

PROTESTANTISM IN THE COHO CHIL COMMUNITY IN LÂM ĐỒNG, VIETNAM

Abstract: *Based on the fieldwork data, the bibliographic analysis of missionaries, published scientific papers, the author presents the stages of evangelisation and Protestantism's impacts on the economic, social and cultural life of the Coho Chil (Cil) community in Lam Dong province. Research on Protestantism in the Coho Chil community, the earliest evangelical residents with the highest percentage of believers in Lam Dong, contributes to knowledge enrichment of the spread of Protestantism among the ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands.*

Keywords: *Protestantism; evangelisation; Coho Chil people; Lam Dong province; Central Highlands.*

Introduction

Since 1929, the evangelization of Protestantism has been introduced into the ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands, it was attached to the event that H. A. Jackson and his wife of *the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA)* arrived Dalat to establish the first missionary office in this area. By 2013, Protestantism attracted more than 441,000 ethnic minority believers¹; it became an important religious entity with many influences on the economy and society, culture of ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands.

So far, there have been many studies on Protestantism among ethnic minority in the Central Highlands in many different aspects such as Missionary history, religious activities and belief characteristics of believers, positive and negative effects of this religion on society, culture and political security in the Central Highlands region. These works have been comprehensively portrayed

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many aspects of Protestantism in the Central Highlands, provided a scientific basis for planning and implementing policies towards Protestantism in the Central Highlands and the whole country. However, most research on Protestantism in the Central Highlands often have an extensive approach for the whole region, wide surveys on many ethnic groups without many in-depth studies on evangelization process and influence of Protestantism on a specific ethnic group. Moreover, studies have been focused primarily on ethnic minority communities who have recently converted from traditional religion to Protestantism or the migrant Hmong community. There are not many works deeply investigating the communities that converted to Protestantism for a long time and stability. Therefore, the study of Protestantism among the community of Coho Chil people, one of the first evangelical communities and the largest proportion of Protestants in Lam Dong, will indicate causes of development and impacts of Protestantism on the life of ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands.

1. The evangelization process of Protestantism into the Coho Chil community

According to *the list of ethnic groups in Vietnam*, the Coho Chil is one of six groups of the Coho. The traditional residence of the Coho Chil people was mainly in the northeast mountainous areas of Lam Dong province. Since 1960, implementing the policy of “gathering people to set up hamlets”, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam (Việt Nam Cộng hòa) has conducted the evacuation of most of villages (bon) of the Coho Chil people from the traditional residence to concentrated areas, strategic hamlets closed to the centers and roads. After the reunification of the country, most of Coho Chil people did not return to the traditional villages, they were mostly settled in the old strategic hamlets. A part of them was migrated to a new place (by the government) with more favorable conditions for production and life. Through many changes, the Coho Chil people have recently resided in 5 districts (Đam Rông, Lạc Dương, Lâm Hà, Đơn Dương, Đức Trọng) and Da Lat city of Lam Dong province, with a population of 10,940 households and 56,143 people, accounted for about 20% of the ethnic minority population in Lam Dong².

Since the beginning of the 1930s, Protestantism has been introduced and gradually developed in the villages of Cõho Chil. Then, it has been spread to other ethnic groups in the Southern Central Highlands. Currently, exception for some Cõho Chi communities who keep the traditional religion or believe in Catholicism, more than 95% of the Cõho Chil people in Lam Dong have become Protestants formed a typical ethnic-religious community. Based on the evangelistic context, the characteristics of the missionary method and the development speed, it is possible to divide the Evangelical history of Protestantism among the Cõho Chil community into two major periods: from 1930 to 1975 and from 1975 to present.

1.1. The period from 1930 to 1975

1.1.1. From 1930 to 1955

Since arriving in Vietnam in 1911, one of the major concerns of the missionary strategy of the CMA has been the evangelization to the ethnic minorities. However, by 1929, this work officially began with the event that the American missionary couple Herbert A. Jackson of CMA arrived Dalat to build the Villa Alliance area for the CMA's missionaries in Indochina and their children where they could live, study and stay for summer vacations, and to establish the first missionary office for ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands. Then, there were some Vietnamese missionary couples sent by the Evangelical Church of Vietnam to support missionaries such asanguine Văn Tầm and his wife (since 1931) and Trịnh An Mẹo and his wife (since 1933), Phạm Văn Năm and his wife (since 1941). Da Lat became one of the two official missionary offices in the Southern Truong Son-the Central Highlands (along with Buon Ma Thuot), this region became a vibrant "missionary site" from the late 1920s to 1975³.

