?

## Literature Review

**Table 1**

Summary of previous studies

Authors	Year	Contents, results
(Phuong, 2020)	2020	In order to control epidemic spread and limit it in the nation. Vietnam cooperated with religious organizations to implement measures restricting religious activities, successfully.
(Nguyen, 2018)	2018	Stated that the achievements of President Ho Chi Minh (the hero of country liberation) is constructing the government, and the political system.
(Van Luong, 2020)	2020	Recognized Vietnam has open to new religion in the world if spread into Vietnam when he analyzes the religions in the nation such as Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam. Then he also studied Vietnamese people's religious life.
(Huy et al., 2021)	2021	Karl Marx, VI Lenin and Ho Chi Minh, esp. Presented Their views on building a strong government organization
(Huy, 2015)	2021	recognize historical values of ideology of Ho Chi Minh in building the country and analyze roles of his leading viewpoints for a sustainable economy and society and for future generation. Vietnam has surpassed wonderful wars and left many lessons for modern revolution in the country. Factors that affect his ideology for socio-economic development and values of his Independence declaration has been also discussed. Last but not least, it also finds out his philosophical perspectives that contribute for society and economic

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management, which became lasting values for the nation over time

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Religions: The State of Vietnam has recognized and granted operation registration to 38 religious' organizations, denominations and 01 spiritual practice belonging to 13 religions, with over 24 million followers (accounting for about 27% of the population), 250,000 positions, following number is 83,000 dignitaries, and the next number is 46 schools for training religious dignitaries (equivalent from intermediate to graduate level), and then 25,000 worship establishments.

In Vietnam, there are currently 06 major religions: Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Cao Dai, Hoa Hao.

(source: <https://asean2020.vn/web/asean/tin-nguong-ton-giao>, access date 15/9/2021)

First, Ho Chi Minh ideologies on public propaganda: Public propaganda and organization contributes to the overall success of the revolution Ho Chi Minh said that the support of the masses determines the success of the revolution. When the people help us a lot, they will succeed a lot, help us a little, they will succeed little, if they help us completely, they will have complete victory. Therefore, the Party needs to gather a huge force of people from all walks of life and must do a good job of mobilizing the masses. It must be made clear to the people that the ideal goal of the Party is to serve the interests of the class and the nation.

(Minh., 2011c)

We present a summary of related studies as follows:

## Methodology

The method that authors used in this research is qualitative analysis, synthesis and inductive methods and observations and explanatory research.

Moreover, authors consider using the method of using historical information, then take advantage of historical combined with dialectical materialism methods.

## Main findings

### Religion in Vietnam

Religions in Vietnam are quite diverse, including Buddhism (both Mahayana, Hinayana and some modified sects such as Hoa Hao, Four an Hieu Nghia, Buu Son Ky Huong, Pure Land Buddhist Association), Christianity, religion (including Catholic and Protestant), endogenous religion such as Cao Dai, and some other religions (Hinduism and Islam). Types of folk beliefs also have a lot of influence in Vietnam.

There is a great number of people who themselves think of non-religious, or at least so even though they come to religious sites on several occasions a year. In the majority of Vietnamese people's mind, belief in ancestor worship also has a very important place.

**Table 2**

Strengths of some religions in Vietnam

Buddhism	Catholic
Buddhism has no difficulty in thinking as well as acting in accordance with the four areas mentioned above, not accepting the division, artificiality, and artificiality of the vast combination into the unity of sentient life.	Friendship and brothership are enhanced and emphasized in Catholic or Christian.
Next, with tolerance for differences, Buddhism also has the ability to resolve political conflicts. Although there are many interreligious efforts to create world peace, but with a peaceful content and feasible method, Buddhist ethics will have a great potential to make a practical contribution to this process.	When it was transmitted to Vietnam, Christianity played a role is a bridge to convey elements of Western civilization to Vietnamese culture. In order to transfer of culture and civilization to foreign lands, The missionaries who came to mission in our country at that time were those who were trained in major seminaries formally.

