
Ho Chi Minh's Ideology Regarding Literature And Art: Insights On Cultural And Political Integration

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Abstract:

This paper analyses Ho Chi Minh's views on literature and art as fundamental catalysts for cultural cohesion and political unification in Vietnam, emphasising their significant significance in promoting social and ideological advancement. This study elucidates the significant relationship between creative expression and political ideology in the formation of national identity and resilience, as evidenced by a detailed examination of his perspectives during different revolutionary eras. Ho Chi Minh's worldview, based on Marxist-Leninist ideas, views literature and art as potent revolutionary instruments capable of fostering patriotism, ethical values, and social cohesion. His vision transcended creative endeavours, championing an arts and literary movement profoundly intertwined with the lives and challenges of the populace, intended to inspire collective action and embody Vietnam's socio-political ambitions. This research elucidates how Ho Chi Minh's perspectives on cultural progress have transcended generations, impacting Vietnam's contemporary social policies, cultural preservation efforts, and educational systems. The study highlights the significance of literature and art in national development, illustrating how Ho Chi Minh's cultural philosophy remains a pivotal influence on educational practices and policies designed to foster a cohesive and resilient Vietnamese society. This article highlights the lasting significance of his ideology and provides a framework for analysing the adaptation of revolutionary cultural ideas in contemporary educational and cultural policy-making in Vietnam.

Keywords: Ho Chi Minh; Literature and art; Cultural policy; Marxism-Leninism; Vietnam revolutionary thought

Introduction

Contextual background

Ho Chi Minh, a preeminent figure in Vietnamese history, significantly influenced the formation of Vietnam's cultural and political identity. His life's work, characterised by transformative leadership, prolific writing, and profound involvement in the arts, embodies a comprehensive vision of a culturally unified and resilient Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh, born in 1890 at a time of colonial subjugation, emerged as a revolutionary symbol, devoting his life to the pursuit of national independence and promoting unity among many Vietnamese groups under a common aspiration for freedom and social equity. His legacy persists through his effect on political ideology and cultural philosophy, which continue to affect Vietnamese society today.

Ho Chi Minh's cultural achievements beyond his diplomatic and administrative positions, as he championed the advancement of literature and the arts as vital elements of a progressive and unified society. His perspectives on culture were integral to his political strategy; they constituted a fundamental element of his approach to revolutionary transformation and nation-building. Ho Chi Minh regarded literature and art as fundamental to Vietnam's political and social awareness, vital for fostering patriotism and a collective identity necessary for national independence and social reform. His writings and speeches frequently underscored the significance of art and literature in engaging the "heart and mind" of the populace, contending

that creative expression could encapsulate and propagate revolutionary ideals in ways that deeply resonated with the public on an emotional level.

Importance of research

Comprehending Ho Chi Minh's worldview on literature and art is essential for understanding the basis of Vietnam's contemporary cultural and educational programs, as well as its strategies for social cohesion and national advancement. Ho Chi Minh viewed literature and art as expressions of a nation's essence and instruments for inciting change, instilling revolutionary principles, and unifying the populace in common ambitions. This paper analyses Ho Chi Minh's cultural thought to highlight how his amalgamation of Marxist-Leninist ideas with Vietnamese traditions created a distinctive ideological framework. This framework not only galvanised support for Vietnam's independence but also fostered a lasting sense of national pride and cultural preservation. In light of the socio-political context of the 20th century, Ho Chi Minh's perspectives on art and literature transcended Vietnamese boundaries, impacting global revolutionary movements and inspiring analogous ideologies throughout Asia and beyond, as both leaders and scholars recognised in his philosophy a potent amalgamation of cultural empowerment and political mobilization[7].

This research is significant for its examination of Ho Chi Minh's ideology, which may provide a good framework for modern cultural policy development and educational reform. His beliefs emphasise the need of cultural education and artistic involvement in fostering national identity and patriotism. Ho Chi Minh's theory articulates the transformative capacity of the arts in connecting civilisations behind a common goal of fairness and resilience. His focus on the social and educational functions of literature and art is still pertinent to contemporary Vietnam, where cultural and educational policies are influenced by his revolutionary principles, incorporating them into present strategies designed to promote social cohesion, pride, and a collective sense of purpose.