In the early period, Protestantism in Da Lat met the obstacle of the French colonial government due to fear of the United State of America's intervention in this area through the activities of the CMA's missionaries (they were mainly American and Canadian). On the other hand, as a result of human and financial difficulty, missionary activities mainly took place at the missionary headquarters

for the Montagnards working in Da Lat where missionaries had the opportunity to meet. Then, they actively trained these followers to become the pioneering force in spreading Protestantism to their own people and the neighboring ethnic groups with many similarities in their culture and language.

For example, in 1930, the missionaries met and evangelized to Mr. K'Sol, a Coho Srê, fluent in French and Vietnamese, from Srê Đăng village (in Ninh Loan commune, Đức Trọng district at present)⁴. Then, he introduced some of Coho Chil who were working as hired laborers on a farm in the outskirts of Da Lat to listen to the preacher H. A. Jackson preaching the gospel. A Bible class was organized and managed by H. A. Jackson to train these people to become missionaries. Among the first students, exception of K'Sol and his wife (the Coho Srê), 13 other couples were young Coho Chil (Ha Chu A, Ha Sao A, Ha Krong A, Ha Kring, Ha Brang, Ha Tiêng, Ha Húy, Ha Bang A, Ha Bang B, Ha Kê, Ha Hạ, Ha Đoi, Ha Krông B)⁵.

These Coho Chil people came to the class for about two months a year. For the rest of the time, they returned to evangelize in Coho Chil's villages scattered on the high mountains in the Northeast of Lam Dong province. These first believers were an important nucleus, played the role of "yeast in flour", helped the Protestantism to develop strongly in the community of Coho Chil people. Thanks to their active preaching activities, although there were many limitations on potentials, Protestantism was introduced into many villages of Coho Chil in the mountainous areas upstream of Krông Nô river, where Catholic priests were not able to reach.

A series of Protestant local Church of the Coho Chil was established such as Dạ Blah (in 1936), Kon Đổ - Liêng Đang (in 1938), Đông Briang (in 1947), Liêng Bông (in 1948), Chil Lú (in 1953). It was associated with the names of the pioneering missionaries of Coho Chil such as Ha Klas A, Ha Sao A, Ha Krong A, Ha Chu A. They did not only evangelize their ethnic group, they also actively evangelized some of the neighboring ethnic groups. Ha Sao A, Ha Kar, Ha Đoi C evangelized the Raglai people; Ha Kar evangelized

T'ring people in Bi Đốp; Ha Chú C evangelized the area of Coho Lạch on the bottom of Lang Biang mountain.

In addition to the activities of the Coho Chil missionaries (they played a major role), every year, in the dry season, the CMA missionaries and Vietnamese pastors, missionaries (from Da Lat) used to organize the evangelizing or training courses (visiting the converted villages to strengthen their faith) in some villages (bon) of Coho Chil in remote areas with the guidance and active support of the Coho Chil missionaries and believers. Each trip lasted for about ten days. At each village, they stayed for about 1 or 2 days, gathered the inhabitants to preach. In the process of evangelization, they paid special attention to prestigious people in the community such as village leaders (*cau kwǎng bon*), heads of clan (*cau kwǎng krǎ*), witches (*gru, pơ jâu*), etc., When these people believed, other members of the community would easily receive Protestantism. During missionary trips, the missionaries used to bring medicine to cure or help some poor families to create good impression.

In order to serve the missionary work, since the beginning years of evangelization in Dalat, Jackson, Pastor Nguyễn Văn Tầm worked with Mr. K'Sol to create letter for the Coho and to translate the Bible and the hymn to the Coho language. During this period, although the translation has not yet completed, the Bible and hymns have been popular within believers.

Thanks to the active evangelistic activities, the number of Coho Chil Protestants gradually increased, from 03 followers in 1930 to 2,000 followers in 1950 and 3,300 followers in 1955 (including 1,300 followers received Baptism)⁶. The Coho Chil became a group of residents with the largest number of Protestants in the Central Highlands⁷. In many places like Đơn Dương district, most of Coho Chil people have become Protestants⁸. These were great successes, created an important premise for Protestantism to more strongly develop in the community of Coho Chil in the period from 1955 to 1975.

