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## Abstract No. 03/2025

### ***Tran Thi Phuong Anh: Religious Structures among Ethnic Minority Communities along Vietnam's Three Land Borderlines: An Analysis Based on Survey Data***

*Abstract: This article examines the religious structures of ethnic minority communities along Vietnam's three land borderlines, drawing on data from the 2019 nationwide survey on the socio-economic conditions of 53 ethnic minority groups. The findings reveal a markedly differentiated religious landscape shaped by geography, ethnic composition, and the historical trajectories of missionary activities: Protestantism predominates in the Vietnam-China border, Catholicism is particularly salient along the Vietnam-Laos border, while the Vietnam-Cambodia borderland is characterized by pronounced religious diversity. The study underscores that religion in border regions operates not merely as an individual choice but as a social institution embedded within specific local contexts. The close nexus between ethnicity and religious affiliation further indicates that religion is increasingly becoming a critical component of the cultural and social life of many ethnic minority communities in contemporary borderlands.*

**Keywords:** Religion, Ethnicity, Ethnic minorities, Social structure, Borderlands.

### ***Nguyen Khac Duc: Religious Policies and Legal Framework in the Nordic Countries: Issues and Challenges***

*Abstract: This paper examines the religious policy and legal framework in several Nordic countries, where governments have shown strong commitment to ensuring freedom of religion and belief while promoting the constructive role of religion in social development. Through document analysis and comparative synthesis, the study highlights key state approaches, including the protection of religious freedom, the integration of religious education, and the provision of financial and institutional support to faith communities. Nordic countries also impose strict penalties for hate speech and religious hostility. However, challenges persist, such as excessive expressions of "freedom" that incite hatred or insult religious sentiments in several Nordic countries.*

**Keywords:** religious policy, legal framework, religion, Nordic countries.

### ***Pham Ngoc Huong, Nguyen Van Quy, Hoang Van Chung: Religious Affairs of the Border Guard in Vietnam's Land Border Areas: Realities, Challenges, and Policy Recommendations***

*Abstract: In recent years, religious life in Vietnam's land border areas has become increasingly dynamic, marked by the emergence of new religious organizations, communities, and phenomena. At the same time, the exploitation of religion for political subversion or personal gain has posed considerable difficulties and challenges to state management of religious activities. The Border Guard is primarily tasked with managing and safeguarding the national border, maintaining political security, and ensuring social order and safety in border areas. Adopting a*

*multi- and interdisciplinary approach combined with document analysis based on data collected during field surveys in 2024 and 2025, this study provides an overview of religious developments in Vietnam's land border areas; analyzes and evaluates the role of the Border Guard in religious affairs in these regions; identifies emerging challenges; and proposes several policy recommendations.*

**Keywords:** Religious affairs, Border Guard, Land border areas, Vietnam.

**Pham Quang Linh: Livelihoods of The Xtieng People in the Border Area of Dong Nai Province Today**

**Abstract:** *In the Vietnam - Cambodia border area of Dong Nai province, the Xtieng are an ethnic minority with a large population, so livelihood issues related to this ethnic group have certain impacts on social stability, security and defense of the whole region. The Xtieng currently have a low per capita income, the rate of poor and near-poor households is high compared to the provincial average. Therefore, the government and functional levels need to encourage the Xtieng to participate in labor at companies and guide them to accumulate to buy land for cultivation, creating a stable source of income in parallel with income from wages. However, in the long term, there needs to be solutions suitable to ethnic practices and local potential to expand vocational training, improve household economic capacity, and support microfinance for the Xtieng to proactively integrate into the labor market, rise from poverty to develop sustainably.*

**Keywords:** Livelihood, Xtieng people, border area, Binh Phuoc province, Dong Nai province

**Truong Van Cuong: Labor Migration and Housing Transformation of the Khmu, Hmong and Thai People in Nghe An Province**

**Abstract:** *In the context of the development of the world economy and the trend of globalization, labor migration has become a common social phenomenon in many countries, including Vietnam. Not only it has a strong impact on the economy, labor migration also profoundly changes the culture of ethnic groups, especially the material culture associated with the house. This is a process of exchange and negotiation between tradition and modernity, making the cultural identity of ethnic groups no longer immutable but always moving and adjusting to the new context. Based on field research in the Khmu, Hmong and Thai communities in Nghe An province, the article analyzes the impact of labor migration on changes in materials, architecture and living space, thereby contributing to clarifying the current situation, change in housing trends and other impacts of labor migration on the lives of ethnic minorities in the Vietnam - Laos border area in Nghe An province today.*

**Keywords:** Labor migration, housing transformation, ethnic minorities, Nghe An province.

**Le Thi Thoa: Cuisine of the Ta-oi and Co-tu People in the Vietnam - Laos Border Area of Hue City: Cultural Resources and Development Potential**

**Abstract:** *Culinary culture is not only a characteristic of people's daily diet but also shows their adaptation to the living environment. In addition to solving people's survival and food security needs, cuisine also has value of a cultural resource, a potential for socio-economic development. Currently, cuisine has become a cultural product for tourism, especially community tourism. In the Vietnam - Laos border community, the role of cuisine, although recognized as a cultural resource, has not been effectively exploited. This is shown through the culinary practices of some ethnic groups such as Ta-oi, Co-tu in the border area of Hue city and the challenges in promoting the culinary values of the people to become cultural products, both meeting people's lives and arousing the potential for local socio-economic development.*