(Source: made by authors)

The nation has over 13,162 m people who confirm to follow one of the officially registered religions (According to the 2019 Vietnam Population and Housing Census). The five largest religions are Catholic, Buddhist, Hoa Hao, Protestant, and Cao Dai; other religions account for a small proportion. The Government Committee for Religion is an agency performing the state management of religion and belief work.

(Source: wikipedia.org, access date 15/9/2021)

We see in below table that both Buddhism and Catholic affect positive thinking of people in order to build better life.

## Ho Chi Minh views on religion concepts and freedom

### Religion and belief in views of Ho Chi Minh

There are valuable ideological legacies for next generation inherited from President Ho Chi Minh, including his views on religious beliefs. His teachings, writings, gestures, actions as well as his behavior towards religions, followers, and religious dignitaries are valuable lessons for us. The ideology of religious solidarity, national harmony and respect for and assurance of the right to freedom of belief and non-belief is the basic content of Ho Chi Minh's thought on religion and belief. Ho Chi Minh's thought on religion, belief or spirituality is an important part of Ho Chi Minh's thought in general.

The basis of Ho Chi Minh's thought on freedom of religion and belief is respect for each person's faith. Ho Chi Minh said: "Everyone has the right to study an ideology. Personally, I study Marxism". And he emphasized that "Buddhists believe in Buddha; Christians believe in God; Just like we believe in Confucianism. Those are the noble ones that we trust" And when answering a Western journalist, Ho Chi Minh also affirmed "I try to be their little student".

In 1945, just one day after reading the "Declaration of Independence", at the first meeting of the Provisional Government (September 3, 1945), President (Minh., 2011c): "I propose that our Government declare: Freedom of belief, unity of religion". The government guarantees the people's right to freedom of religion and worship. No one should infringe on that freedom. All Vietnamese have the right to freely follow a religion or not. In this regard, he emphasized: "In the Constitution we have clearly defined: Freedom of belief. If anyone violates the constitution, ... will be punished."

(source: (Minh., 2011c)

Prevent violations of the right to freedom of belief and religion in any form. This is a measure for the right to freedom of belief and religion to be respected and effectively implemented in practice. Ho Chi Minh always requires cadres "to strictly abide by the policy of respecting freedom of belief for all religions". At the same time, he also asked monks and religious dignitaries to "have the task of educating believers in patriotism, civic duty, and a sense of respect for the people's government and the laws of Vietnam." Southern Democratic Republic". Compatriots and religious dignitaries have the obligation to obey the law; All religious are equal in front of the law. Ho Chi Minh advocated propagating and mobilizing people of all religions to understand and believe in the Party's policies and the State's laws on freedom of belief, thereby educating the masses to properly exercise their right to freedom of belief. one's creed, religion, raise vigilance,

"Do not be deceived by the propagandists." At the same time, (Minh., 2011c) also fought mercilessly with those who took advantage of freedom of belief and religion to propagate and incite the masses to oppose the revolution. He pointed out in Article 7, Ordinance 234 (Decree on Religion, dated June 14, 1955) stating: "The law will punish those who use the name of religion to undermine peace, unity, independence, democracy, propaganda of war to destroy unity, prevent believers from performing their civic duties, infringe on freedom of belief and freedom of thought of others, or do illegal things.

Freedom of belief and religion but must not affect others. The people's right to freedom of belief are the right to believe or not to believe, to follow or not to follow a religion. At the same time, it is strictly forbidden to oppose, confront, cause disunity, and make it easy for the enemy to take advantage of and divide. Ho Chi Minh pointed out: "In a civilized country, there is freedom of belief and freedom of speech, but you must not slander others". (Minh., 2011c) view on the right to freedom of belief and religion also includes the recognition of the people's right to freely

choose a religion to follow as well as the equality between religions. However, the freedom of belief and freedom to choose one's religion must not hinder the economic, political, cultural and social life of the country.