1.1.2. From 1955 to 1975

Since 1960, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam implemented a forced migration policy, over 10,000 people of most of

the Coho Chil villages moved from the traditional residence area in remote mountainous areas to live in strategic hamlets which were set up in places with convenient traffic conditions to facilitate the management and prevention of supplies for revolutionary forces such as Đạ Me, Suối Thông, R'Chai, Đạ Sar, Đầm Ròn⁹.

Shifting from a isolated life in the mountainous area to a life in an unfamiliar strategic hamlets, there are many changes and difficulties in livelihoods that have made many Coho Chil feel insecure. Meanwhile, the traditional beliefs, a spiritual fulcrum, were no longer suitable with the new life context, gradually became "backwardness" that tied people to the taboos, the costly sacrificial rituals. It led to difficulties and crises in the spiritual life of a part of the Coho Chil people who did not convert. Besides, Protestantism with simple, low-cost rituals, appreciation of individual roles, respect for democracy was evangelizing in strategic hamlets with the support of United State forces and the active participation of many international Protestant organizations such as the Bible Society, World Vision International, etc. Therefore, this religion quickly attracted most of the non-protestant Coho Chil who were living in strategic hamlets. In 1965, the number of Christians Coho Chil increased to about 10,000 people with 3,100 baptized¹⁰, they mainly belonged to the CMA, other people followed the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They were the majority in the Protestant Coho community in Lâm Đồng¹¹.

In the strategic hamlets, Protestant churches were well organized. Many new churches were founded. The previous churches were strengthened, more strongly organized. The church was built in most of the Coho Chil areas, a strategic hamlet even had 3 or 4 churches such as Tiếng Liêng and N'thôl Hạ. Many children of believers were selected and sent to study at Dalat Bible School (founded in 1949), Nha Trang Alliance Evangelical Divinity School (inaugurated in 1962), they joined the Coho Chil dignitaries and preachers team. Many Coho Chil people of the second missionary generation also played a crucial role in evangelizing other ethnic groups in Trường Sơn - Tây Nguyên such as missionary Chil Múp Ha Kar evangelized the Stiêng ethnic people in Tân Rai commune, Bảo Lâm district;

missionary Ha Wãn propagated the H'rê ethnic people in Quảng Ngãi province; missionary Ha Chãn tutored boarders of the Raglai ethnic people, in Ninh Thuận province; missionary Ha Tông evangelized the M'ông people in ở Quảng Đức (Đắk Lắk province today)¹².

The prominent feature of this period is the evangelical activities closely associated with charitable activities, aid in order to keep previous followers and attract more new followers. A number of Protestant education and health facilities were established and operated near strategic areas and hamlets to support the missionary work. At Nam Thượng hạt headquarters in Tiềm Quân Thành road (Khe Sanh road today), many works were built or expanded such as the Bible School of the Cõho (Trường Trung cấp Kinh Thánh Cõho), Đồng Nai Thượng Primary School, medical station, dormitory for the Bible School, church of the Thượng people Evangelical Church, vocational school for indigenous people and its dormitory. A technical school for the Thượng's children named Chil- La- Ma- Srê Technical School (Trường kỹ thuật Chil - La - Ma - Srê) was built in 1967 in Đinh Văn town, Lâm Hà district (named of the four communities of the Cõho: Chil, Lạch, Mạ, Srê).

The translation and printing of the Bible, the hymn for the missionary work was also promoted. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (ISL) of the University of North Dakota and the Wycliffe Bible Translators from the United States have made great efforts in combining with the missionaries to study and create letter systems for a number of indigenous peoples in Vietnam to serve missionary works. In particular, the completion of the letter of the Cõho was particularly interested. Since 1954, the Protestant Printing House has been transferred from Hanoi to Da Lat, located next to the missionary office, supported the printing of parts of the Bible and the hymn in Cõho language. By April 1967, the Protestant Bible Society had printed 5,000 New Testament books in Cõho language and organized a dedication ceremony at the Protestant Church of Dalat at Hàm Nghi Street (Nguyễn Văn Trỗi Street today). This Bible series is the first one in the Thượng language in the Western Highlands¹³.

It can be said that until 1975, Protestantism has gained a status and faith in the Coho Chil community with a large number of followers and dignitaries. This is an important premise for this religion to continue to maintain silently in the period after 1975 and to recover and develop strongly in the mid-1980s.

