

## **Viewpoints on Human and Human Rights at the Present Time: An Approach from the Thought of Ho Chi Minh**

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**ABSTRACT:** *Ho Chi Minh thought on people and human rights is a comprehensive and profound system of views on the nature, position and role of people as well as the rights and behaviors between people and people. Ho Chi Minh thought on human has universal content and value, aiming to liberate people in all respects. The content of this ideology so far has remained practical value. Based on the original source of information about Ho Chi Minh, the article analyzed the views on human and human rights in Ho Chi Minh's ideological system. The research results contribute to the study of Ho Chi Minh thought, the worldview on human and suggest some issues in the comprehensively human development today.*

**KEYWORDS:** *People, human rights, Ho Chi Minh, thought, value.*

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### **I. Introduction**

President Ho Chi Minh (1890 - 1969) was not only a revolutionary leader fighting for national liberation, bringing freedom, prosperity and happiness to the people of Vietnam, but also an eminent leader of the world revolution in the twentieth century [1]. Ho Chi Minh's heritage is an extremely valuable treasure in term of thought, morality, exemplary style in many aspects, in which, contains the most core values, people and human rights. With these contributions, Ho Chi Minh was recognized and honored by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as "Vietnamese Hero of National Liberation and Great Man of Culture" in 1990 [2].

### **II. Ho Chi Minh Thought On Human**

Ho Chi Minh thought on human is a system of comprehensive and profound perspectives on the most fundamental and core issues of people. It is the matter of human nature that is unified between individual person and social person, is the position, role and responsibilities of people in the world as well as in the struggle for social liberation. Ho Chi Minh does not offer a specific or complete concept about people. In his works, Ho Chi Minh discusses people from abstract to specific, from common to private in a popular way and easy to understand.

Summarizing the opinions and views on the human factor in history, Ho Chi Minh said that the word "human" in narrow meaning is family, brothers, relatives, friends, and in broad meaning is compatriots in the whole country and more broadly is all mankind [3]. According to this understanding, Ho Chi Minh's view on human is about both a specific individual and a community of people who are referred by Ho Chi Minh as "compatriot" or "people" and "humanity" and shorter "folk"- "dân". Expanding this concept, according to Ho Chi Minh, people are the essence of heaven, earth and the world. This means that people are synthesizing the most quintessential values in the evolution of nature and the development of society and are decided by society.

These are real people, have their own lives and personalities, and are proactive and active to participate in all aspects of social life, as the basic and fundamental factors in the structural-functional system of human society. Those people, through the struggle of natural and social reform, are more and more developing, improving and continuous progressing [4].

That contains and implies the philosophy that the life of a specific person is limited, but the generations of people continue and continue, the next generation is always more advanced than the previous generation. These are the basic perspectives for Ho Chi Minh to recognize and evaluate properly about human constituents such as position, role, responsibility, rights and benefits.

President Ho Chi Minh said that mankind is a product of nature and society, but for survival and the purpose of living, it has gradually accumulated the essence of heaven and earth and society that are in developing process. Therefore, people from being passive, depending on the world have taken the position of the center and being the owner of the world actively and positively. Ho Chi Minh has placed the four virtues of humanity, "industriousness, thrift, integrity, uprightness" in causal relationships with four seasons: spring,

summer, autumn, winter of heaven and four direction east, west, south and north of the land. Ho Chi Minh concluded that "Lack of a season does not become the heaven/ Lack of one direction does not become the earth / Lack of a virtue does not become a person" [5].

That view of Ho Chi Minh has inherited the rationality of Eastern and Western philosophy. Baguaof works Ching was formed by three bars overlapping represents Heaven, People, Earth united together, in which the center line is People, reflects the center position of people in universe. People in the central position and master of universe are also expressed in many schools of Western philosophy. On that basis, Ho Chi Minh affirmed that "heaven is not as important as geography, but geography is not as important as humanity" [6].

As far as Ho Chi Minh concerned, people from depending on the world have gradually become the force that dominated the world by their great power. Ho Chi Minh made it clear that, in the world, nothing was as strong as the unity of the people [7]. That role of human beings is expressed firstly in the role of reproduction that extends the people and human society itself, both in quantity and quality. The morality "People with ancestors" and "When you eat a fruit, think of the man who planted the tree" inherited by Ho Chi Minh is rooted from that role. More important in view of Ho Chi Minh is the role creating all cultural values (both physical, mental side and method of using those values) of mankind by which human exists and grows constantly. Ho Chi Minh in his works indicated: "For survival as well as the purpose of life, human beings create and invent language, writing, morality, law, science, religion, literature, and art, tools in daily activities of eating, wearing, staying and method of use"[8].