(source: (Minh., 2011a)

One of (Minh., 2011a) unique ideas and great contributions to the development of Marxist-Leninist theory on religion is that it has been determined: the highest purpose, the cross-cutting content of religious work is to increase strengthen the great unity of the whole people, unity of religion, solidarity among people of different religious ethnicities, making "the country glorious, the religion bright", "good in the world, beautiful in religion", making a greater and greater contribution. in the resistance war and national construction. Therefore, even when the fate of the revolution is like "a thousand pounds hang a hair", President (Minh., 2011a) still identifies one of the first six urgent tasks that the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam must perform. is: "Freedom of religion and unity of religion". To build great national unity and religious unity, he pointed out the consensus between the goals of the revolution and the goals of the founders of the religion. "Now, our compatriots are united, sacrificed their wealth and blood, fought the war to the end, to defeat the reactionary colonialists, to save the nation from suffering to preserve the right of unity and independence of the Fatherland. So, we follow the great compassion of Buddha Shakyamuni, fight to bring the race out of slavery" and with the responsibility of the head of the State, he clearly affirmed: "...what our government and people do, are in harmony with the spirit of the Gospel". President (Minh., 2011a) and our Party led and directed the entire people to do their best, including sacrificing blood and blood to preserve that unity, and at the same time deeply criticized the short-sighted view in building the union. religious conclusion. He said: "Narrow thoughts, narrow actions. Narrow-minded people have many enemies but few friends (such as religious issues). Narrow-minded people that are less helpers. A group that is narrow will not develop".

## Conclusion

President Ho Chi Minh always directed people with religious beliefs as well as those without religious beliefs to unite to strive for the common interests of the nation. In order to do well in the management of religious and spiritual matters, the State must take care of the life and religion of the masses in general and the followers of religions in particular.

Besides, Preserve and promote the tradition of ancestor worship, honor and be grateful to those with meritorious services to the Fatherland, nation and people. The State respects and fully implements the people's rights to freedom of belief, religion and spirituality, but resolutely handles elements who take advantage of religious beliefs and conduct superstitious activities against the interests of the people. of the nation and nation, taking advantage of the spiritual life to violate the law. President Ho Chi Minh once criticized those who in the name of religion act as henchmen for the enemy, harming the people and harming the country; they are not only "Vietnamese frauds but also false teachers".

The person who explained to the compatriots of religions clearly understood: The revolutionary cause of national liberation and the socialist revolution that the whole Vietnamese nation is carrying out is in line with the ideals of true religions, compatriots for national construction is in line with the ideals of the religious founders. He called on compatriots of all religions to promote patriotism and good cultural and ethical values in religious teachings to build a "good life and nice religion".

For dignitaries and religious monks, President (Minh., 2011a) always respects and appreciates their position and role in religious organizations; encouraging them to participate in the cause of national liberation and building a new society. He also always respected the small contributions of dignitaries and monks and encouraged them to continue to contribute to the country and the nation.

Thus, President (Minh., 2011c) not only appreciates the good cultural and ethical values in religion but also encourages dignitaries, monks and religious compatriots to promote those values in life.. He is a talented designer of society, family and for national independence and socialism with goals of "Rich people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization".

(source: <https://sonoivu.sonla.gov.vn/1282/30665/64444/554424/cong-tac-ton-giao/tu-tuong-ho-chi-minh-ve-phat-huy-gia-tri-cua-ton-giao>, access date 15/9/2021)

Last but not least, (Tinh, Thuy, & Ngoc Huy, 2021), (Huy et al., 2021), (Thi Hang, Thi Tinh, Ngoc Huy, & Hong Nhung, 2021) said Ho Chi Minh's (Minh., 2011b) greatest contribution is for the practice and theory of building personnel, state and organizations. This is great significance to the formation and development of the country and people of Vietnam today and he became a "hero of Vietnamese national liberation", and "world cultural celebrity".

## Research limitation

Authors need to present more details of religion statistics in the nation.

## Acknowledgement

Thank you, editors, brothers and friends, to support this publishing

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