CHAPTER 9

The Noble Person and the Revolutionary

Living with Confucian Values in Contemporary Vietnam

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AT A CONFERENCE in Hanoi in 2012 on research methods for studies on Confucianism, a couple of papers were presented on President Hồ Chí Minh and Confucian teachings. During the discussion on this topic, a participant brought to the audience's attention the case of the well-known medical doctor and political activist Nguyễn Khắc Viện, who was seriously criticized in North Vietnam in the 1960s for figuring out, in an essay, Confucian elements in Hồ Chí Minh's thought. Rereading Viện's essay, titled "Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam," together with his notes added to the text later in 1984, we can retrieve some traces of a downturn period for Confucianism in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). Examining how the essay and its author have been treated throughout different phases of recent history, we can see the changing attitudes toward Confucianism, the opposing public points of view on it as part of socialist leadership, and the diverse standpoints of Vietnamese intellectuals under the influence of prevalent sociopolitical discourses.

Equally interesting is Nguyễn Khắc Viện's analysis of passages cited from Hồ Chí Minh's handbook *Let's Change Our Methods of Work*. The citations comprise a set of moral values put under the name of "Revolutionary Virtues," and they are unquestionably the modifications of Confucian cardinal moralities. Thus, these "revolutionary virtues" epitomize the revolutionization of Confucian pivotal virtues, which makes them more effective for and suitable to new revolutionary tasks. Through Hồ Chí Minh's revolutionization of Confucian moral values, it is not hard to see an enduring of Confucianism in

his ideological foundation, and this is a universal feature shared by East Asian leaders, no matter which ideology they are pursuing. Furthermore, the core of Confucian virtues remains as a powerful force to unite people around a leadership that skillfully employs it in East Asian society. All these arguments will be justified through the scrutiny of Hồ Chí Minh's Confucian foundation and his cardinal revolutionary moral values as explained in *Let's Change Our Methods of Work*.

Introductory Remarks

In 1962, the French journal *La Pensée,* a quarterly review of "modern rationalism" founded in Paris, published a feature essay titled "Confucianisme et Marxisme au Vietnam" (Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam) (*La Pensée,* no. 105 [October 1962]) by Vietnamese pediatrician and political activist Nguyễn Khắc Viện (1913–1997). It was later translated into English in 1974,[1] and subsequently became Viện's most widely read work. Ironically, however, it was not available in Vietnamese translation until 1993, more than three decades after its initial publication[2] and about seven years after the implementation of Đổi Mới (Renovation) policy in Vietnam.[3] The 1993 Vietnamese edition included a short but significant note from the translators, who observed that the essay "has been translated into many languages. That year [1962], the Sự Thật Publishing House[4] in Hanoi translated it into Vietnamese, but did not publish it."[5] Although the translators offered no explanation for the three-decade delay in publication, Nguyễn Khắc Viện himself offered a few hints in an appendix to the 1993 volume. The appendix, which Viện had drafted during the 1980s, proposed "to review a few crucial points from the previous essay before discussing other issues." Viện first restated the main argument that he had advanced in 1962, and acknowledged that his thesis had provoked controversy:

> Confucianism paved the way with auspicious conditions for the introduction of Marxism [into Vietnam]. This is an argument that has caused many "waves and winds." The main argument is that unlike other religions, [the aim of] Confucianism is to direct human beings' thought completely into social life; therefore it stands on the same page with Marxists. If we are able to convince a Confucian that Marxism can realize all the social ideals that he has ever thought of, this Confucian should be willing to decline Confucianism and accept Marxism. Meanwhile, socially persuading a Christian, a Buddhist, or a Muslim remains insufficient, because persuasion cannot provide them with an answer about the transcendental afterlife. Like Marxists, Confucians do not raise such a question.[6]

As a way of defending his argument, Viện identified two main historical aspects of Confucian thought. The first and most foundational aspect was the essentially humane quality of Confucianism, which emphasized the ideal of human social improvement. The second and far less appealing aspect of Confucianism had to do with its recasting as a bureaucratic ideology of governance. Viện summed up this difference as follows: "one is the mandarin's Confucianism, and the other the scholar's." According to Viện, the first aspect of Confucianism—its fundamental humanity—was particularly apparent in the Confucian background of Communist Party founder Hồ Chí Minh. Viện argued that this claim regarding Hồ's affinity for Confucianism had been the main reason that his essay had not previously been published in Vietnam.

Due to their lack of awareness of these two trends, a number of people have blotted out the historical role of Confucianism, upholding that since its beginning, Confucianism has only played a negative role antithetical to the so-called folk-thought. Armed as these people are with such a prejudice, whenever they hear someone asserting the proximity between Confucianism and Marxism, or, more seriously, mentioning some Confucian elements in President Hồ's thought, they will treat [these allegations] as "heresies" or "insubordinations."

To back up his claims about Hồ's embrace of Confucianism, Nguyễn Khắc Viện also cited at length a few passages from a 1948 handbook authored by Hồ titled *Sửa đổi lề lối làm việc* (Let's change our methods of work). In this text, Hồ undertook to transform pivotal Confucian values into revolutionary moral concepts. An investigation of Viện's essay, coupled with an analysis of Hồ's handbook, reveals some of the ways in which Vietnamese intellectuals and political elites undertook to adapt core elements of Confucian morality into a revolutionary ethical system.

Nguyễn Khắc Viện and His Essay

According to the autobiographical account in his book *Đạo và đời* (The way and life), Nguyễn Khắc Viện was born into "a laureate family."[7] His father Nguyễn Khắc Niêm (1889–1954) passed the imperial examination at a very young age in 1907, with the title of Metropolitan Graduate with Honors, and then served as a mandarin of the Nguyễn dynasty, but did not want his son to follow in his footsteps. Viện was sent to a Franco-Vietnamese elementary school, and later attended high school in Vinh, Huế, and Hanoi. After studying in Hanoi's Medical School for three years (1934–1937), Viện continued his study in Paris. Having earned his medical degrees in pediatrics and tropical diseases in 1940 and 1941, respectively, he became active in the politics of the overseas Vietnamese community in France. Suffering from tuberculosis, Viện had to undergo seven surgeries between 1943 and 1948: eight of his ribs,

the entirety of his right lung, and one-third of his left lung were removed, and doctors warned him that he had at most two years to live. But instead of surrendering to this miserable fate, Viện consulted various "books on Eastern and Western philosophies," and finally adopted the technique of "breathing with the stomach" as a treatment for his aliments. In 1949, as Viện was recovering, he joined the French Communist Party. This was a significant political landmark in Nguyễn Khắc Viện's life, and he would later describe himself as "rooted in Confucianism but equipped with [the] experimental science that is liberal democracy and Marxism."[8]

As the secretary general and Communist Party secretary of the Overseas Vietnamese Federation in France from 1952 to 1963, Nguyễn Khắc Viện was a leader of the Vietnamese liberation movement in France, and contributed to notable French journals such as *La Pensée, La Nouvelle critique, Démocratie nouvelle,* and *Europe.* His essay "Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam" was written during this time, coincident with the construction of "the initial foundation of socialism" in North Vietnam and "the struggle against [the] U.S. neocolonialism regime" in South Vietnam.[9] Recalling the causes and conditions of his essay's composition, Viện writes:

> On the occasion of a discussion with writer Albert Camus, I raised the question on the relationship between Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam. I presented a few arguments. First, Confucianism actually had two trends; one was humane/anthropocentric [*nhân bản* 人本], and the other feudal [*phong kiến* 封建]. Second, although differing from one another, Marxism and Confucianism share a common point [in] that [each] directs human thought toward the improvement of social organization, and the construction of relationships among people, but makes no claims about where the soul goes after death, whether [to] heaven or hell. Hence, if persuaded, those who follow Confucian teaching can accept Marxism. Based on these observations, I wrote an essay printed in the journal *La Pensée* in 1962. This work received a lot of attention from the public within and outside Vietnam because the way it posed questions was not as rigidly dogmatic as the style favored by many Party authors during that period. Some brothers from Sự Thật ["Truth"] Publishing House also suggested that the work be translated and published, but they could not obtain permission and had to abandon the idea.[10]

In addition to reiterating his main point about the basic compatibility of Confucianism and Marxism, Nguyễn Khắc Viện also specified the adaptability and relevance of Confucianism in a new society founded on Marxist philosophy. Trained with the anthropocentric and collectivistic spirit of Confucian-

ism, Vietnamese Confucian scholars, according to Viện, saw no conflict in their transition from the teaching of Confucius to the doctrine of Karl Marx. Viện's bifurcation of Confucianism into "humane/anthropocentric" versus "feudal" traditions was designed to legitimate it in the new socialist Vietnam. Yet it was the very distinctiveness of the essay's claims that had triggered the negative reactions against it.