1.2. From 1975 to 2017

After the reunification of the country on April 30, 1975, Protestantism in the Coho Chil community in particular, in the Central Highlands in general was allowed to activate normally like other religions. However, the situation became complicated after the FULRO organization rebelled, closely linked with many ethnic Protestant dignitaries, armed activities against the revolutionary government, led to unstable lives of people. In order to stabilize the situation, since 1977, the revolutionary government has been forced to suspend the operation of the administrative organization attached to the dignitaries of this religion. Local churches were disbanded, most churches were closed, pastoral activities suspended¹⁴. Therefore, during the period between 1977 and the mid-1980s, the Protestant activities among ethnic minorities in Lâm Đồng were reduced, the Protestant organizations were disbanded. However, most believers of the Coho Chil community still silently maintained their faith and religious practices, rituals at home and clan.

After nearly 10 years of quietness, since the mid-1980s, Protestantism has recovered and strongly developed in the Coho Chil community in the context of the country's economic reforms, innovation of policy on society and initial awareness and views about religion. In terms of not being recognized as a legal entity by the State, lack of external support, limited human and material resources compared to the period before 1975, Protestantism has implemented a flexible missionary strategy in associated with new context. The Protestantism has overcome the difficulties of the missionary team by training and ordaining people who were unfinished study at the Bible School of Đà Lạt, Nha Trang Alliance Evangelical Divinity School before 1975. Besides, Protestantism also selected new missionaries as

young people who were capable and active in religious activities to be trained to lead religious activities and to become pioneers in evangelisation. As a result, many local churches and groups of Protestant denominations in the Coho Chil community have recovered and strengthened their activities. Some Coho Chil communities who used to live in revolutionary bases also believe in Protestantism. In addition to the method of witnessing, dignitaries and Coho Chil Protestants actively evangelize the Coho Srê, the Churu people, the Mạ people who live in remote areas.. It led to the strong development of Protestantism during this period.

In 2001, the legal status recognition of the Government allowed the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) to operate legally, the Representative Board of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) in Lam Dong province, Course I (term between 2001 to 2003) was established with 3 members: 01 director and 01 vice-director (a Coho Chil pastor), 01 commissioner (a Vietnamese pastor). Since, the activities of groups and local churches of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) have been gradually stabilized. In particular, after the Prime Minister's Directive No.01/2005/CT-TTg on *Some Affaires towards Protestantism*, the activities of Protestant denominations among the Coho Chil communities have been active compliance with the law. According to the statistics of the Committee for Religious Affaires of Lâm Đồng Province, by the end of 2017, the Coho Chil Protestants were 39,139 people out of a total of 98,363 Protestants in the province (accounting for nearly 40 percent), 50 local churches, 62 groups; The Coho Chil dignitaries consisted of 32 pastors, 21 sub-pastors (nhiệm chức), 12 missionaries and 12 elders (trưởng lão)¹⁵, the largest among the Protestant dignitaries in Lam Dong. The majority of Coho Chil Protestants belonged to the two denominations have been spreading before 1975 that the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) with 31,700 followers and The Seventh-day Adventist Church with 7,194 followers.

Thus, over 80 years of missionary, Protestantism has formed a significant ethnic-religious community in the area of the Coho Chil in Lâm Đồng province.

2. The influence of Protestantism on the economy, society and culture of the Coho Chil people

The introduction of Protestantism, a religion associated with Reformation of Christianity and the process of modernization in the West, has created many changes in the economic, social and cultural life of the Coho Chil community. As a community with a long history and most of them converted to Protestantism, the influence of Protestantism in the Coho Chil also has different characteristics from those of other ethnic minority communities who newly converted to the Protestantism in the Central Highlands.

In terms of economy, although Protestantism does not directly build the effective economic models or conduct the support production for believers, it is a religion associated with modernization, with the outstanding feature is “rationality”, it has an indirect impact to change the way of thinking which has a positive influence to the followers’ economic activity. Firstly, Protestantism led to changes in notion of labor, wealth, richness, labor division, production efficiency, product distribution, awareness of personal values which brought changes in the attitude of life and organization of the community’s life towards a rationality and modernization to meet the needs of modern society. Moreover, pastors and preachers often integrate the doctrinal content in lectures with the advices believers to do business, diligence, saving, applying sciences to production, hygiene breeding facilities. It helps believers change their awareness in production activities, improve family economy have better conditions to serve God.