**Keywords:** *Cuisine, Vietnam - Laos border, resources, potential, community.*

**Nguyen Thi Bich Ngoan : Social Charity Activities of Phùng Khoang Parish Caritas, Hanoi**

**Abstract:** *Vietnam Caritas is a social charity organization under the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Vietnam, with a network extending from the central level to dioceses and parishes. Within this structure, parish Caritas constitutes the core unit, involving the direct participation of lay faithful, religious, and clergy. In Hanoi, many parishes have been expanding the role of Caritas, recognizing it as the key institution in parish-based social and charitable work. A representative case is Phùng Khoang Parish Caritas, which has been effectively implemented a variety of social and charitable work with practical significance. This study focuses on examining the social charity activities of Phùng Khoang Parish Caritas, under the Archdiocese of Hanoi, thereby elucidating its positive contributions to supporting the disadvantaged and fostering humanistic values and compassion within the community.*

**Keywords:** *Vietnam Caritas, Phùng Khoang Parish, Social charity Hanoi.*

**Nguyen Dinh Lam, Vu Quang Anh, Nguyen Huu Giap, Ha Thi Ngoc Ly: Formation and Development of the “Bát Âm” Ensemble in Folk Belief Ritual Practices in the Red River Delta**

**Abstract:** *The Bát Âm ensemble has a long-standing origin and has been widely used by the Vietnamese in various traditional rituals. Historical records indicate that although the system of “Bát Âm” was partly adopted from China, it was subsequently localized and adapted by Vietnamese dynasties for use in the royal court, with distinct organizational forms and terminologies. Over time, the Bát Âm ensemble was fully indigenized to fit the cultural and artistic life of the Vietnamese people. On this basis, this article analyzes key findings on the origin of the Bát Âm ensemble in relation to certain royal court ensembles in Vietnam throughout history, thereby shedding light on its process of formation and development. At the same time, the paper further discusses the presence of the Bát Âm ensemble in Vietnamese folk belief ritual practices in the Red River Delta, particularly in two common rituals - the village deity procession and Vietnamese funerals. These discussions contribute to the preservation and promotion of the Bát Âm ensemble in particular, and Vietnamese traditional music in general, within contemporary cultural life.*

**Keywords:** *Bát Âm ensemble, formation and development, Red River Delt.*

**Dang Hoang Lan, Doan Le Minh Khoi: The Function of Ông Bồn Talismans in the Chinese Community of Cầu Kè District, Trà Vinh Province, Vietnam**

**Abstract:** *The worship of Ông Bồn is one of the distinctive folk beliefs of the Hoa people community in Cầu Kè District, Trà Vinh Province. Each year, during the Vu Lan Festival, the Ông Bồn Festival attracts thousands of participants from various regions. What makes the festival particularly appealing are the spirit possession rituals and the writing of talismans. In this study, the phenomena of Ông Bồn possession and talisman writing are examined as religious rituals that serve specific functions within the local Hoa people community. Drawing on Malinowski's functionalist perspective and Radcliffe-Brown's structural functionalism, along with data collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation, the authors focus on analyzing the function of Ông Bồn talismans in the Hoa people community of Cầu Kè District, Trà Vinh Province. The study further highlights the cultural value of these talismans in preserving and sustaining community stability while also contributing to local economic development.*

**Keywords:** *Rituals, Ông Bồn's talismans, spirit possession, the Hoa people, Cầu Kè.*

**Le Tran Quyen: The Value of the Ky Yen Ritual in the Life of the Hoa Community in Bac Ninh Province**

**Abstract:** *Ky Yen ritual of the Hoa (Chinese) community in Thac Do village, Tan Quang commune, Luc Ngan district, Bac Giang province (now Luc Ngan commune, Bac Ninh province) is an important cultural and religious activity, closely associated with spiritual life and community cohesion. Based on field survey data, this article analyzes the outstanding values of the ritual, especially the role of this festival in preserving identity, connecting the community and transmitting cultural knowledge. Thereby, it can be seen that the current Ky Yen ceremony still maintains the core elements of ritual, space and meaning, although there have been significant changes in participants, organization process and some ritual details, reflecting the flexible adaptation of the Hoa community to social changes. However, there are also a number of issues that need to continue to preserve and promote the value of the ritual in the current context of integration.*

**Keywords:** *Customs, Hoa ethnic people, Ky Yen ritual, value, Bac Ninh.*

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**Abstract:** *This article explores the potential for developing spiritual tourism in An Phu District, An Giang Province. It applies Wang's (1999) concept of authenticity - including objective, constructive, and existential authenticity - to analyze the cultural characteristics and tourism potential of the area. The findings indicate that An Phu possesses a unique religious and cultural borderland space shaped by the harmonious coexistence of diverse religions and ethnic groups. This cultural landscape remains largely untapped, thereby offering visitors the promise of*

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**Keywords:** *Spiritual tourism, authenticity, An Giang.*

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