Due to his antiwar activities, Nguyễn Khắc Viện was expelled from France and returned to Vietnam in 1963. Around the same time, the Ninth Plenum of the Vietnam Worker's Party passed a Resolution on "The International Situation and the Party's International Duties," which called on the Party to fight against opportunism, revisionism, dogmatism, and sectarianism.[11] Viện later described the political atmosphere in North Vietnam at that time as fraught with tension and suspicion:

> When I returned [to Vietnam], people in the country were conducting a course on learning Resolution Nine against revisionism. Since I had just come back, I did not yet fully understand the Party's internal situation. [The transfer of] my Party membership was also not yet accepted. [Vietnamese] members of the French Communist Party who had returned to Vietnam before 1960 only needed to complete a couple of formalities, and quickly joined the Vietnamese Party. However, as there occurred the problem of fighting against "revisionists" starting from 1960, European parties were regarded as "revisionist," and consequently Party members coming home from European countries had to endure a trial period [to verify if they were qualified to join the Vietnamese Communist Party]. The political situation of 1963 was truly quite complicated.[12]

Although Nguyễn Khắc Viện did not explicitly link the suppression of the Vietnamese version of his essay to the 1960s domestic context in North Vietnam, such a political situation was evidently unfavorable for the publication of his work.[13]

After his return, Viện eventually gained admission to the Party and was placed in charge of the Foreign Language Publishing House in Hanoi, where he became "an interpreter of Vietnamese history, culture, and the Vietnamese struggle to the many intellectuals, militants, and journalists sympathetic to Vietnam who visited Hanoi during the Vietnam War, from 1965 to 1975." In this role, he was "one of the Vietnamese scholars who did most to interpret Vietnam for the West."[14] Although he rejoiced at the end of the war and the reunification of the country in 1975, Viện remained critical of whatever was detrimental to the development of the nation. During the period from 1976 to 1993, he submitted about thirty recommendations, comments, and letters discussing various

critical issues of the country and calling for reforms to leaders of the Party, the National Assembly, and the Government. These documents were not released to the public at the time, and only a portion of them was recently published.[15] In 1992, in keeping with the implementation of the Đổi mới policy, the Party's General Secretary Đỗ Mười had several meetings with various audiences, assuring them that the Party would welcome divergent ideas from the people.[16] It is probably not coincidental that in the following year, 1993, Thế Giới Publishers (formerly Viện's Foreign Language Publishing House) printed the Vietnamese translation of his essay together with some of his other writings in a book titled *Bàn về đạo Nho* (On Confucianism).

The publication of Nguyễn Khắc Viện's book *On Confucianism* in 1993 should be examined in relation to the broader reappraisal of Confucianism in connection with its alleged contribution to the rise of the "Four Asian Tigers" (alternatively, "Four Asian Little Dragons")—Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan. As early as 1974, Edwin O. Reischauer attributed the economic success of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore to a number of key traits easily linked to Confucian values.[17] In his "1984's Supplemental Notes," Viện mentioned *en passant* that "a Japanese scholar[18] has also formed the argument that Confucianism has helped nations like Japan, Taiwan, [and] Korea easily move toward modernity."[19] In the same vein as these observations, *Le Nouveau monde sinisé* (The new sinicized world) by French scholar Léon Vandermeersch was translated into Vietnamese in 1992, reconfirming the appreciation of Confucianism within an Asian framework.[20] More than thirty years after he first wrote it, Viện's essay seemed to be reaching Vietnamese readers at a propitious moment. Four years later, in 1997, its author passed away at the age of eighty-four.

In a section of the 1962 essay called "Confucians and Marxists," Nguyễn Khắc Viện painted a picture of Vietnam's first Marxists. In most cases, these revolutionaries were "petty intellectuals," educated in the Franco-Vietnamese education system but "forced to end their studies before taking their baccalaureate exams." In other cases, they were "village teachers, often at private schools, just like the scholars of old."[21] Having grown up in the Confucian tradition, these Vietnamese Marxist cadres often appreciated and integrated Confucian principles of political morality into their revolutionary lives:

> The notion that leaders should exemplify high moral standards was deeply engrained in Confucian countries. . . . [Today's Marxists] still recite Confucian sayings: "Do not be corrupted by wealth," "Do not succumb in the face of adversity," "Do not bow your head before demonstrations of force."[22]

To support this contention, Viện quoted long passages from a handbook called *Sửa đổi lề lối làm việc* (Let's change our methods of work) that was employed as a main material for the Party's cadre training during the national liberation war in the late 1940s. Although Viện did not mention the identity of the writer of the handbook, Hồ Chí Minh (under the pen name of X.Y.Z.) is widely known to have been its author. And even though the reason why the author's name is omitted remains unknown, the cited passages in Viện's essay clearly showed how Hồ had transformed pivotal Confucian moral values into key virtues required for the revolutionary. Before examining their transformation in detail, let us do a quick review of Hồ Chí Minh's attitude toward Confucianism.

The Issue of the Noble Man and the Revolutionary

A number of Vietnamese scholars have written about Hồ Chí Minh and Confucianism since the 1990s.[23] The opening of a 1993 essay titled "Nguyễn Ái Quốc—Hồ Chí Minh với Nho giáo" (Nguyễn Ái Quốc—[also known as] Hồ Chí Minh and Confucianism) by Nguyễn Đình Chú points out that

> There exists something strange in the following case: Confucianism had had a predestined affinity with Nguyễn Ái Quốc since his childhood, and followed Hồ Chí Minh to the end of his life; and although the discipline "Hồ Chí Minh Studies" was founded and has been developing for about thirty years, the recognition of Confucian influence on Nguyễn Ái Quốc—Hồ Chí Minh—was officially promoted only three years ago (1990), on the occasion of the commemoration of the centenary of his birth. Perhaps the title of "Cultural Personality" that the world offered him on the occasion of this commemoration[24] plus the atmosphere of renovation started after the Sixth National Plenum of the Communist Party of Vietnam have helped us to overcome that abnormal thing.[25]

The Confucian background of Hồ Chí Minh has recently been lauded as a key part of his commitment to patriotic tradition. According to an official biography of Hồ Chí Minh (announced on the website of the Ho Chi Minh Museum), Hồ "was born into a *family of patriotic Confucian scholars,* and grew up in a locality that had a patriotic tradition of valorous fighting against aggression."[26] Thus, we may wonder what Hồ Chí Minh himself thought of Confucianism.

In a conversation with Russian poet and essayist Osip E. Mandelstam (1891–1938) in Moscow in 1923, Nguyễn Ái Quốc (the future Hồ Chí Minh) offered an understanding of Confucianism framed within a Vietnamese context:

> I was born into a Vietnamese Confucian family. . . . The youth from those families often studied Confucianism. Comrade, you must know that Confucianism is not a religion but a science of moral experience and conduct. Based on this foundation, one puts forward the notion of the "Great Unity."[27]

Mandelstam recorded these words in an interview-like essay under the title "Visiting an International Communist Warrior—Nguyễn Ái Quốc." For Mandelstam, the view of Confucianism as "a science of moral experience and conduct" plus the Confucian goal of the "Great Unity" in Nguyễn Ái Quốc's narrative were highly suitable to communist ideals.

Hồ Chí Minh regarded Confucianism as part of his life. In a speech presented at the ceremony to celebrate the National Unity Front (Liên hiệp quốc gia) organized by the Buddhist Association for National Salvation (Hội Phật giáo cứu quốc) on January 5, 1946, Hồ claimed that " As Buddhists believe in Buddha, [and] Christians believe in God, *we believe in the teaching of Confucius.* Those are the most venerated to whom we entrust."[28] Later, during an interview with Vasidev Rao of Reuters in May 1947, when asked whether Hồ Chí Minh's government would include members of all social classes and parties in order to reach a political solution for a Vietnamese-French relationship, Hồ asserted that "*Hồ Chí Minh may pursue Marxism, or follow Confucianism,* but the Vietnamese government still comprises representatives of all parties and even those who belong to no party at all."[29]

Among the extant writings collected in *Hồ Chí Minh: The Complete Works* (*Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập*), there survives a short article titled "Confucius," published in 1927.[30] This article expressed Hồ's reaction to the Chinese Nationalist Government's decision "to henceforth abolish all ceremonies commemorating Confucius as well as projected expenses for those rituals, and to use all temples of Confucius as public schools." Hồ's reaction in this particular case was based not only on his political standpoint, but also on his general understanding of Confucius and Confucianism. According to the article, the Chinese Nationalist Government's official order was issued on February 15, 1927.[31] Hồ Chí Minh (also known as Ly Thuy around that time) wrote the article in Guangzhou—the former seat of the Nationalist Government, and commented on the abolition of the ceremonial ritual clearly from a communist perspective. The Nationalist Government's order discussed in Hồ's article was the beginning of an ideological policy that would be widespread in China in the next few years, pinpointing Confucius' political shortcomings, and reevaluating the contributions of Confucianism to the development of China through history.[32] Ho's response to this policy was decidedly mixed. While he seemed prepared to accept the abolition

of Confucianism as a political doctrine, he argued that it could and should be preserved as a system of moral values:

> With the abolition of rituals commemorating Confucius, the Chinese government has dropped an old institution that goes against the spirit of democracy. For us, the Vietnamese, let us perfect ourselves spiritually by reading Confucius' works, and revolutionarily reading Lenin's works is a must.[33]

Eighteen years later, as the provisional president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Hồ Chí Minh had the chance to formally pay respect to Confucius and his teaching in a revolutionary spirit and style. As the head of the new state, standing against colonialism and feudalism, in David Marr's words "Hồ was quite selective when it came to participation in commemorations, reflecting the national persona he was crafting for himself."[34] Nonetheless, on October 21, 1945, President Hồ invited the former emperor, Bảo Đại, who had previously announced his abdication, and was currently serving as a "Supreme Adviser" to the new DRV, to accompany him to Hanoi's Giám Temple (also known as the Temple of Literature, dedicated to Confucius) and attend the Autumn Ritual commemorating the Sage. It was worth mentioning that not only Vietnamese government officers but also high-ranking Chinese officials took part in this annual commemoration. It was also noteworthy that Hồ Chí Minh played the role of the ritual host, and that the commemoration "was carried out with a specifically new spirit" through several reformed rituals, reflecting the "breaking with bad feudal practices to follow the path of revolutionary democracy."[35]

The fusion of Confucian and revolutionary values was prevalent indeed during the early years of the DRV. Perhaps the best evidence of this appears in the reworking of the concept of "noble person" (*junzi/quân tử* 君子) in official DRV discourse. Only about three weeks after the commemoration of Confucius hosted by President Hồ, the DRV's first university opened in Hanoi. As the General Director of the Higher Education Department and the Director of the École française d'Extrême-Orient, Professor Nguyễn Văn Huyên delivered the opening speech at the university's inauguration in the presence of President Hồ. Emphasizing the university's responsibility to train a new generation of Vietnamese intellectuals, Nguyễn Văn Huyên announced:

> We all feel responsible in training a number of people who possess good morals and the capability to guide the masses. Should you allow me to employ an ancient term with its ancient connotations from an Eastern civilization, [these people are] *quân tử,* who, on the one hand, know how to hone their knowledge to be able to evaluate any force of civilization,

> and who, on the other hand, also apprehend how to process practically so that they can apply their wisdom in life, raising the national flag together with their brothers, sisters, and compatriots of different professions, even in thunderous storms, and in all international meetings on culture built on the glorious foundation of peace, justice, liberty, happiness, and universal love of human beings in the future.[36]

The *quân tử* (noble person) in this speech implicitly carried on the traditional Confucian values, yet was also a blend of both nationalism and internationalism. Although sometimes overlooked, the notion of the "noble person" always serves as the foundation for the construction of the ideal personality (colored with a specific political ideology) in countries influenced by Confucian culture. In his essay, Nguyễn Khắc Viện portrayed Hồ Chí Minh as "a Confucian scholar who changed from one philosophy to another,"[37] and "yet still retained his basic personality of a *'quan-tu.'*"[38] Peter A. DeCaro, in his study *Rhetoric of Revolt,* even dedicates a full-length chapter to a portrait of "Ho Chi Minh: The Chun Tzu [*junzi*]."[39] Just as he had reformed the rituals commemorating Confucius along revolutionary lines, Hồ Chí Minh would promote the new image of the revolutionary (and not the "noble man"), with redefined Confucian values, in his handbook *Let's Change Our Methods of Work.*

Let's Change Our Methods of Work

For a better apprehension of the handbook *Let's Change Our Methods of Work* (hereafter, "the handbook"), a brief review of its historical background is needed. Hồ Chí Minh completed the handbook in October 1947 under the penname of X.Y.Z. It was first printed by Sự thật ("Truth") Publishing House in 1948, and was subsequently reprinted several times in Vietnam.

During the short but tumultuous period from 1945 to 1948, the Vietnamese were fighting for their country's unity and independence from the Japanese and French occupiers. Taking advantage of the Japanese surrender at the conclusion of World War II, the Việt Minh (League for the Independence of Vietnam), under the leadership of Hồ Chí Minh, established the new state known as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on August 28, 1945. A few days later, on September 2, Hồ proclaimed Vietnam's independence in Hanoi, opening his speech with Thomas Jefferson's declaration "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."[40] More than a year later, unwilling to lose its colony, France opened fire in Hanoi on December 17, 1946; shortly after that, on December 19, France issued an ultimatum, demanding the disarmament of the DRV's armed forces. Refusing the French demand,

on December 20, as DRV President, Hồ appealed to the whole nation to stand up and join the national resistance against the colonial regime. The Việt Bắc, a mountainous region between the Sino-Vietnamese border and the Red River, then became "the very cradle of the resistance." In October 1947 the French secretly launched the Lea Campaign to "destroy the foundation of Vietnamese resistance" in the north; it was also at that time that the Central Party Committee's Standing Bureau decided to "destroy the winter march of the French army."[41] Hồ's resistance government not only fought against the French army, but also commenced building the foundation for a new ideology. David Marr succinctly describes the beginning of this long and complex process:

> From his mountain hideout during the Pacific War, Hồ Chí Minh promoted a mix of Confucian and modernist values to be assimilated by the [Indochinese Communist Party] members and then taught to followers.... The Propaganda Ministry under Trần Huy Liệu took responsibility for devising a comprehensive program of social transformation dubbed the New Life Campaign (Vận động Đời sống Mới).[42]

These were the historical circumstances under which the handbook was completed. Its targeted readership clearly included Party members and cadres who were striving for the nation's independence and governing part of the country's territory.

Revolutionary Virtues

Under the title "Revolutionary Virtues" (*Đạo đức cách mạng*), Hồ presents a concise account of the moral values that a cadre must display and embrace in order to transform himself into a revolutionary:

> It is not difficult for a cadre to become a real revolutionary if he wants to. Everything depends on his *heart-and-mind* [*lòng mình*]. If his sole interest is the Party, the country, and his compatriots, he will *gradually* become *totally just and selfless* [*chí công vô tư* 至公無私]. *As he has been just and selfless,* his personal faults will progressively decrease, and his virtues *described below* will become increasingly apparent each day. *In brief, the good* virtues are five in all: humanity [仁], *righteousness* [義], knowledge [智], courage [勇], and integrity [廉].[43]

This excerpt brings up a number of issues, including the origin of *chí công vô tư,* a phrase that would later become one of the foundational revolutionary moral values of the members and cadres of the Vietnamese Communist Party. It also

illustrates Hồ's selective appropriation of certain Confucian virtues to form the list of five required norms of revolutionary virtue. The first chapter of the *Classic of Loyalty* (*Zhongjing* 忠經), titled "Heaven, Earth, and Gods" ("Tiandi Shenming" 天地神明),[44] begins with the following lines:

> A maxim from ancient times [states that] the only virtue for the above and the below to receive Heaven's favor is the way of loyalty. Overshadowed by Heaven, sustained by Earth, and followed by human beings, nothing is greater than loyalty. Loyalty means [standing at] the center, being *totally just and selfless.*[45]

Another dictum in the same chapter also reads, "Loyalty is what is described as 'being whole-hearted.'"[46] Thus, the notion of being "totally just and selfless" and the importance of the *heart-and-mind* in self-training to become "a real revolutionary" asserted in Hồ's handbook seem to have been inspired by this classical text. Although Hồ did not cite the *Classic of Loyalty* explicitly, the circulation and popularity of the classic in Vietnam can be confirmed by the local reproduction of this work now preserved at the Han-Nom Research Institute in Hanoi.[47]

At first glance, the five good virtues of the revolutionary are reminiscent of the "Five Constants" (*wuchang* 五常) originally advocated by Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179–104 B.C.E.). Indeed, three of Hồ's five essential revolutionary virtues apparently were taken directly from the "Five Constants": benevolence (*ren* 仁), righteousness (*yi* 義), and knowledge (*zhi* 智). Hồ opted to replace the other two of the five, ritual (*li* 禮) and trustworthiness (*xin* 信), with courage (*yong* 勇), and integrity (*lian* 廉). However, a further reading of the *Analects* shows another group of three fundamental virtues of the noble man:[48]

> The Master said, "The way of the superior man is threefold, but I am not equal to it. Virtuous [*ren*], he is free from anxieties; wise [*zhi*], he is free from perplexities; bold [*yong*], he is free from fear."[49]

> The Master said, "The wise are free from perplexities; the virtuous from anxiety; and the bold from fear."[50]

The *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸) also gathers *ren, zhi,* and *yong* into a trio called *dade* 達德 ("universally binding virtues"): "Knowledge, benevolence, and courage, these three are the universally binding virtues" (*Zhongyong* 20).[51] Hence, following this approach, one may treat Hồ's revolutionary virtue quintet as a combination of the *dade* trio and two additional elements (righteousness and integrity). However, due to the quintet format of the essential

revolutionary moral values, they were apparently grouped together according to the model of the "Five Constants." The choice and use of these Confucian moral concepts was reminiscent of the New Life Movement in China of the early 1930s, which emphasized the roles of the old Confucian virtues of ritual (*li* 禮), righteousness (*yi* 義), integrity (*lian* 廉), and knowledge (*zhi* 智) as a means to reinforce nationalism and modernization.[52]

In his essay titled "Virtues of *Junzi,*" Antonio S. Cua tries to distinguish the basic interdependent/complete virtues of *ren* 仁 (benevolence, humaneness), *li* 禮 (rules of proper conduct, ritual, rites), and *yi* 義 (rightness, righteousness, fittingness) from dependent/partial virtues such as *kuan* 寬 (magnanimity), *xin* 信 (trustworthiness), and *yong* 勇 (courage). According to Cua, the cardinal virtues of *ren, yi,* and *li* are "relevant to all situations of human life as our actions have always effects on others," whereas the partials have their "application to circumstances," and, furthermore, their ethical value "depends on connection with the…cardinals."[53]

The emphasis on certain moral values reflects specifically temporal sociopolitical demands, even as the modification of the connotations of the selected moral concepts reveals the efforts to make them fit well in new social contexts. Although the handbook does not specify any reasons for its particular choices from the Confucian repertoire of moral concepts, reading its interpretation of the five highlighted virtues can help to better understand why Hồ selected them.

HUMANITY

Humanity (*ren*) is the first virtue to be interpreted, and its interpretation also paves the way for the representation of the remaining virtues. The handbook explains:

> The virtue of humanity consists of loving deeply and wholeheartedly assisting one's comrades and compatriots. That is why the cadre who displays this virtue wages a resolute struggle against all those who would harm the Party and people. That is why he will not hesitate to be the first to endure hardship and the last to enjoy happiness. That is why he will not covet wealth and honor, nor fear hardship and suffering, nor be afraid to fight those in power. Those who want nothing are afraid of nothing and will always succeed in doing the right thing.[54]

In this explanation of "humanity," readers can identify at least two Confucian writings that have been reworded and altered for a better fit into the handbook's new context. First, there is Fan Zhongyan's 范仲淹 (989–1052) oft-quoted motto from his "Memorial to Yueyang Tower" (*Yueyang Lou ji* 岳陽樓記): "Be the first in all under heaven to bear hardship, be the last in all under heaven to

enjoy happiness."[55] Moreover, Fan's thought is followed by a slight modification of Mencius' definition of "the great man" (*dazhangfu* 大丈夫). A passage in the *Mencius* reads:

> To be above the power of riches and honors to make dissipated, of poverty and mean condition to make swerve from principle, and of power and force to make bend—these characteristics constitute the great man.[56]

For Hồ, the ideal revolutionary was obviously close to the Confucian "great man." At the same time, Hồ departed from classical precedents in subtle ways. As described by the handbook, the "virtue of humanity" comprises *honestly* loving (*thật thà* thương yêu) and *wholeheartedly* assisting (*hết lòng* giúp đỡ) "one's comrades and compatriots." Here, humanity also requires sincerity (*cheng* 誠) and full devotion of one's heart-mind (*jinxin* 盡心) to realize one's object of commitment. Unlike the Confucian "great man," the revolutionary "wages a resolute struggle against all those who would harm the Party and people." Thus, for Hồ, loyalty (*zhong* 忠) was directed first and foremost to the Party and the people while love was clearly class-oriented.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

As for righteousness (*yi* 義), the handbook writes:

> Having a sense of duty means uprightness—not having ulterior motives, doing nothing unjust and having nothing to hide from the Party. It also means not being preoccupied by personal interests in conflict with those of the Party.[57]

The distinction between "just" and "unjust," the individual's transparency in front of the Party, and the harmonization between the individual's and the Party's interests here are clearly based on a subset of class-based moral values that the revolutionary must follow strictly. The distinction between "right" and "wrong" of course requires the involvement of knowledge/wisdom.