In the Coho Chil Protestant community, the religious organizations and traditional community institutions are combined and intertwined. The structure of the local churches is mostly organized on the basis of traditional villages (*bon*), the names of the local churches are also the names of the old villages such as Liêng Bông, Bon Rôm, Đa Lơ Nghị, Tiêng Liêng, etc., and followers are those with the same old villages. Many heads of clans and village patriarchs are also deacons and missionaries, preachers or they are often faithful and diligent followers. Because, if they are not active and do not have prestige in

the religious activities of the Church, they will have difficulty in establishing prestige in clan and community. They also often discussed with pastors on dealing with the problems of the clans and communities, the rules of traditional customary law are often combined with the teachings of Protestantism. Therefore, it is not easy to distinguish between religious institutions and traditional social institutions in the Coho Chil community¹⁶.

Religious dignitaries and members of the Executive Board (Ban Chấp sự) are often those who are well educated, have a wide social relationship, have a healthy lifestyle (do not smoke, drink alcohol, have a happy family life, etc.). It has formed the elite class who are respected and trusted by the community. Protestants often ask them for advices and help when they encounter difficulties in life or in great evens of family or individuals such as marriage, funerals, conflict reconciliation. They do not only lead religious and spiritual life, they also play a crucial role in guiding believers in socio-politic and economic activities, orienting community life and participating in reconciliation disputes, friction. In the life of the Coho Chil Protestant community, besides the key role of official institutions and the laws of the State, the influence of religious institutions, doctrines and teachings is also important in many demensions.

Today, most of the Coho Chil people in Lam Dong are Protestants, they mainly belong to the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This religion has created a homogeneous ethnic-religious community. Thus, there is almost no divisions and social conflicts within the community, ethnicity, clan between Protestants and non-Protestants, among the Protestant denominations as it has often seen the ethnic minority communities who have just converted. In contrast, religion as a catalyst adds to the cohesion, because in addition to the same clan relationship, their relationship is tightened by sharing a faith, doctrines and religious practices.

Protestantism also plays an important role in increasing social capital and expanding social networks of Coho Chil followers. The religious activities of local churches as well as of the inter-local

churches are opportunities for exchange, learn from each other, increase social capital. The relationship of believers, from different ethnic groups, localities in the province who do many different careers, also helps to expand the social network of the Coho Chil Protestant (it was previously confined to traditional villages). In addition to the support of family members, clan and the community when encountering difficulties in life such as sickness and tribulation, the Coho Chil Protestants receive support and encouragement from fellow practitioners (người đồng đạo). Social capital and social network has created by religious factor. It has played a significant role for the Coho Chil believers in the contemporary context of economy and society.

Protestantism also contributes to the loss of the bad customs in community activities. When following Protestantism, the Coho Chil believers gave up many “backward customs” in the funeral, marriage and medical treatment with “magic methods” (the role of the mystery-men in traditional society has lost). In fact, in the past years, dignitaries of local churches have actively cooperated with local authorities and organizations to effectively mobilize the Coho Chil believers to abolish many backward customs and practice a new cultural life: do not smoke, do not drink, promote moral lifestyle, encourage young people to study hard and practice hygiene. In addition, Protestantism is also a means to convey external cultural values, contributes to formation a lifestyle in accordance with the norm of contemporary life like saving, democracy, upholding the personal role in the community. The religious activities of Protestantism such as attending church, singing hymn, playing organ, activities according to age, gender, have met the spiritual needs and the demand for entertainment, community activities, sharing and cohesion among people in the context of traditional cultural and spiritual activities decreased in a contemporary society.

Besides many positive impacts, Protestantism also has some negative impacts on preserving and promoting the traditional cultural values and identities of the Coho Chil people. Protestantism is a monotheistic religion, association with the modern world, promoting

the process of modernization, so during the missionary work, Protestant dignitaries often attacked, condemned the traditional polytheistic belief and system of rituals associated with that belief. Since it has led to the formation of psychological believers that what is attached to tradition is backward; it is necessary to condemn and abolish what is contrary to the Protestant faith. Although it does not have undertakings to abolish the traditional cultural identity, in fact, the replacement of folk festivals and activities with ritual practices of Protestantism in the Coho Chil community for a long time has gradually lost traditional cultural values expressed in festivals, music, folk performances, led to the situation of cultural assimilation. However, the strong transformation of traditional cultural values and identities did not only take place in the Coho Chil Protestant community but it is also a common phenomenon that occurred in many non-Protestant ethnic minority groups in the Central Highlands due to the impact of many different factors such as the changes of socio-economic context, living space and the livelihood, the process of coexistence with Kinh people, crisis of the traditional cultural system.