The role of people raised with new quality decides the development of human society, from low to high, through the social revolution and the national liberation revolution. This role was deeply analyzed by Ho Chi Minh in the Revolutionary Road work and in many other articles and speeches. For the revolution of national liberation, Ho Chi Minh pointed out, to be truly independent and free, oppressed peoples must rely first on their own forces, Vietnamese people must release by themselves. For the construction of socialism, Ho Chi Minh also affirmed: "To build Socialism, first of all need to have socialist people" [9]. Finally, Ho Chi Minh concluded: "Whatever work need populace because"no matter what, are artificial, and from small to large, from near to far, all like this" [10]. Thus, in Ho Chi Minh thought, people are both motivation and goal of social revolutions. According to Ho Chi Minh, this role is due to the fact that people have fulfilled their tasks, associated with their responsibilities and certain rights (human rights) in accordance with their status and professions in social ladder as well as in social labor division. President Ho Chi Minh said that the mission of the people was what people must do from their social status and professions because of the survival and purpose of life. These tasks are completed voluntarily by humans, resulting in their own efforts, not causing damage to others, then they are considered responsible. Ho Chi Minh pointed out: "Any person, do anything, political or professional, if fulfills his duties, the result will be good" and "if there is one person who does not finishhis task, all will is broken [11]. More profoundly, Ho Chi Minh also divided society into two types of people as "good and evil", on the basis of two types of work performed is "Right work and wrong work". He concluded: "Doing the right work is the good, doing the wrong work is the evil". Since then, Ho Chi Minh request: "Good deeds should be done, even if they are small. The evil, though it is small, must be avoided and for the demons, "we must resolutely overthrow"[12]. That is the common duty and responsibility of all people, because according to Ho Chi Minh: "Every human being has good and evil in his heart" [13]. These are the duties and responsibilities of people toward themselves, toward their work and toward others. In summary, in Ho Chi Minh thought, man is both a motivation and a goal of national liberation and class liberation, and finally freeing people from oppression of exploitation and poverty,gradually improving the material and spiritual life for people, towards the comprehensive and sustainable development of human.

### **III. Ho Chi Minh Thought On Human Rights**

In the history of human thought there have been many different approaches, leading to different ways to understand human rights. Ho Chi Minh approaches human rights from a practical standpoint, a comprehensive perspective and especially from the position of slaves who are looking for a way to liberate, are struggling to regain basic rights of the entire nation and of every human being. In particular, Ho Chi Minh researches deeply into human rights in term of natural rights, benefits and equal behavior between people and people in society.

Sticking with human positions, roles, tasks and responsibilities is human rights. Human right is the factor that decides the the activeness, motivation, purpose of life and creativity of people. Fighting for human rights is always a strong motivation for the development and improvement of human and human society. The more roles and duties people have, the more rights they possess. These rights are the integration of the rules of both nature and society in man, which is created for man.

According to the above definition, no one can deprived human rights. In order to assert and generalize these rights, Ho Chi Minh quoted the immortal statements in the 1776 Declaration of Independence of the

United States and the Declaration of Human Rights and Civil Rights of the French Revolution in 1789. In particular, Ho Chi Minh emphasized: "All men are created equally; they are endowed by their Creator with certain **inalienable** Rights; among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" [14]. From these, withdraw the conclusion that All the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live, to be happy and free [15].

However, when there was oppression, exploitation of class and nation, those rights of people who were oppressed and exploited were deprived. Summarizing the history of struggles for human rights, Ho Chi Minh had generalized the truth of the times: "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom". These are the new contributions of Ho Chi Minh, greatly contributing to the struggle for human inheritance rights, to expand and improve human rights in human history.

Human rights and human interests must be closely linked, associated with each other, in which respect and implement the right is the cause and benefit is the result. Ho Chi Minh affirmed: "People are born free and equal in rights; and always be free and equal in benefits". Therefore, Ho Chi Minh always pays attention to both human rights and comprehensive and synchronous interests of people, aiming to constantly improve the benefits for people. That is the greatest goal of Ho Chi Minh. Ho Chi Minh stated clearly: "We struggle for freedom, independence but the people still die of hunger and cold then the freedom and independence do nothing. People only know the value of freedom and independence when people are fed and dressed sufficiently. We have to do it immediately: 1- Make people have food to eat. 2- Make people have clothes to wear. 3- Make people have places to live. 4- Make people study. Our purpose is to accomplish four above points" [16].

Deriving from the specific historical situation of Vietnam and the world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Ho Chi Minh recognized clearly that, in colonial countries, only when the peoples (nation) are liberated to regain the rights of the nation can human and the domestic groups (mainly tribes, class, social class) pursue their own rights.