KNOWLEDGE

According to the handbook, selflessness plays a crucial role in the display and application of knowledge (*zhi* 智):

> Since one's conscience [*zhi/trí*] is not clouded by personal interests, clarity of purpose can be easily maintained. It becomes easier to reason and find the right way. One can judge men and investigate matters. Useful projects can be accomplished, while interests harmful to the Party can

> be avoided. For the sake of the [Party's] just cause, people of value will be promoted while vigilance against crooks is maintained.[58]

Often rendered into English as "knowledge" or "wisdom," *zhi/trí,* as Henry Rosemont has observed, "is the philosophically significant most frequently occurring term in the *Analects.*"[59] Having examined this concept in various contexts of the *Analects,* Rosemont concludes that "[*Zhi*] is perhaps best defined as *a sense of what it is most fitting to do in our interactions with our fellow human beings, understanding why, performing those actions, and achieving a sense of well-being from so doing.*"[60] Hence, there is another translation suggested by Roger Ames for this Confucian concept: the term "realize" can serve well here, for "it is epistemically as strong in English as 'know' with respect to truth conditions."[61] Moreover, since "realize" also means "[making] real" it simultaneously carries the meaning of "[putting] into practice" with the proper stances and feelings toward what one is making real in one's conduct. Through Confucius' teaching on *zhi/trí,* Rosemont finally sees it as "religious or spiritual instructions for how to live a meaningful life."[62] The handbook's description of this concept also reflects this spirit, but redefines it on the basis of the interests of the Party and the people.

COURAGE

For Hồ, the introductions of *nhân, nghĩa,* and *trí* prepared the way for the fourth moral virtue, "courage" (*yong* 勇):

> Having courage means carrying out what one believes is right. It means not being afraid to correct one's faults, to endure suffering, and to face hardship. It means not hesitating to reject honors and ill-gained wealth. If necessary, it means the sacrifice of one's life for the Party and country without qualm.[63]

The premise on which Hồ understands *yong* is clear: it must be carried out on the basis of daring to realize "what one believes is right" (*gặp việc phải có gan làm*).[64] This principle is in agreement with Confucius' sayings in the *Analects,* where the Master emphasizes the critical need of righteousness in improving personal courage:

> To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage.[65] (2.24)
>
> Zilu said, "Does the superior man esteem valor [courage]?" The Master said, "The superior man holds righteousness to be of superior importance. A man in a superior situation, having valor without righteousness,

> will be guilty of insubordination; one of the lower people, having valor without righteousness, will commit robbery. (17.23)

According to the *Analects,* courage must be guided by righteousness, and in its turn righteousness must be based on humanity/benevolence as indicated by Confucius: "Men of humanity are sure to be bold, but those who are bold may not always be men of humanity" (14.5).[66] Based on the *Analects'* accounts, one scholar has described the interrelationship among humanity, righteousness, and, implicitly, courage as follows:

> Hence, a *ren* person must be a righteous (*yi*) person. If this reasoning is correct, the relationship between *ren* and *yi* has to be that *ren* determines both *yi* as the rightness of an action and *yi* as the righteousness of the agent.[67]

Noteworthy is that courage is often linked to other virtues in the *Analects,* such as the love of learning: "There is the love of boldness without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to insubordination" (17.8).[68] Bravery must follow propriety/rites (*li* 禮) to avoid chaos—"Boldness, without the rules of propriety, becomes insubordination" (8.2)[69]—and this is why Confucius hates those who "have valor merely, and are unobservant of propriety" (17.24).[70] In the handbook, since the "propriety/rites" of the Five Constants are not listed among the five required virtues of the revolutionary, the absence of the link between this moral value and courage is understandable. However, as we have seen in the elucidations of the previous three moral values of benevolence, righteousness, and knowledge, loyalty to the Party and the people stands out as the pivotal criterion that defines every single virtue essential for the revolutionary's self-cultivation. This trend of thought was first promoted in 1946 in the educational system of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and became an essential moral norm of the Vietnamese state.[71] Hồ Chí Minh would later crystallize this loyalty in his oft-cited motto, originally written in 1955:

> Revolutionary virtue can be summarized as clearly distinguishing right from wrong, persevering with class position, wholeheartedly being loyal to the country, and unreservedly practicing filial piety toward people (*tận trung với nước, tận hiếu với dân*).[72]

Nine years later, in 1964, he proclaimed another version of the motto:

> Our army is loyal (*trung* 忠) to the Party, and practices filial piety (*hiếu* 孝) toward the people, being ready to fight and sacrifice their lives for the independence and freedom of the fatherland, and for socialism.[73]

"Being loyal to the country/the Party and practicing filial piety toward the people" has been regarded as one of Hồ Chí Minh's fundamental ideas. The textbook *Tư tưởng Hồ Chí Minh* (Hồ Chí Minh's thought), prepared for college students, observes this principal virtue:

> Hồ Chí Minh introduces new revolutionary contents into a new concept, namely "being loyal to the country and practicing filial piety toward the people." This is the most important moral criterion. Moving from being loyal to the king and practicing filial piety toward parents to being loyal to the country and practicing filial piety toward the people is a revolution in moral conception. Hồ Chí Minh reverses the old Confucian concept, and constructs new morality as if "a man firmly stands on his feet, and raises his head toward the sky."
>
> In Hồ Chí Minh's view, the country is the people's country and the people are the country's owner. Hence, "being loyal to the country and practicing filial piety toward the people" is the expression of responsibility toward the enterprise of nation-building-and-defending and the development path of the country.
>
> The core content of loyalty to the country is that within the relationships of individuals, community, and society, one must give the foremost priority to the interests of the Party, Fatherland, and Revolution.[74]

The common thread that traverses the first four revolutionary moral values of humanity, righteousness, knowledge, and courage has been summed up in Hồ Chí Minh's mottos and clarified in the commentaries: as the representative of the country and the people, the Party deserves the top priority, and loyalty to the Party assures the perfection of the five fundamental revolutionary virtues highlighted in the handbook. Reading the handbook in its original context when the Party was taking the lead in the fight against feudalism and the resistance against French colonialism, one can straightforwardly understand why courage was one of the five desired moral values for the revolutionary.

INTEGRITY

As a Confucian moral value, depending on the contexts in which it emerges, *lian* 廉 has been rendered into various English equivalents, such as "grave reserve,"[75] "self-denying purity,"[76] or "upright, honourable, integrity and character."[77] However, the most common equivalent is "integrity," which also appears in Nguyễn Khắc Viện's citation from the handbook:

> Having integrity means not coveting status or wealth, not seeking an easy life or *not willing to be flattered by others.* That is why one can be lucid and generous and avoid self-degradation. *There exists only one type of eagerness—that is the eagerness to study, work, and make progress.*[78]

In the Vietnamese original of the citation, the term *tham* ("coveting" 貪) stands for different English rewordings, such as "seeking" or "willing." The quote ends with the eagerness for self-cultivation, and this reminds us of a saying from the *Analects*: "When his desires are set on benevolent government, and he secures it, who will accuse him of covetousness?" (20.2).[79] Having a rhetorical structure similar to Confucius' cited assertion, the handbook defines "integrity" as the avoidance of any temptations that lead to self-degradation, and the enthusiastic striving for self-improvement.

Two years later, in 1949, writing under the pseudonym of Lê Quyết Thắng, Hồ Chí Minh revisited this moral concept in a series of four newspaper articles on diligence (*cần* 勤), frugality (*kiệm* 儉), integrity (*liêm* 廉), and straightforwardness (*chính* 正),[80] and discussed *liêm* in great detail:

> *Liêm* means purity, without greediness. In the past, under feudalism, mandarins who did not squeeze money from the people were called *liêm,* but it has only a narrow meaning. Our country is now the Democratic Republic; and the term *liêm* has a broader meaning. Everyone must practice *liêm.* Similarly *trung* is to be loyal to the Fatherland, and *hiếu* means to practice filial piety toward people. We love our parents, but we must also love others' parents, and inspire the love for parents in all human beings.
>
> *Liêm* must be accompanied by *kiệm.* Correspondingly, *kiệm* must be paired with *cần. Kiệm* is the premise for the practice of *liêm,* because lavish spending begets greediness.
>
> …Our nation is carrying out the war of resistance and structuring the country, building the New Life in our new Vietnam. Not only do we need to be diligent and frugal, but we must also keep our purity/integrity (*liêm*).[81]

Here, as in the earlier handbook, Hồ sought to redefine Confucian key moral values in the context of revolutionary Vietnam in the 1940s. An examination of some Confucian classics, such as the *Analects, Mencius, Liji* (Classic of Rites), and *Xunzi,* to name but a few, shows that *liêm* has various connotations, and as a moral value it can be universally practiced without restriction to any social class.[82] Like Hồ's elucidations of the other Confucianism-based moral values,

his interpretation of *liêm* is positioned within the framework of the war of resistance and nation-building led by the Communist Party.

WHY ARE PROPRIETY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS MISSING?