Purpose and range

This study seeks to examine Ho Chi Minh's views on the function of literature and art, investigating how he perceived these cultural forms as instruments of revolution and means of teaching. This book aims to elucidate Ho Chi Minh's comprehensive approach to culture and revolution by analysing the socio-political and cultural aspects of his philosophy. This research examines how Ho Chi Minh's intellectual foundation, based on Marxist-Leninist principles, regarded literature and art as instruments of "cultural warfare," essential to the liberation effort and the continuous cultural education of the people.

This paper examines Ho Chi Minh's writings, speeches, and recorded encounters with Vietnamese writers, painters, and intellectuals to elucidate his cultural leadership strategy. This study examines the influence of Ho Chi Minh's literary and artistic philosophy on current Vietnamese policies regarding culture, education, and social development. This analysis seeks to address concerns including: How did Ho Chi Minh's ideological framework influence the revolutionary function of literature and art in Vietnam? How does his legacy persist in shaping Vietnam's cultural and educational development strategies? This study provides a comprehensive knowledge of how Ho Chi Minh's ideas might serve as a framework for combining cultural and educational policies to enhance national identity and social cohesion in modern countries.

This dissertation enhances the scholarly discourse on Ho Chi Minh's philosophy by offering a nuanced perspective on the role of literature and art within a political framework to promote cultural preservation and social progress. This research enhances our comprehension of Vietnamese cultural identity and provides insights into the broader applicability of Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary thought, highlighting the significance of his ideas for societies aiming to harmonise cultural and political goals in a globalised context.

Literature Review

Theoretical frameworks

Ho Chi Minh's worldview on literature and art is fundamentally grounded in Marxist-Leninist principles, particularly about the functions of creative expression within socio-political frameworks. Inspired by Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh regarded literature and art not solely as aesthetic endeavours but as vital tools in the revolutionary quest for emancipation and the socialist reformation of society. This paradigm highlights the capacity of literature and art to galvanise the populace, evoke patriotism, and construct collective identity. In Marxist-Leninist philosophy, artistic expressions are perceived as instruments that can either benefit the capitalists or advocate for the working class and the oppressed, a viewpoint that firmly aligned with Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary principles. Ho Chi Minh tailored these concepts to the Vietnamese context, arguing that all artistic expressions must benefit the populace, fostering the growth of a cohesive socialist consciousness that bolsters the revolutionary effort. This theoretical framework supported his advocacy for "literature and art with steel," wherein creative expression serves as a battleground for ideological conflict, aimed at advancing social justice, moral integrity, and national pride [7], [8].

Marxist-Leninist frameworks assert that culture constitutes a part of the superstructure, both influencing and being impacted by the economic basis. Ho Chi Minh emphasised that Vietnamese art and literature should conform to political goals, contributing to the formation of a new society. He believes that literature and art should transcend mere reflections of reality; they ought to serve as catalysts for social development, embodying revolutionary ideals and the Vietnamese people's determination to oppose oppression. Through the integration of cultural endeavours with Marxist-Leninist ideology, Ho Chi Minh formulated a distinct Vietnamese viewpoint on revolutionary literature and art that continues to influence the nation's cultural policy today.

Prior investigation

Academic research on Ho Chi Minh's cultural ideology underscores the essential amalgamation of traditional Vietnamese values with revolutionary principles, accentuating his comprehensive perspective on culture, politics, and social progress. Research demonstrates how Ho Chi Minh advocated for the integration of Marxist-Leninist doctrines with Vietnamese cultural qualities, including communal togetherness and perseverance. Ho Chi Minh established a cultural ideology that integrated Vietnamese culture, traditional tales, and national symbols with revolutionary ideas, thereby preserving national identity while promoting advancement towards a socialist society. Ho Chi Minh esteemed traditional art forms such as folk poetry and songs, yet underscored the necessity for their reformation to fulfil revolutionary objectives, urging artists to modify these forms to evoke patriotism and a unified spirit of resistance against colonialism.

