

Review of: "Vietnam's Religious Policy: Navigating the Path to Religious Freedom"

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Vietnam has a rich and diverse religious heritage, influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, as well as foreign religions such as Catholicism and Protestantism. Traditional Vietnamese religion was a syncretic amalgamation of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, onto which had been added a rich variety of preexisting animist beliefs. Little distinction was made between the worlds of the living and the dead, and life was regulated by a vast array of beliefs and practices, taboos, and injunctions, all designed to leash in the powers that held sway over human life. Buddhism is the largest of the major world religions in Vietnam, with about ten million followers. Vietnamese Buddhism is generally inclusive and syncretic, drawing on the main Chinese Buddhist traditions, such as Tiantai and Huayan, Zen, and Pure Land. Theravada Buddhism also exists, as well as indigenous forms of Vietnamese Buddhism such as *Bửu Sơn Kỳ Hương* and *Hòa Hảo*. Confucianism entered Vietnam during the Chinese rule and has maintained its influence since that time. Confucianism in Vietnam can be considered as a social philosophy rather than just a normal religion, advocating a code of social behavior that man ought to live in harmony with society and attain happiness in his individual life. Taoism in Vietnam is believed to have been introduced into the country during the first Chinese domination of Vietnam. Taoism in its pure form is rarely practiced in Vietnam, but elements of it have been absorbed into the Vietnamese folk religion and fragments of it are still practiced in areas with small Chinese communities. Taoism has also influenced Caodaism and shamanic beliefs *Đạo Mẫu* in Vietnam. In regard to the major world religions, Vietnam is a multi-religious state, with more than 20 million believers and more than 30,000 places of worship. The Vietnamese religions have never opposed or competed with one another, but were united in a national united front, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, peacefully coexisting in the Vietnamese community, and contributing to the struggle against foreign aggression for national construction. Overall, religion plays a significant role in Vietnamese society and culture, shaping the spiritual life of the Vietnamese people.

what is the history of catholicism in vietnam???

how has the vietnamese government's policies towards religion changed over time??

what is the current state of religious freedom in Vietnam??