The absence of two Confucian constants, propriety (*li* 禮) and trustworthiness (*xin* 信), from Hồ's set of revolutionary virtues cannot be easily overlooked. Given its status as a cardinal virtue, the exclusion of "propriety" from the list is particularly striking. As we will see, the logic of the omission of "propriety" helps explain Hồ's decision to leave "trustworthiness" off the list. Having reviewed extant documents relevant to Hồ Chí Minh and Confucian morality, Hoa John Le Van concludes:

> As a son of a Vietnamese mandarin-scholar, [Hồ Chí Minh] was trained early in the Confucian heritage. The five cardinal virtues of compassion, righteousness, ritual, knowledge, [and] integrity, perhaps except for ritual, were part of [Hồ]'s personal life.[83]

Nonetheless, Hồ Chí Minh himself did not stipulate why he left "propriety" out of the repertoire of revolutionary virtues. Various scholars have endeavored to fill in the gap, rationalizing any possible reason that might have caused Hồ to pass over "propriety." The following is a line of reasoning articulated by a Vietnamese academic:

> Whenever talking about human beings' virtue, Confucians often link it with *li/lễ* of the Five Constants (*ren, yi, li, zhi, xin*). Based on the explanation from the *Shuowen jiezi* [說文解字, Explanation of patterns, elaboration of graphs], the principle of *li* is "stable steps, respecting the spirits, and seeking happiness,"[84] reflecting the relationship between human beings and spirits. [*Li*] is combined with theocracy, and developed into the distinction between superior and inferior, rich and poor, closeness and distance, that is founded on a strict aristocratic ranking system. Therefore, in the *Zuozhuan,* the account of Zhanggong's [莊公] eighteenth year says, "As fames and positions vary, rituals are also different." … Thus, *li/lễ* stands for the social status of the feudal hierarchy. Among the dominant classes, *li/lễ* also cannot escape from it. *Li/lễ* becomes a powerful political tool, and an effective method for controlling the realm and people in the feudal monarchical age. Thus, in *Hồ Chí Minh: The Complete Works* (ten volumes with 7,053 pages in total), Uncle Hồ never mentions the term *li/lễ* from the Five Constants of feudal Confucians.[85]

The passage starts with a definition of *li* (unfortunately, inaccurately translated) from the *Shuowen jiezi* to suggest that *li* was originally deployed as an instrument to enhance the unequal relationships between human beings and spirits. It then takes the next step of identifying *li* as a feudal social practice, a claim that appears to confirm the class-based nature of this moral concept and reveal it as a "powerful political tool, and an effective method for controlling the realm and people in the feudal monarchical age." Although Hồ Chí Minh never endorsed such an understanding of *li/lễ,* it seems to be widely accepted in Vietnam, as the phrase *lễ giáo phong kiến* ("feudal proprieties") carries strongly negative connotations (especially of gender inequality). However, the author of the excerpt above seemingly overlooks a well-known dictum of Confucius in the *Analects*: "To overcome oneself and restore the practice of proprieties is benevolent love."[86] Since *ren* (benevolence) is the ground of *li* (rules of propriety), and *li* must be in accord with *ren,* "customs, rituals, regulations, and rules eventually should be regulated by *ren.*"[87] In other words, rules of propriety are the vehicle for realizing and strengthening benevolence. When discussing the civility of the revolutionary policeman in a letter written in March 1948, Hồ Chí Minh reminds the reader that police must treat people with respect, etiquette, and moral standards (*lễ phép*).[88] Obviously, revolutionary benevolent love needs to be expressed through certain revolutionary rules of propriety. *Li/lễ* was omitted from President Hồ's writings possibly due to the fact that it was generally understood as "rites" or "rituals," and its hierarchical features had been prevalently associated with feudalism. However, as the set of rules of propriety or social conventions, *li/lễ* was unquestionably required and practiced in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Although trustworthiness (*xin* 信) is not recorded in the handbook's list of moral virtues that the revolutionary must acquire, it occasionally emerges as a required virtue in a number of other writings by Hồ Chí Minh. In his speech given at the concluding ceremony of a complementary training course for mid-level cadres in 1947, Hồ declared:

> A good cadre must have revolutionary morality. If one is well-trained in military affairs, but lacking revolutionary morality, it is difficult to succeed. In order to acquire revolutionary morality, one must possess the following five elements: *Trí* [智], *Tín* [信], *Nhân* [仁], *Dũng* [勇], [and] *Liêm* [廉]. I now clarify them.
>
> *Trí* means clear-headedness, knowing both the enemy and ourselves; recognizing good people and supporting them; identifying bad ones and not employing them; being aware of our goodness and improving it; identifying evil and avoiding it.

> *Tín* means [that] whatever is said must be trustworthy; assertions and practices must be in accordance with one another; we must try our best to earn people's and soldiers' trust.
>
> *Nhân* means to possess universal love: loving our country, people, and soldiers.
>
> *Dũng* means being forceful, decisive but not jeopardizing, having well-prepared plans and determinedly carrying them out straightaway, even if facing dangers. It also means to have bravery in any business.
>
> *Liêm* means not to covet fame or position, not being excessively desirous of life, money, and sex. A cadre who dares to sacrifice his life for the fatherland, for his people, and for the just cause does not covet anything.[89]

The above-cited passage not only furnishes us with another chance to further comprehend Hồ's understanding of *trí, nhân, dũng,* and *liêm,* but also supplies us with his explanation of *tín,* another moral value. Hồ Chí Minh's notion of *tín* is basically in agreement with the Confucian notion of *xin,* which emphasizes verbal commitment with respect to one's deeds. This point can be illustrated through a couple of examples from the *Analects.* For instance, when asked about how a man's conduct can be appreciated by his fellows, Confucius replies, "Let his words be sincere and truthful, and his actions honorable and careful."[90] In another case, the Master places emphasis on the imperative concordance between words and conduct: "At first, my way with men was to hear their words, and give them credit for their conduct. Now my way is to hear their words, and look at their conduct."[91] Having examined the concept of *xin* in the *Analects,* Cecilia Wee comes to the following conclusion:

> *Xin* is concerned primarily with commitments in which verbal (or other) representations have been made, where trust can exist, and perhaps usually exists, against a background of unspoken social norms.[92]

Indeed, the agreement between words and deeds stands out as the foundational principle of *xin,* but it must be conducted against the "background of unspoken social norms." This background is spelled out in Hồ's discourse: as all means must serve revolutionary ends, the cadre must be trustworthy so as to win his people's and soldiers' hearts-and-minds. Hồ Chí Minh obviously did not treat the Confucian Five Constants as an entirety; he broke them down into individual entities and recombined them with other moral values into different clusters of five. Depending on his audience, Hồ selected a certain cluster to present to his targeted readers/listeners. Thus, even though *xin/tín* does not emerge among the "Revolutionary Virtues" discussed in the handbook *Let's*

Change Our Methods of Work, it remains as an essential quality of the revolutionary in other writings by Hồ Chí Minh.

The handbook in general and its five revolutionary moral elements in particular are in many ways reminiscent of Chinese Communist Party leader Liu Shaoqi's 劉少奇 *Lun gongchan dangyuan de xiuyang* (On the cultivation of Communist Party members).[93] First delivered as a series of lectures for CCP members at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Yan'an in 1939, Liu frequently invoked the Chinese concept of self-cultivation (*xiuyang* 修養), and therefore aligned his views with "Chinese tradition, most specifically with Neo-Confucian praxis based on the *Great Learning* [*Daxue* 大學], the *Mean* [*Zhongyong* 中庸], and self-examination through quiet-sitting." In this work, Liu cited several sayings from Confucian and Neo-Confucian sources, but these quotes "survive in the collective memory only as traditional sayings without awareness of their exact provenance."[94] Liu's work was translated into Vietnamese and also employed as training material for Vietnamese cadres in the late 1940s.[95]

Unlike Liu's indoctrination work, Hồ's handbook does not contain any direct quotations from the Confucian classics, although traces of those texts can be discerned in his text, as this chapter has shown. By rephrasing Confucian sayings in Vietnamese language, the handbook rhetorically presents them in a simple and easy-to-understand way, and consequently strips off the old-fashioned classical veneer of the original texts. This tactic is especially clear in Hồ's discussion of the Confucianism-inspired essential revolutionary virtues. The Confucian roots of these terms were instantly recognizable to Vietnamese elites trained in the Confucian educational system. And yet, as they were popularly employed and practiced in daily life, ordinary Vietnamese embraced them as common sense and as part of their culture, even though they were unaware of their classical provenance.

After examining several Confucian values as they were reinterpreted in Hồ Chí Minh's writings, Hoa John Le Van concludes:

> [Hồ]'s unique revolutionary contribution was his adaptation of Marxism to elaborate a new dimension of traditional Confucian values that had tightly bound Vietnamese society in ritual bondage. Earlier, we have noted that [Hồ] deliberately excluded [*lễ,* ritual] from the five basic Confucian virtues.[96]

That Hồ infused traditional Confucian values with revolutionary meanings is undeniable. However, based on the evidence presented here, it is hard to find any trace of Marxist theory in Hồ's adaptation of Confucian moral concepts. In addition to distilling and simplifying Confucian values, Hồ's revolutionary framework points his readers to the ultimate goal: service to the Party and the

people, or, in Neil L. Jamieson's words, to "behave toward the party as if it were your family."[97]

Conclusion

Although there has never been any government-led campaign of "Criticizing Confucius" during the Democratic Republic of Vietnam era (1945–1975) or in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam period (1975 to the present), the treatment of Confucius and his doctrine has changed significantly over the decades. Often identified with pejorative suppressive feudalism, Confucianism has sometimes been targeted for eradication, even in countries where it enjoyed deep influence. Nguyễn Khắc Viện's essay "Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam" serves as an example, showing an intellectual effort to acknowledge the positive aspects of "Confucianism of the scholars" of a Vietnam in transition. However, a number of his arguments, including his discussion of the relationship between Hồ Chí Minh and Confucianism, faced negative reactions and criticisms from contemporary readers. Only after the implementation of the Đổi mới (Renovation) policy, the international reappraisal of Confucianism due to the success of the four Asian Little Dragons, and the commemoration of Hồ Chí Minh as a "cultural personality" on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, did Viện's essay have the chance to reach its Vietnamese readers. Since the publication of the essay in Vietnam, numerous studies on Hồ Chí Minh and Confucianism have been carried out, revealing his skillful transformation of Confucian values to serve the nation's revolutionary cause. Cited in Nguyễn Khắc Viện's essay, the section "Revolutionary Virtues" from Hồ Chí Minh's *Let's Change Our Methods of Work* and other examples from Hồ's writings reveal how Hồ transformed pivotal Confucian moral values and reintroduced them as essential virtues required for the revolutionary. Simplified, Confucian values are rendered into new revolutionary contexts. The Confucian noble person is transformed into the ideal revolutionary and put forward to serve the revolution.