A recurring theme in prior studies is Ho Chi Minh's conviction on the dual function of literature and art: they ought to mirror the daily experiences of the populace while also acting as instruments for ideological instruction. He contended that Vietnamese artists and authors ought to produce works that resonate with the public and offer moral direction, cultivating a consciousness that coincides with national values and socialist ideals. Research demonstrates that Ho Chi Minh's amalgamation of ideology and cultural expression was transformative, transcending theoretical discourse to impact tangible practices in literature, art, and cultural policies that persistently influence Vietnam's sociocultural framework.

Ho Chi Minh's Ideology On Literature And Art

Fundamental principles

Ho Chi Minh's theory of literature and art emphasises that these cultural expressions must serve the nation and reflect revolutionary principles. Ho Chi Minh asserted that art and

literature should not alone provide entertainment but also stimulate social and political transformation, serving as tools to direct the populace towards a socialist future. His declaration that "in poetry, there must be steel" encapsulates his belief that literature and art should embody the revolutionary spirit, capable of galvanising the masses towards common ideals of independence, freedom, and collective might. His literary oeuvre, exemplified by *Diary in Prison*, demonstrates a deep-seated national pride and commitment to the liberation fight, embodying the revolutionary ethos he championed for all Vietnamese writers and artists [7], [8].

Furthermore, Ho Chi Minh's notion of "serving the people" emerged as a fundamental tenet for revolutionary art, underscoring that all artistic endeavours must resonate with the lived experiences and ambitions of the Vietnamese populace. He urged artists to produce works that would both depict the realities of Vietnamese society and motivate constructive action, fostering a cohesive national identity. Ho Chi Minh asserted that literature and art has a distinctive ability to resonate with the populace, fostering ideals of patriotism, resilience, and solidarity crucial for the triumph of the revolutionary process.

Symbiosis of culture and politics

Ho Chi Minh's philosophy anticipates a symbiotic link between culture and politics, wherein art and literature assume crucial roles within the socio-political framework, impacting both economic advancement and social unity. Utilising Marxist concepts, he contended that culture, encompassing literature and art, constitutes an essential component of the superstructure and must correspond with political and economic aims to facilitate national development. Ho Chi Minh, however, infused this perspective with a distinctly Vietnamese element by asserting that cultural representations must be anchored in traditional values while advancing revolutionary principles. Ho Chi Minh viewed culture as a cohesive force, integral to national unity and essential for cultivating resilience against foreign challenges, especially colonialism and imperialism.

In his perspective, the arts facilitate socio-political advancement by both mirroring and shaping the collective awareness of the populace. He asserted that revolutionary art must communicate unequivocal messages endorsing socialism, motivating individuals to participate in national development and safeguard the nation's sovereignty. The amalgamation of cultural and political life is apparent in his speeches and publications, wherein Ho Chi Minh continually emphasised the significance of a culturally educated citizenry in constructing a just, unified society. Consequently, art and literature transcended mere aesthetics, functioning as instrumental resources for nation-building and social reform.

Artistic autonomy and accountability

Ho Chi Minh championed the incorporation of literature and art into the revolutionary paradigm, while simultaneously acknowledging the necessity of artistic freedom to genuinely reflect socioeconomic realities. He asserted that artists and authors ought to possess the freedom to examine issues relevant to the nation's challenges and ambitions, thus performing their duties as "soldiers on the cultural front." His advocacy for artistic freedom was moderated by a feeling of obligation, as he anticipated that artists would utilise their talents to advance national interests and uphold ethical principles. Ho Chi Minh believed that the freedom to create was inherently connected to the obligation of using that freedom for the populace's advantage, necessitating both dedication to the revolutionary cause and a profound comprehension of the nation's cultural history.

Ho Chi Minh's focus on this equilibrium is evident in his engagements with artists, whom he urged to portray both the strengths and adversities of Vietnamese society with integrity and bravery. He cautioned against superficial or escapist creations, promoting literature and art that would reflect the genuine realities of the populace and cultivate a sense of national pride and communal resilience. He posited that by harmonising their artistic endeavours with socialist

principles and the populace's interests, artists might significantly aid the revolutionary movement while simultaneously articulating their individuality and inventiveness. This methodology created a unique paradigm of creative liberty inside a revolutionary framework, wherein artistic expression was promoted yet orientated towards national and collective aims.