At present, many dignitaries and Coho Chil Protestants have awared that maintenance some traditional cultural elements of ethnicity does not affect or against the faith. It also helps to form a Protestant ethnic minority community with its identity. Therefore, some Coho Chil Protestant local churches had specific work to affirm their identity like using Stem wine jars (rượu cần) as flower jars to decorate the church, using Brocade (vải thổ cẩm) to decorate the sacred table, wearing traditional costumes when attending church, allowing and encouraging believers to use gongs in some cultural activities outside the church space such as playing gongs to welcome guests in the wedding. It can be said that the early missionary period with relatively extreme views and behaviors, the current Coho Chil Protestant community has a tolerant and comprehensive view of the traditional cultural values. It is a sign of the trend of adaptation and integration between Protestant culture and ethnic culture in the Central Highlands as mentioned by a researcher¹⁷.

In terms of security and politics, Protestantism in the Coho Chil community created instabilities in the relationship between the Kinh and Highlanders (Thượng). Historically, the evangelization in the Coho Chil community in Lâm Đồng in particular, in the ethnic minorities of the Central Highlands in general has always been associated with conspiring to divide the Kinh and Highlanders relationship. For example, the Coho Chil Protestant dignitaries involved in the activities of FULRO forces in Lâm Đồng in the period from 1975 to 1986. However, in my opinion, the issue of Protestantism in the Central Highlands is not only a consequence of political intrigue but it is also a religious, cultural and social issue related to ethnicity.

Conclusion

Among ethnic minorities in the South Central Highlands (Nam Tây Nguyên), Protestantism was firstly propagated into the Coho Chil community in Lâm Đồng. Before 1975, most of the Coho Chil villages gave up traditional belief to follow Protestantism. Achievements of Protestantism in the Coho Chil community were derived from many objective and subjective reasons. The early period of evangelization, Protestantism did not encounter competition of Catholicism; the missionary context had many advantages; missionary method is suitable. In particular, in my opinion, the most important reason is that the characteristics and doctrinal content, religious practices of Protestantism are suitable and meet the religious needs of the Coho Chil when the traditional belief has gradually lost its role. In other words, because of meeting the spiritual needs of the Coho Chil people, this religion has strongly developed in the community. The strong development of Protestantism in the Coho Chil- the residents have scattered residence in the forests, mountain, the most difficult and backward life among the ethnic groups in the South Central Highlands, are impacted by many fluctuations of political and social factors - is also a testament to the popular phenomenon in the world: backward community, sufferings of many changes of the socio-economic context, a difficult life is one of the fertile lands for the Gospel to be “sowed” and developed.

Because of its long history, deep and stable faith, the Coho Chil believers still silently maintained their faith and religious activities at the individual and family level in the context of Vietnamese society after 1975, although it was dissolved in terms of organization. Since the mid-1980s, when the country implemented economic and social reforms and international integration, this religion has been quickly recovered in terms of religious activities and organization. At the same time, the Coho Chil dignitaries and believers has also been the most powerful force, has played a nuclear role in expanding and developing this religion to ethnic minorities in the South Central Highlands until now.

The conversion to Protestantism, has created many positive changes in economy, society and lifestyle, on the other hand, it has led to decrease of traditional cultural values, ethnic identity expressed in festivals, music, folk performances. However, in recent years, at some Protestant local churches, the Cơ ho Chil people have also had specific trends and activities to partly integrate the Protestant culture with the ethnic culture. /.

NOTES:

- 1 Chu Văn Tuấn (Subject leader, 2014), *Religious Issues in Sustainable Development of the Central Highlands* (Vấn đề tôn giáo trong phát triển bền vững Tây Nguyên), A science subject at State level of program TN3, p. 79.
- 2 Data of *the Workshop of self-awareness of the Coho Chil People* organized by the Institute of Ethnic Minorities - the Committee for Ethnic Minorities of the Government and Committee for Ethnic Minorities of Lâm Đồng Province, November 20, 2012.
- 3 Nguyễn Xuân Hùng (2014), “Evangelization of Protestantism in Ethnic Minorities in the Southern Truong Son- Central Highlands from its beginning until 1975”, *Nghiên cứu Tôn giáo*, N^o. 4 (130), p. 105.
- 4 After his conversion, Mr. K’Sol stayed in the missionary headquarters in charge of language teaching and translated the Bible into Coho language. Later, he became the first Montagnard to be ordained a pastor.
- 5 Documents are archived at Bon Rom local church (N’tôl Hạ Commune, Đức Trọng District, Lâm Đồng Province)
- 6 Đỗ Hữu Nghiêm (1995), *Protestantism in the Central Highlands - Southern Truong Son* (Tin Lành ở Tây Nguyên Nam Trường Sơn), unpublished document, archived at Southern Institute of Social Sciences, Vietnam, pp. 72, 78.
- 7 In his work, Pastor Dr. Le Hoang Phu said that in 1955, the Thượng Du church reported a total of 5,978 followers with 2,468 people being baptized. (see: Lê

- Hoàng Phu (2010), *History of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (1911-1965)*, Religious publisher, Hanoi, pp. 348, 355). Therefore, the Coho Chil accounted for 55,2% and 52,6% people being baptized in Thượng Du church. Although these statistics are only relative, they have also shown the strong development of the Protestant in the area of Coho Chil in Lâm Đồng Province.
- 8 Đỗ Hữu Nghiêm (1995), *Protestantism in the Central Highlands - Southern Truong Son*, ibid, p. 72.
 - 9 Mạc Đường (Chief Author, 1983), *Vấn đề dân tộc ở Lâm Đồng* (Ethnic issues in Lam Dong), Lâm Đồng Department of Culture and Sport publishing, p. 82.
 - 10 Đỗ Hữu Nghiêm (1995), *Protestantism in the Central Highlands - Southern Truong Son*, ibid, p. 81.
 - 11 According to Lê Hoàng Phu, in 1965, the Coho Churches included Coho Chil, Lạch, Srê, T'ring... accounted for 12,625 believers (200% compared to 1955) with 3,551 people were baptized (130% compared to 1955) [see: Lê Hoàng Phu (2010), ibid, p. 355.
 - 12 Lê Minh Quang (2011), "Protestantism in Lâm Đồng in the period from 1929 to 1965" (Tin Lành ở Lâm Đồng giai đoạn 1929-1975), *Công tác Tôn giáo*, N^o. 5, p. 19.
 - 13 Phạm Văn Năm (2012), *Dedicating one's Life (Dâng trọn cuộc đời)*, Pub: Phương Đông, p. 103; Đỗ Hữu Nghiêm (1995), ibid, p. 129.
 - 14 Nguyễn Đức Hiệp (Subject Leader, 2014), *Protestantism and Stable Development in the Ethnic Minority Areas of Lam Dong Province (Tin Lành và việc ổn định phát triển trong vùng đồng bào dân tộc thiểu số tỉnh Lâm Đồng)*, A science subject at Province level, Lâm Đồng Department of Sciences and Technology, p. 49.
 - 15 In our opinion, the statistics on the population of Coho Chil in general as well as the number of Coho Chil Protestants are only relative. Based on the official point of view of the State, the Coho Chil people are considered as a group of the Coho, since some localities have merged them with the other groups of Coho. In the statistics of the Committee for Religious Affairs of Lam Dong province, although there was a separate column of Coho Chil group, there were many churches of Coho Chil people listed in the column of Coho. In fact, the number of Coho Chil Protestants and dignitaries is much higher than this figure. Combining field survey materials with a summary of statistical data, we found that there were about 2,000 Coho Chil Catholics residing in Đưng K'nớh commune (Lạc Dương district), Mê Linh commune and Đạ Đờn commune (Lâm Hà district), and about 500 non-believers in Đạ Chais commune (Lạc Dương district), the other Coho Chil people were Protestants.
 - 16 Phạm Thanh Thôi (2014), "Social change of the Coho Chil people in Lam Dong" (Biến đổi xã hội của người Coho Chil ở Lâm Đồng), *Phát triển Khoa học Công nghệ*, Ho Chi Minh City National University, Vol. 17, N^o. X4, p. 77.
 - 17 Đỗ Quang Hưng (2011), "Some Issues about Protestantism in the Central Highlands" (Một số vấn đề về Tin Lành ở Tây Nguyên), *Khoa học xã hội Tây Nguyên*, N^o. 2, p. 11.

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