Appendix 1

1984's SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

by Nguyễn Khắc Viện[98]

Please allow me to review a few crucial points from the previous essay before discussing other issues:

We must clearly identify two trends of thought in Confucianism: one is

the original stream that is humane, and the other is a stream belonging to the ideology of the bureaucratic apparatus; one is the mandarin's Confucianism, and the other the scholar's.

Due to their unawareness of those two trends, several people have blotted out the historical role of Confucianism, asserting that since its beginning, Confucianism has only played a negative role in opposition to the so-called folk-thought. Of course, as they're armed with such a prejudice, whenever they hear someone asserting the proximity between Confucianism and Marxism, or, more seriously, mentioning some Confucian elements in President Hồ's thought, they will consider [these sayings] "heresies" or "insubordinations."

Also due to this type of prejudice, they believe that Nguyễn Trãi [阮廌] [1380–1442] has nothing to do with Confucianism, repudiating all Vietnamese patriotic Confucians as a whole, and treating patriotism merely as anti-Confucian. Someone even writes, "Patriotism is the *pathbreaking* light (let me emphasize the term 'pathbreaking') for the early naissance of a traditional and unique culture in Vietnamese territory."

Such statements reverse the historical process. There must first have been the establishment of a thriving and distinctive culture, and later from this foundation patriotism would gradually take shape. When the Bách Việt [百越, or "One-Hundred Viet] nations fought against the Qin-Han army, they were not motivated by patriotism; even in the time of the Trưng sisters [the rebellion against the Han military], there did not exist a true patriotism as it is understood in our time. People must have gone through a long historical process in which the resistance against foreign invasions was not the exclusive element that formed patriotism. One must include the following components:

Self-protection from natural disasters through the construction of embankment systems
The establishment of a centralized monarchical government
The construction of a national culture

Without the centralized monarchy with its mandarin machinery accountable for national duties based on a unified ideology, there could not exist the awareness of patriotism at an advanced level. Only when facing natural disasters and foreign invasions would commoners come to the recognition of transcending their local mentality, scholar gentry would be conscious of their duties to the nation, and everyone would be [unified] around the image of a king. Within a long historical evolution, being loyal to the king [*trung quân* 忠君] and being patriotic [*ái quốc* 愛國] would have remained inseparable from one another. Confucianism played a crucial role in the formation of patriotism. Nguyễn Đình Chiểu, Mai Xuân Thưởng, [and] Phan Đình Phùng were Confucians,

and one cannot distort the truth by claiming that these patriots totally had no relationship with Confucianism.

Later, as history moved forward, there emerged more progressive regimes and ideologies. To return to Confucianism is reactionary, but to fully reject the role of Confucianism is really childish. Only the emergence of capitalist [thought] and proletarian thought could end the historical role of Confucianism. Nowadays it is easy to point out the weaknesses of Confucianism, but one has to relocate it back into its historical context to be able to see its multifacetedness.

Some have argued that people do not accept Confucianism because it arrived in our country together on "the hooves of invading soldiers." What a simplistic view! Some portion of the people will accept an ideology because of its contents, but not for its place of origin (let's consider the cases of Buddhism and Marxism!). In the early independent period, during the Lý and Trần dynasties, the centralized monarchical machinery had not reached an advanced level; although the warlords were gone, rice fields, estates, and the fiefs of royal nobles still existed. Confucianism and its unified mandarin apparatus were not accepted. The mandarin machinery employed Confucianism as its weapon to compete with Buddhism. During this period, Confucianism was progressive in comparison to Buddhism.

Others have also considered the Lý-Trần period with the dominance of Buddhism more progressive than the post-fifteenth-century Lê dynasty founded on Confucianism. To some extent, Buddhism was better than Confucianism, and the Lý-Trần regime more "likeable" than that of the Lê dynasty. However, examined within the nation's historical process, the Lê period achieved a higher level of unification of the kingdom. Newly independent, the Lý [and] Trần dynasties could only defend the northern borders of their realm; with a population still small, they could not fully explore the Red River Delta, and they had to confront two kingdoms, Champa and Khmer, without a decisive victory. The realm was always threatened by two-pronged attacks from the Northern and Southern frontiers. In the Lê dynasty, Đại Việt [大越, "Great Viet" = Vietnam] clearly gained more advantages: the Northern and Southern borders were secured for a long time, and the territory was expanded southward. This was a centralized monarchy with a mandarin apparatus working on a unified ideological foundation of Confucianism. In the historical context of that time, this regime was the most rational (in comparison to the Champa and Khmer kingdoms). Later on, Confucianism could not handle conflicts and had to concede.

Confucianism paved the way with auspicious conditions for the introduction of Marxism [into Vietnam]. This is an argument that has caused many "waves and winds." The main argument is that unlike other religions, [the aim of] Confucianism is to direct human thought completely into social life; there-

fore it stands on the same page with Marxists. If we are able to convince a Confucian that Marxism can realize all the social ideals that he has ever thought of, this Confucian should be willing to decline Confucianism and accept Marxism. Meanwhile, socially persuading a Christian, a Buddhist, or a Muslim remains insufficient, because persuasion cannot provide them with an answer about the transcendental afterlife. Like Marxists, Confucians do not raise such a question.

Recently a Japanese scholar[99] has also formed the argument that Confucianism has helped nations like Japan, Taiwan, and Korea more easily move toward modernity.

On this favorable land, Marxism sowed new seeds—science, democracy, and international proletarian spirit, which were completely new elements. However, like Confucianism, when the Party has held political power, the risk of the bureaucratization of Marxism is always threatening, and a Marxism bureaucratized in several aspects is very similar to Confucianism. Criticizing Confucianism is also helpful for the criticism of today's bureaucratism.

Appendix 2

CONFUCIUS[100]

Guangzhou, February 20, 1927

On February 15, the Government of the Republic of China issued a decree: henceforth to abolish all ceremonies commemorating Confucius as well as projected expenses for those rituals, and to use all temples of Confucius as public schools.

Confucius lived 2,478 years before our time. During the last 2,400 years, he had been worshiped by the Chinese people. All Chinese emperors called Confucius the head of sages, and offered honorific titles to his successors.

From ancient times, the Vietnamese people and Vietnamese kings highly respected this sage. Nevertheless, the Chinese government has just decided that from now on, there is no longer any official worship for Confucius. Is that truly a revolutionary action?

Let us first review who Confucius is, why kings and emperors venerated him so approvingly, and why the Chinese government now rejects such a sage who has been so greatly worshiped.

Confucius lived in the Spring-Autumn period. His virtue, scholarship, and knowledge have earned great admiration from his contemporaries and later generations. He studied tirelessly, and never felt shame when learning from his inferiors; being unknown to the masses did not bother him at all. His renowned formula "See what a man does. Mark his motives. Examine in what things he

rests. How can a man conceal his character?"[101] reflects the profundity of his cleverness.

Nevertheless, in a setting twenty centuries ago, during the time when capitalism and imperialism did not exist, and nations were not oppressed as we have now experienced, Confucius' mind was never roused by revolutionary doctrines. His virtue is perfect but cannot accommodate our contemporary trends of thought. How can a round lid fittingly cover a square box?

Kings venerated Confucius, not only because he was not a revolutionary, but also due to the fact that he carried out a prevailing propaganda beneficial to them. They exploited Confucianism in the same way as imperialists are exploiting Christianity.

Confucianism is founded on three cardinal guides, namely [that] the king is the guide to his subjects, a father to his children, and a husband to his wife; and five constant virtues, namely benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom, and trustworthiness.

Confucius compiled the *Spring and Autumn Annals* to criticize "rebellious ministers" and "villainous sons,"[102] but did not write anything to indict the crimes of "evil fathers" and "parochial princes." In brief, he was obviously a speaker who defended the exploiters against the oppressed.

Judged by Confucian teaching, Russia, France, China, the United States, and democratic countries are nations in which moral principles are missing, and people who rise against the monarch are seditious. If Confucius lived in our time, and persistently kept those opinions, he would become a reactionary person. There could also be another possibility that this super-man would be able to cope with the situation, and quickly become a loyal inheritor of Lenin.

With the abolition of rituals commemorating Confucius, the Chinese government has dropped an old institution that goes against the spirit of democracy. For us, the Vietnamese, let us perfect ourselves spiritually by reading Confucius' works, and revolutionarily reading Lenin's works is a must.

Published in *Thanh niên* (Youth) newspaper, no. 80 (1927)
Translated [into Vietnamese] from a French translation

Notes

1. Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* ed. David Marr and Jayne Werner; trans. Linda Yarr, Jayne Werner, and Tran Tuong Nhu (Berkeley, CA: Indochina Resource Center, 1974).

2. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Bàn về đạo Nho* (On Confucianism), trans. Đào Hùng and Trần Văn Quý (Hanoi: Thế Giới Publishing House, 1993).