The traditional rights of the nation are "an independent nation and a sovereign state" that has been trampled by the French colonialists and Japanese militarists. After the August Revolution, the traditional rights of the nation were supplemented and solemnly announced by Ho Chi Minh to all the nations and the whole world Vietnam has the right to be a free and independent country and in fact it is so already. And thus the entire Vietnamese people are determined to mobilize all their physical and mental strength, to sacrifice their lives and property in order to safeguard their independence and liberty [17]. Thus, the prerequisite is that the colonial countries must carry out the revolution to liberate the nation successfully to regain the national interests, as a premise to satisfy the next interests. In Ho Chi Minh thought, in every independent nation like Vietnam, the collective interests (mainly ethnic, class, social class) are the rights and overall benefits of each member joins that group. Due to the relative differences in functions, duties and powers, the interests of members in each group also have a certain difference.

Therefore, Ho Chi Minh requested the principle:

- Regarding the rights of each citizen, whether participating in any group they "are equal before the law" and "Citizens of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, social, religious, religious, asset status, cultural, occupational, residence period, from eighteen years old all have the right to vote and from twenty-one years old all have the right to stand for election" [18].

-Regarding the benefits of each citizen, whether participating in any group, they are equal in learning, vocational training, medical care, taxation, mobilization of strength and physical foundation of distribution principle by labor. He affirmed: "Socialism is fair justice: Do more and enjoy more, do less and enjoy less, do not enjoy it. Elderly or disabled people will be cared for by the state" [19]. He emphasized: "There are two important things in the work of distribution circulation: - No fear of lack, just fear of unfairness; - No fear of poverty, only fear of unpeaceful people's hearts" [20]. In the future, when all humanity reaches a high developing stage, implementing the principle of "work depending on capacity and enjoy according to demand", human rights will be fully satisfied.

Consistent with the view of Marxism-Leninism on the great role of human beings, Ho Chi Minh affirmed that he had to trust and cherish people: "In the sky there is nothing as precious as the people". It is a truth summarized by Ho Chi Minh, expressing Ho Chi Minh's trust and respect for people. In Ho Chi Minh's thought, belief and respect in people is a trust in human goodness: "People in spite of how bad, good, civilized or savage they are have emotions [21]; is a precious belief in human intelligence, talent and creativity; is believing in the strength of people when they are closely united. Ho Chi Minh asked to eliminate the Vietnamese people who betray the nation, get rid of colonialists, and with all others, we must love, respect and help" [22]. In essence, Ho Chi Minh's "respect for people" is to cherish human personality. This is reflected in the fact that, when criticizing, Ho Chi Minh emphasized that, "criticise work, not criticise human" [23]. From trust and respect for people, Ho Chi Minh wished everyone to have love for people through the practice of the words "Bác Ái - Humanity" that Ho Chi Minh embodies. Ho Chi Minh not only loves all workers, people of all ages, genders in everyday life, but also particularly loves those who are oppressed, exploited or suffer being enslaved by class and nation. In a New Year's greetings to compatriots in the area to be temporarily seized by the enemy, Ho Chi

Minh wrote: "On a good day, in the Vietnamese heaven and earth, but the fellow citizens must bear the cold, humiliating, extreme, sadness under the Iron of the brutal colonial demons. I am very sorry for the peoples who temporarily fall into that situation"[24]. Ho Chi Minh has never been apathetic and indifferent to human suffering and humiliation. Ho Chi Minh also loves all from the poor, oppressed, exploited and imprisoned people in the world, to the soldiers and officers of the invading army who were taken prisoner. Ho Chi Minh's human love has been raised at the high level of ideological awareness. He wanted to find out the social causes of suffering and unhappiness of humans and Ho Chi Minh found. It was the evil people, the "Viet Gian, who sold the country", the "fascists, colonists" whom he was so indignant about, calling them demons. Ho Chi Minh urged to "punish them to set an example for others" and only so could help people escape from the misery. Ho Chi Minh's whole life was a heroic epic of the struggle against oppression, exploitation and meaningless for humanity to live in peace and happiness. That awareness has raised Ho Chi Minh's "love" and "salvation" perspective to become deeper and radical.

In everyday life, in many people, due to the insurgency of evil or limited awareness, there are many shortcomings or misdeeds that cause crimes. Early in history tolerance was considered as a way to overcome that situation. Ho Chi Minh inherited and applied creatively the tradition of the nation, the compassionate thought of Buddhism and the humanitarian thought of Marxist-Lenin about tolerance in the new era. On that basis, Ho Chi Minh conceived, people must open their tolerance to humanity. HCM has developed tolerant behaviour to an art.

The basis of tolerance heart of Ho Chi Minh is believe in the human goodness of all human beings in the struggle between "good and evil" The legitimacy and science of the revolutionary path and especially the moral example of Ho Chi Minh is to fight for the victory of the good over the evil in social life, along with their great tolerance is. a prerequisite for the good to dominate the evil in people with mistakes, which means to recover and develop the good to win the evil in every human being.

In term of tolerance to human, Ho Chi Minh first cares for those who are forced by the enemy to persuade, bribe, threaten, and coerce to harm the country and harm the people; next, he cares for people with mistakes, including cadres and party members who are not yet stable on ideological view-point, moral and lower-level officials and young people, who have not yet taken the hard work of studying, training and accumulating experience. Ho Chi Minh makes it clear that "with each person we need to be tolerate" [25].

Awakening conscience, capturing people's hearts to create the unrivaled power of great unity is the lofty goal of tolerance and generosity of Ho Chi Minh. He said clearly, "we have to be lenient, magnanimous. There is such a great unity: "Having great solidarity, the future will be glorious" [26]. Evaluating the tolerance and generosity of Ho Chi Minh, historian Tran Van Giau quoted the words of a foreign scholar who shared his view: "Uncle Ho is a conscientious builder, build it when it doesn't exist, recreate it when it lost. He awakened the enchanted man, graciously supported the one who have made mistakes, turn the thousands of ordinary people into anonymous and famous heroes in labor, on the battlefield, in dungeons, before guillotines [27].

#### **IV. Ho Chi Minh Thought On Human Development**

All views of Ho Chi Minh on the nature, position, role, duties, responsibilities, rights and interests of people, how to deal with people and step by step to thoroughly liberate people by the revolutionary of national liberation, democracy to advance to the proletarian revolution has comprehensively expressed Ho Chi Minh's central thought about people. It is the thought considering human as both motivation and the goal of the struggle to liberate people. Because Ho Chi Minh determined, everything is done for people and beyond for the liberation of people. On the contrary, only liberating people creates conditions for human development.

Inheriting and applying creatively the ideas of ancient people and Marxist-Leninist views on education and training, Ho Chi Minh pointed out: "To build socialism, first of all need to have socialist people" [28]. Those are new people in the construction of socialism. Therefore, it is necessary to strive to educate and train people to develop comprehensively both **moral, intelligence, constitution and art**. Ho Chi Minh considers it a difficult, complicated and long-term career - the "hundred years of human training" career and the national policy of the country.

In order to guide the building of a newly well-rounded person, Ho Chi Minh requires new person to have socialist ideology and style with qualities:

**Regarding to moral:** Have a sense of ownership of socialist community "one for all, all for one", have industriousness, thrift, integrity, uprightness and public-spirited and selfless", have passionate patriotism and pure international spirit.

**Regarding to talent:** Always improve the level of political theory, scientific - technical knowledge, cultural understanding, learn and summarize experiences, use foreign languages well and know how to organize work in a scientific way to bring about high results.

**Regarding to physical strength:** develop the body well, have sufficient health to complete the task.

**Regarding to aesthetics:** evaluating correctly about beauty, know how to create beauty and enjoy comprehensive beauty in both soul and appearance.

From these qualities, Ho Chi Minh attaches special importance to the methods of developing human comprehensively with the following four methodological system.

Firstly, it is necessary to criticize and fight against bad ideologies, bad behavior, unethical phenomena, counter-culture, and the harms of colonial lifestyle from foreign countries imported into our country. Ho Chi Minh required to wipe out "the internal enemy aggression". It is individualism and bureaucracy, orders, wastefulness.

Secondly, education and training and the qualities of new men. Fighting goes along with building, in which building is priority. The top measure is to attach importance to self-education and self-training of each person in the sincere spirit "Self-criticize and criticize" to help themselves and help others improve.

Thirdly, the need to combine education with training and practicing in family, school and society, domestic and foreign, attaching importance to solutions of setting examples of "good people and good deeds"; strict reward and fine; promoting the role of example of parents, siblings in the family, teachers, party members and cadres, key officials and the most important are the leaders.

Fourthly, regularly organizing the supervision, inspection, urging and summarizing the experience of the process of implementing education, training new people in the past and present to draw useful lessons for the next process.

In Ho Chi Minh thought, having good management skill and proper use of human resources, as Ho Chi Minh pointed out "using talent, finance and power of people to benefit people" [29] is a basic point of view. The essence of this view is to require the leaders and managers to properly and fully realize their roles "as both leaders and servants of the people". This helps the members of these organizations to create all conditions for people to be aware of the duties, responsibilities, rights and to properly and fully realize the benefits of each person, through which promote all human resources. The general view of "people are both a motivation and a goal of the struggle to liberate people" can only gradually become reality when all human resources are promoted more and more fully.

## V. CONCLUSION

Ho Chi Minh is a great man. He strived and sacrificed his whole life for the happiness of the Vietnamese people. Ho Chi Minh is a beautiful symbol that crystallizes the humanity values of mankind in all ages. Ho Chi Minh's views on people, human rights are formed from practical activities and the acquisition of the cultural essence of mankind. That thought, gradually becomes true in Vietnam and brings about good values; people are liberated and fully developed. Moreover, human rights from the approach of Ho Chi Minh thought are still universal for all mankind in this era.

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