Ho Chi Minh established the basis for a distinctly Vietnamese perspective on literature and art, advocating for both cultural preservation and revolutionary change. His impact persists in Vietnam's contemporary cultural policies, which consistently embody his vision of a society where literature and art function as cornerstones of national identity, social cohesion, and political awareness. Ho Chi Minh's worldview, which advocates for a balance between creative freedom and responsibility, continues to influence Vietnam's cultural and educational growth, highlighting the lasting significance of literature and art in the nation's pursuit of progress and unity.

The Role Of Literature And Art In Revolution And Education

Artistic involvement in politics

Ho Chi Minh considered literature and art essential instruments for political education and social mobilisation, highlighting their capacity to promote national unity and enhance political consciousness among the populace. His promotion of "literature and art with steel" indicates his conviction that creative endeavours should embody intellectual robustness, empowering the public with the moral resilience necessary to participate in the quest for national independence. Ho Chi Minh's correspondence with artists and his addresses at cultural conferences repeatedly underscore that artistic expression must not be isolated from life's reality but rather actively confront urgent social and political matters. In his 1951 letter to Vietnamese artists, Ho Chi Minh implored writers, painters, and musicians to concentrate on the lives of common individuals, especially workers, peasants, and soldiers, who constituted the foundation of the revolution[7].

He regarded art and literature as catalysts for transformation that may motivate individuals to participate in the communal objective of national freedom. His speeches frequently emphasised this by urging artists to match their creations with revolutionary objectives, showcasing themes that would advocate the values of sacrifice, patriotism, and tenacity. This focus on involvement is seen in Ho Chi Minh's endorsement of wartime poetry and prose that directly confronted the quest for independence, including works that honoured the valour of revolutionary combatants. He believed that these art forms would instill a spirit of resistance and resolve in the populace, fostering a collective consciousness that strengthened unity across social classes and geographic areas.

Moreover, Ho Chi Minh urged artists to utilise their creations as a conduit for uniting urban and rural communities through common ideas and experiences. By incorporating both ancient and contemporary elements, artists can render the revolutionary cause relatable to various segments of the populace, thus unifying them under the shared objectives of independence and socialism. This method underscores Ho Chi Minh's inventive application of art as a tool in the ideological conflict and as a cohesive element capable of galvanising the population towards a common objective.

Art as a vehicle for cultural preservation and innovation

Besides its function in political involvement, Ho Chi Minh regarded literature and art as essential for maintaining Vietnamese cultural identity, even as they evolved under revolutionary conditions. He championed the conservation of Vietnamese cultural traditions, particularly in the realms of folk melodies, poetry, and historical narratives, as these artistic expressions encapsulated the tenacity and energy of the Vietnamese populace. His writings, including *Diary in Prison*, exemplify this ideology by merging traditional Vietnamese literary structures with themes of resistance and national pride. This anthology of poems, written during his

incarceration by the Chinese Nationalist regime, encapsulates the resilience of the Vietnamese character and emphasises his conviction that, even amidst adversity, art can foster hope and unity [7].

Ho Chi Minh's methodology on art facilitated both adaptation and innovation within conventional genres. He urged artists to utilise the abundant heritage of Vietnamese folk culture while integrating aspects that resonated with the modern revolutionary movement. This was especially apparent in revolutionary poetry, which frequently appropriated ancient forms while including new themes centred on the principles of freedom, unity, and opposition to oppression. Ho Chi Minh aimed to establish a cultural movement that harmonised preservation with innovation, rooted in tradition while being progressive, so cultivating a distinctive Vietnamese identity resilient to colonial and global forces.

His worldview embodies a pragmatic stance on cultural preservation, wherein traditions are appreciated but not venerated; rather, they are reconfigured to meet the changing demands of society. This methodology persists in Vietnam's cultural milieu, as modern artists and educators utilise Ho Chi Minh's principles to foster a vibrant cultural identity that endures amidst modernisation and globalisation.