3. This chapter employs the edition published by Trẻ Publishing House (Ho Chi Minh City, 1998).

4. Now known as Nhà xuất bản Chính trị Quốc gia (National Political Publishing House), this publisher belongs directly to the Party's Central Committee.

5. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Bàn về đạo Nho,* p. 1.

6. Ibid., p. 68. For a complete translation of the document, see Appendix 1 at the end of this chapter.

7. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Đạo và đời* (The way and life) (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 2007), p. 7.

8. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Bàn về đạo Nho,* pp. 75–76.

9. Words used in the title of chapter 9 of Nguyễn Khắc Viện's book *Vietnam: A Long History* (Hanoi: Thế Giới Publishers, 1999).

10. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Ước mơ và Hoài niệm* (Wishes and yearnings) (Đà Nẵng: Đà Nẵng Publishing House, 2003), p. 143.

11. "Hội nghị lần thứ chính Ban chấp hành Trung ương Đảng khóa III, tháng 12–1963" (Ninth Plenum of the Party's Central Committee, Third Term, December 1963), accessed September 30, 2015, http://dangcongsan.vn/cpv/Modules/News/NewsDetail.aspx?co_id=30653&cn_id=65356.

12. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Tự truyện* (Autobiography) (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 2007), pp. 4–105.

13. For the fight against revisionism in Vietnam, see Martin Grossheim, "'Revisionism' in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam: New Evidence from the East German Archives," *Cold War History* 5, no. 4 (November 2005): 451–477; "The Lao Động Party, Culture, and the Campaign against 'Modern Revisionism': The Democratic Republic of Vietnam before the Second Indochina War," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 8, no. 1 (February 2013): 80–129.

14. Elizabeth Hodgkin, "Obituary: Nguyen Khac Vien," *The Independent* (London), May 26, 1997.

15. Trung Sơn, "Nguyễn Khắc Viện và những 'di cảo' chưa công bố" (Nguyễn Khắc Viện and his unpublished 'Posthumous Manuscripts'), *Đại biểu nhân dân,* May 6, 2007, accessed September 30, 2015, http://daibieunhandan.vn/default.aspx?tabid=78&NewsId=13746; "Di cảo Nguyễn Khắc Viện: Vai trò của khoa học xã hội và dân chủ xã hội" (Nguyễn Khắc Viện's Posthumous Manuscripts: The roles of the social sciences and social democracy), *Sông hương* 294 (August 2013), accessed September 30, 2015, http://www.tapchisonghuong.com.vn/tap-chi/c289/n12315/Di-cao-Nguyen-Khac-Vien-vai-tro-cua-khoa-hoc-xa-hoi-dan-chu-xa-hoi.html.

16. "Vietnam" section in *Human Rights Watch World Report* 1992, accessed September 30, 2015, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1992/WR92/ASW-15.htm#P938_343433.

17. Edwin O. Reischauer, "The Sinic World in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs* 52, no. 2 (January 1974): 347.

18. This may refer to Morishima Michio and his book *Why has Japan "Succeeded"? Western Technology and Japanese Ethos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

19. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Bàn về đạo Nho*, p. 73.

20. Léon Vandermeersch, *Le Nouveau monde sinisé* (The new sinicized world) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1986); *Thế giới Hán hóa mới,* trans. Chu Tiến Anh and Hoàng Việt (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1992).

21. Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* p. 45.

22. Ibid., pp. 47–48.

23. For instance, see Trịnh Khắc Mạnh and Chu Tuyết Lan, eds., *Thư mục Nho giáo Việt Nam = A Bibliography on Confucianism in Vietnam* (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 2007), pp. 228–229. Some noteworthy works, just to name a few, are Lương Duy Thứ, "The Confucian Origin of Hồ Chí Minh's Ideas," in *Confucianism in Vietnam* (Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City, 2002), pp. 229–235; Hồ Sĩ Hùy, "Tư tưởng đạo đức Hồ Chí Minh với tinh hoa Nho giáo" (Hồ Chí Minh's moral thought and the quintessence of Confucianism), *Văn hóa Nghệ An Online,* accessed April 27, 2011, http://vanhoanghean.com.vn/goc-nhin-van-hoa3/nh%E1%BB%AFng-g%C3%B3c-nh%C3%ACn-v%C4%83n-h%C3%B3a/tu-tuong-dao-duc-ho-chi-minh-voi-tinh-hoa-nho-giao.

24. It is said that UNESCO conferred the title of "Cultural Personality" on Hồ Chí Minh. In fact, UNESCO adopted a Resolution on the commemoration of the centenary of the birth of President Hồ Chí Minh instead; see UNESCO's *Records of the General Conference: Twenty-fourth Session, Paris, 20 October to 20 November 1987,* vol. 1, *Resolutions,* pp. 134–135. However, in UNESCO's commemoration list of "Anniversaries of Great Personalities and Historic Events, 1990–1991," there are only three events listed for May 1990: the 100th anniversary of Labor Day (Federal Republic of Germany), the 100th anniversary of the birth of Portuguese poet Mario de Sa-Carneiro (Portugal), and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Theater (Costa Rica).

25. Nguyễn Đình Chú, "Nguyễn Ái Quốc: Hồ Chí Minh với Nho giáo" (Nguyễn Ái Quốc: Hồ Chí Minh and Confucianism), in *Tư tưởng đạo đức Hồ Chí Minh: Truyền thống dân tộc và nhân loại* (Moral thought of Hồ Chí Minh: National tradition and humankind), ed. Vũ Khiêu (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1993), accessed September 30, 2015, http://www.viet-studies.info/NguyenDinhChu_NguyenAiQuoc.htm.

26. Ho Chi Minh Museum, "Biography of Ho Chi Minh," accessed September 30, 2015, http://www.baotanghochiminh.vn/tabid/545/Default.aspx; emphasis added.

27. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập* (Hồ Chí Minh: The complete works), 2nd ed., vol. 1, *1919–1924* (Hanoi: National Politics Publisher, 2000), p. 476.

28. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập* (Hồ Chí Minh: The complete works), 2nd ed., vol. 4, *1945–1946* (Hanoi: National Politics Publisher, 2000), p. 256; emphasis added.

29. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập* (Hồ Chí Minh: The complete works), 2nd ed., vol. 5, *1947–1949* (Hanoi: National Politics Publisher, 2000), p. 373; emphasis added.

30. The time and location of this article's composition are quite clear as stated in the subtitle line "Guangzhou, February 20, 1927," but it remains unclear in which language the article was originally written. A few words added to the end of the article inform readers that it was published in a weekly newspaper called *Thanh niên* (Youth), and the current Vietnamese version is in fact a translation from another French translation (*dịch lại từ bản dịch ra tiếng Pháp*). In a report to the Comintern's Oriental Division dated June 1927, Hồ Chí Minh wrote: "Starting from November 1924, I was sent by the Oriental Division and the French Communist Party to Guangzhou to work for Indochina. . . . Although lacking time and money, thanks to the assistance of Russian and Vietnamese comrades, we were able to . . . publish three small weekly newspapers" (*Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* 2nd ed. [Hanoi: National Politics Publisher, 2000], vol. 2, *1924–1930*, p. 241). Thus, the newspaper in

question might have been one of the three publications printed in Guangzhou around that time.

31. This decree was issued during the transition of the Nationalist Government from Guangzhou to Wuhan, and only six days before the official inauguration of the Government in Wuhan on February 21, 1927. See Guo Tingyi 郭廷以, *Zhonghua Minguo shishi rishi* 中華民國史事日志, *1912–1949* (Daily record of historical events of the Republic of China, 1912–1949) (Beijing: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Jindaishi Yanjiusuo 中央研究院近代史研究所, 1985), accessed September 30, 2015, http://fzr5185.blog.163.com/blog/static/155240885201111129138449 68/.

32. See Zhang Songzhi 張頌之, "Kongjiaohui shimo huikao" 孔教會始末匯考 (Comprehensive research on the whole story of the Association for Confucian Religion), *Wen shi zhe* 文史哲 1 (2008): 68; Wang Shichun 汪士淳, *Ruzhe xing: Kong Decheng Xiansheng zhuan* 儒者行：孔德成先生傳 (A Confucian's practices: A biography of Mr. Kong Decheng) (Taipei: Lianjing, 2013), pp. 65–67.

33. For a complete translation of Hồ Chí Minh's article on Confucius, see Appendix 2 at the end of this chapter.

34. David Marr, *Vietnam: State, War, and Revolution (1945–1946)* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013), p. 471.

35. "Ngày thu lễ đức Khổng Tử tại Đền Giám" (Commemorating Confucius in the Giám Temple on an autumn day), *Cứu quốc* 73 (October 22, 1945).

36. From Nguyễn Kim Nữ Hạnh, *Tiếp bước chân cha* (Following our father's footprint) (Hanoi: Thế Giới, 2003); the letter is accessible online at http://hnue.edu.vn/directories/Science.aspx?username=thanhvn&science=75.

37. Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* p. 51.

38. Hoa John Le Van, "Cultural Foundation of Ho Chi Minh's Revolutionary Ideology" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1989), p. 12.

39. Peter A. DeCaro, *Rhetoric of Revolt: Ho Chi Minh's Discourse for Revolution* (Westport, CT, and London: Praeger, 2003), pp. 51–86.

40. For a quick reference on Vietnamese independence movements, see Shelton Woods, *The Story of Việt Nam: From Prehistory to the Present* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2013), pp. 37–44.

41. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Việt Nam: A Long History,* 7th rev. and expanded ed. (Hanoi: Thế Giới Publishers, 2007), pp. 467–468.

42. David Marr, *Vietnam: State, War, and Revolution (1945–1946),* p. 536.

43. This is my revised version of the English translation from Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* pp. 48–49. I also consulted the French original, "Confucianisme et Marxisme au Vietnam" and the Vietnamese translation of the essay "Bàn về đạo Nho" as references during my revision procedure.

