

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

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Just after reading an article *Vietnam's Religious Policy: Navigating the Path to Religious Freedom* I can highly recommend it to the readers of the *Qeios* (international scientific journal). The goal of reviewed article was to „provide an overview of Vietnam's religion, and highlight key and recent developments, policies, key challenges for some religions such as Pure Hoa Hao Buddhism, the Vietnamese government has restricted on unregistered groups, the current state of religious freedom in the country”. I can clearly say that the goal was fulfilled. Author very correctly and logically divide whole text into several parts: 1. Overview (analyse of main Vietnam's religions – Buddhism, Catholicism, Hoahaoism, Protestantism, Caodaism and Islam); 2. Vietnam's religious policy; 3. Vietnam suppress religious activities; 4. My thoughts (Conclusion).

In the first part of the article Author on the basis of scientific literature and observations presents main contributions of main Vietnam's religions. He claims that Buddhism „continues to thrive, adapting to the changing times while preserving its core teachings of compassion, wisdom, and liberation“. The Catholic Church „has persevered, adapting to the changing times while remaining committed to its core values of faith, love, and service“. The Hoa Hao Buddhism „continues to practice its beliefs, focusing on spiritual development, charitable works, and promoting social harmony“. The protestantism „emphasis on personal faith, community support, and social engagement continues to attract followers and shape the religious landscape of Vietnam“. The caodaism, as a syncretic religion that combines elements of various world religions, „emphasizes moral conduct, compassion and the practice of rituals and prayers“. Finally, Islam „continues to flourish, attracting new followers and playing a vital role in the religious and cultural landscape of the nation“.

In the next parts of the article Author claims that Vietnamese authorities put strict control over formal religious hierarchies and related activities. The government views religion as a potential threat to its authority and promotes atheism as the official ideology. Although Vietnam's constitution affirms all individuals have the right to freedom of belief and religion, unregistered religions are restricted. However in the conclusion he claims that „Vietnam's religious policy has undergone significant transformations over the years, reflecting the country's complex history and socio-political context. While progress has been made in recognizing religious freedom and accommodating religious diversity, challenges remain. It is crucial for Vietnam to continue working towards a more inclusive and tolerant society, where all religious groups can freely practice their faith without fear of discrimination or persecution.“

It is also important to say, that Author uses appropriate scientific methods and cites many valuable scientific books or articles. The results are very unique and useful not only in Vietnam but also in other countries. Mentioned fact itself calls for further surveys and analysis in the area of religious freedom in contemporary societies all over the World. It is really

important to seek a balance between state control and religious freedom, which is not an unlimited right. The just limits of religious freedom must be determined in each social situation with political prudence, according to the requirements of the common good. I am sure that many readers of the *QEIOS* (international scientific journal) will be satisfied during reading reviewed article.

(reviewed by Assoc. Prof. Ondrej Štefaňak, PhD. - Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia)