

# Ho Chi Minh Cult: An Invention of Tradition

**Wednesday, 22 November 13:30-15:00**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Mid-sized Meeting Room, Inamori Bldg, CSEAS**

胡志明傳



“What can I do? The people need a god,” said the Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party Joseph Stalin as he was endeavoring to wipe out religious traditions in the Soviet Union. As occurred in many other countries where communist parties came to power, the Vietnamese communists dismissed preexisting deities when they established their rule in North Vietnam, for these did not correspond to their ideology and policy goals. After the August Revolution in 1945 that established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), also known as North Vietnam, its first president, Ho Chi Minh, became the center of a newly created political religion that was essential in establishing and cementing Vietnamese statehood and that eventually became part of the Vietnamese religious landscape. In this talk, I explore the main means (and ends) of the creation of Ho Chi Minh's cult of personality in Vietnam and abroad focusing on its aesthetics and the most salient features: the representation of his personality and political role.



**Olga Dror**  
CSEAS Visiting Research Scholar

Educated in the Soviet Union, Israel, and the United States, Olga Dror is a professor of history at Texas A&M University and currently a fellow at CSEAS. She has authored, translated, and co-edited five books and numerous articles. The focus of her research ranges from Vietnamese and Chinese theistic religions and European missionaries in Asia in early modern times to the study of the civilian experience during the Tet Offensive in Hue, to North and South Vietnamese youth during the Second Indochina War to political religions. Her most recent monograph *Making Two Vietnams: War and Youth Identities, 1965-1975* was published in 2018 by Cambridge University Press. Her articles have appeared in the leading journals of several fields *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, *Journal of Social History*, *Journal of Cold War Studies*. Among her awards are a National Endowment for Humanities Fellowship, a Henry Luce National Humanities Center Fellowship, a fellowship of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Nantes, France, and a Dan David International Fellowship.

No  
Reservation  
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