44. The *Zhongjing* is attributed to Ma Rong 馬融 (79–166) of the Later Han period. This work is said to be commented on by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), a disciple of Ma Rong. For a study of the *Zhongjing,* see Judith Suwald, "*Zhong* 忠 und das *Zhongjing* 忠經" (Ph.D. diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, 2008).

45. 昔在至理，上下一德，以徵天休，忠之道也。天之所覆，地之所載，人之所履，莫大乎忠。忠者、中也，至公無私。

46. 忠也者，一其心之謂矣。

47. For instance, the Han-Nom Research Institute has a copy titled *Trung kinh hiếu kinh tiết yếu* 忠經孝經節要, reprinted in 1852 (VHv.1006); accessed September 30, 2015, http://www.hannom.org.vn/trichyeu.asp?param=8833&Catid=248.

48. Scholars have recently tried to track the origin of the trio of knowledge, benevolence, and courage even further back than the *Lunyu.* See Peng Lin 彭林, "Cong 'San dade' kan Kongzi de shu er buzuo" 從"三達德"看孔子的"熟而不做" (From "Three universally binding virtues," Reexamining Confucius' self-identification as "a transmitter and not a maker"), *Kongzi yanjiu* 孔子研究 5 (2012): 32–39.

49. 子曰：君子道者三，我無能焉：仁者不憂，知者不惑，勇者不懼 (*Analects* 14.28). Unless stated otherwise, this chapter employs James Legge's translation for all citations from the *Analects,* occasionally with slight modifications. See Confucius, *Confucian Analects, The Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean,* trans. James Legge, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893; New York: Dover, 1971).

50. 子曰：知者不惑，仁者不憂，勇者不懼 (9.29).

51. 知仁勇三者，天下之達德也。

52. Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 109.

53. Antonio Cua, "Virtues of *Junzi,*" in *Confucian Ethics in Retrospect and Prospect,* ed. Vincent Shen and Kwong-loi Shun (Washington, D.C.: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008), pp. 10, 9.

54. Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* p. 48. In this chapter, all excerpts of the handbook *Let's Change Our Methods of Work* are from Nguyen Khac Vien's work, pp. 48–49.

55. 先天下之憂而憂，後天下之樂而樂。

56. 富貴不能淫，貧賤不能移，威武不能屈。此之謂大丈夫 ("Teng Wen Gong II," 7, in *The Works of Mencius,* trans. James Legge [Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991], p. 265).

57. Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* p. 48.

58. Ibid., pp. 48–49.

59. Henry Rosemont, *A Reader's Companion to the Confucian* Analects (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 30.

60. Ibid., p. 32.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid., p. 35.

63. Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam,* p. 49.

64. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Bàn về đạo Nho,* cites it as "gặp việc phải *làm* có gan làm" (literally, "daring to do what one has to do"); here I follow *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* vol. 5, p. 489.

65. 見義不為無勇也。

66. 仁者必有勇，勇者不必有仁。

67. Shirong Luo, "A Defense of *Ren*-Based Interpretation of Early Confucian Ethics," in *Taking Confucian Ethics Seriously: Contemporary Theories and Applications,* ed. Kam-por Yu, Julia Tao, and Philip J. Ivanhoe (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), p. 136.

68. 好勇不好學，其蔽也亂。

69. 勇而無禮則亂。

70. 惡勇而無禮者。

71. David Marr, *Vietnam: State, War, and Revolution (1945–1946),* pp. 82–83.

72. From the article titled "Người cán bộ cách mạng" (The revolutionary cadre), published in *Nhân dân* (People) newspaper on March 3, 1955; see *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập* (Hồ Chí Minh: The complete works), 2nd ed., vol. 7, *1953–1955* (Hanoi: National Politics Publisher, 2000), p. 480. A Chinese equivalent of *tận trung với nước, tận hiếu với dân* is *weiguo jinzhong, weimin jinxiao* 為國盡忠為民盡孝.

73. This citation is from a speech given on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the People's Army of Vietnam on December 22, 1964; see *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập* (Hồ Chí Minh: The complete works), 2nd ed., vol. 11, 1963–1965 (Hanoi: National Politics Publisher, 2000), p. 351.

74. Mạch Quang Thắng, ed., *Giáo trình tư tưởng Hồ Chí Minh* (Hồ Chí Minh's thought: A textbook) (Hanoi: National Political Publishing House, 2005), pp. 160–161.

75. "The stern dignity of antiquity showed itself in grave reserve; the stern dignity of the present day shows itself in quarrelsome perverseness" (古之矜也廉，今之矜也忿戾) (*Analects* 17.16).

76. In his translation of the *Mencius,* James Legge also renders *lian* as "self-denying purity," in "Teng Wen Gong II," 15.

77. Patrick Kim Cheng Low and Sik Liong Ang, "Confucian Ethics, Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility," *International Journal of Business and Management* 8, no. 4 (2013): 32.

78. The original English translation reads, "becoming angered because of the actions of others" and "Our only aim should be to study, work and make progress," respectively.

79. 欲仁而得仁，又焉貪。

80. The four articles, titled "Thế nào là *cần?*" (What is "diligence"?), "Thế nào là *kiệm?* (What is "frugality"?), "Thế nào là *liêm?*" (What is "integrity"?), and "Thế nào là *chính?* (What is "honesty"?), were consecutively printed in the newspaper *Cứu quốc* (National salvation) from May 30 to June 2, 1949. Signing under the pen name Lê Quyết Thắng (Lê the determined-to-win man), Hồ Chí Minh opens the series with a rhetorical question, "Why does President Hồ promote the slogan *Diligence, Frugality, Integrity, Honesty?*" The answer is:

> Because Diligence, Frugality, Integrity, [and] Honesty are the foundation of *the new life* (*đời sống mới*), and the cornerstone of *patriotic emulation* (*thi đua ái quốc*)…. From the success of the August Revolution (1945), and the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, until these years of resistance, thanks to Diligence, Frugality, Integrity, [and] Honesty, our people have defeated many enemies such as flooding, illiteracy, colonialism, and famine. However, among our compatriots there are some people who comprehend those concepts, and others who still do not clearly understand them. There are some people who have practiced them well, and others who have rarely realized them. Hence, we must explain the concepts in question so clearly that everyone can apprehend and practice them. (See *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* vol. 5, *1947–1949,* p. 1312)

81. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* vol. 5, *1947–1949,* pp. 1321, 1323.

82. In his translation of the *Mencius,* James Legge presents his understanding of this concept through different renditions, such as "moderation" in "Li Lou II," 51; "pure" in "Wan Zhang II," 10; or "disinterestedness" in "Jin Xin II," 83.

83. Hoa John Le Van, "Cultural Foundation of Ho Chi Minh's Revolutionary Ideology," p. 263.

84. The original reads, "*Li* is as if wearing shoes [i.e., being bound and following criteria], thus, worshiping the spirits and receiving blessings [from them]" (履也。所以事神致福也).

85. Lê Văn Quán, "Bước đầu tìm hiểu Bác Hồ với học thuyết của Nho gia" (Preliminary understanding of Uncle Hồ and Confucian doctrine), in *Thông báo Hán Nôm học 1996* (Sino-Nom Studies' reports of 1996), accessed September 30, 2015, http://hannom.vass.gov.vn/noidung/thongbao/Pages/baiviet.aspx?ItemID=176.

86. 克己復禮為仁 (*Analects* 12.1; English translation from Antonio S. Cua, ed., *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* [New York: Routledge, 2003], p. 941). In China, this renowned saying was severely criticized in the anti-Lin Biao, anti-Confucius campaign during the period from 1973 to 1976.

87. Bo Mou, *Chinese Philosophy A–Z* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 84.

88. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* vol. 5, *1947–1949,* p. 875. The term *lễ phép* is, in fact, a Vietnamization of the Chinese *lifa* 禮法.

89. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* vol. 5, *1947–1949,* pp. 460–461.

90. 言忠信，行篤敬 (*Analects* 15.6; James Legge's translation).

91. 始吾於人也，聽其言而信其行；今吾於人也，聽其言而觀其行 (*Analects* 5.10).

92. Cecilia Wee, "Xin, Trust, and Confucius' Ethics," *Philosophy East and West* 61, no. 3 (2011): 529.

93. This text is also known as *How to Be a Good Communist* (see *Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi* [Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984–], vol. 1), online version at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/liu-shaoqi/1939/how-to-be/index.htm; original Chinese version available at http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/8198/30513/30515/33955/2524494.html.

94. Wm.Theodore de Bary, ed., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2nd ed., 2001), vol. 2, pp. 427, 430–431.

95. According to Trần Đĩnh, Liu Shaoqi's book was translated into Vietnamese as *Bàn về tu dưỡng của người cộng sản.*" See Trần Đĩnh, *Đèn cù* (Lighted merry-go-round lantern) (Người Việt Books, 2014), p. 27.

96. Hoa John Le Van, "Cultural Foundation of Ho Chi Minh's Revolutionary Ideology," p. 269.

97. Neil L. Jamieson also has a brief comment on the handbook as follows, "A handbook used by Party militants defined the core values of tradition in contemporary terms. Nhan and nghia were still the core elements of the ethical system.… This handbook for cadres might be summarized in a single sentence: behave toward the party as if it were your family." See Neil L. Jamieson, *Understanding Vietnam* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 217–218.

98. Nguyễn Khắc Viện, *Bàn về đạo Nho,* pp. 68–73.

99. This may refer to Morishima Michio and his book *Why has Japan "Succeeded"?*

100. *Hồ Chí Minh toàn tập,* vol. 2, *1924–1930,* pp. 456–458.

101. 子曰：「視其所以，觀其所由，察其所安。人焉廋哉？」(*Analects* 2.10).

102. 孔子成春秋而亂臣賊子懼 ("Confucius completed the Spring and Autumn, and rebellious ministers and villainous sons were struck with terror") (*Mencius,* Book 3, "Tengwen Gong II," part 2.9; English translation from Legge, *Works of Mencius*).