Contemporary Implications Of Ho Chi Minh's Cultural Ideology

Impact on Vietnamese cultural policy

Ho Chi Minh's cultural philosophy continues to be a fundamental influence on Vietnam's contemporary policies concerning literature, art, and cultural education. His perspective that art and literature need to benefit the populace and conform to national goals has been codified in numerous cultural and educational programs that prioritise the advancement of national ideals, patriotism, and social cohesion. The Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of Vietnam is actively pursuing efforts to preserve traditional art forms, bolster cultural industries, and advance the creation of "national literature" in accordance with socialist principles. The continued endorsement of ancient art forms such as water puppetry, folk music, and historical theatre illustrates how Ho Chi Minh's vision of a culturally enriched and ideologically cohesive society has influenced modern policies.

Moreover, his promotion of cultural interaction with the rural populace has motivated initiatives to enhance the accessibility of art and education nationwide, guaranteeing that cultural advantages extend to all areas, including those that are isolated and marginalised. Government efforts aimed at delivering art education in rural schools and fostering local cultural festivals exemplify the practical application of Ho Chi Minh's principles of inclusive cultural involvement. His focus on the interrelation of culture, politics, and education has cultivated a distinctive cultural policy framework in Vietnam that emphasises both preservation and progressive advancement.

Impact on education

Ho Chi Minh's worldview has significantly influenced Vietnam's educational system, especially in the realms of national defence and security education. His conviction that cultural and moral education must accompany intellectual development has influenced curricula that prioritise patriotism, civic duty, and the significance of cultural awareness. Numerous Vietnamese educational institutions instruct students on Ho Chi Minh's biography, ideology, and the principles of loyalty, resilience, and communal responsibility. These teachings extend beyond history lectures and are incorporated into other subjects, emphasising the significance of a holistic education that encompasses moral, cultural, and intellectual components.

In the realm of national defence and security education, Ho Chi Minh's ideology has shaped curriculum that emphasise the significance of a robust cultural identity as a cornerstone for national resilience. Educational institutions integrate instruction on Vietnamese cultural heritage, encompassing traditional music, literature, and historical narratives, as a component of a comprehensive plan to cultivate pride and responsibility in pupils. This strategy corresponds

with Ho Chi Minh's perspective that an educated and culturally informed citizenry is crucial for preserving national sovereignty and fostering social stability.

His concepts persist in shaping educational changes that emphasise the instruction of ethics, cultural awareness, and patriotism, highlighting the necessity for pupils to cultivate allegiance and commitment to the nation. The ideas inherent in Ho Chi Minh's worldview have cultivated a unique educational philosophy in Vietnam aimed at developing not just proficient professionals but also socially responsible and culturally aware citizens.

Conclusion

Synopsis of results

This study demonstrates how Ho Chi Minh amalgamated cultural and revolutionary principles in literature and art, establishing an ideological framework that fostered social cohesion and individual fortitude. Ho Chi Minh highlighted the significance of art and literature as instruments for revolutionary transformation, creating a paradigm in which cultural expression served as a means of social and political involvement. His conviction in the interdependent relationship between culture and politics has significantly impacted Vietnam's cultural policies and educational methods, guaranteeing that literature and art persist in serving national objectives while maintaining Vietnamese identity.

Ho Chi Minh's concepts emphasise the significance of creative autonomy harmonised with social accountability, granting artists and writers the flexibility to investigate national concerns while ensuring their work aligns with the objectives of socialism and communal well-being. This ideology has significantly influenced Vietnam's cultural environment and has inspired global revolutionary movements, illustrating the international applicability of his concept.

Prospective research avenues

Subsequent research may investigate the application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology within modern cultural policies and educational frameworks, especially in relation to globalisation and technological advancements. As Vietnam's cultural and educational frameworks progress, it is essential to evaluate how Ho Chi Minh's ideals may persist in guiding national development while accommodating emerging problems. Comparative studies may also investigate the implementation of analogous ideologies in other nations, emphasising the worldwide influence of Ho Chi Minh's cultural philosophy and its viability as a framework for the integration of cultural, educational, and social policies across varied contexts.

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