

Pursuing the path to national salvation: reflections on the youth generation at Thai Nguyen University of Technology

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the author delves into the journey of seeking national salvation undertaken by President Ho Chi Minh, highlighting the willpower, aspirations, and determination to change the destiny of the nation. Through the exemplary leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, valuable lessons and experiences are drawn for the developmental trajectory of Thai Nguyen University of Technology. President Ho Chi Minh stands as an epitome of patriotism, embodying the spirit of youth, daring to think, daring to act, and daring to immerse oneself in the quest to alter the nation's fate. He dedicated his youthful years traversing the globe, acquiring knowledge, and honing his skills to liberate the Vietnamese people from colonial oppression, laying the foundation for the prosperity and happiness of present-day Vietnam. Emulating the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, the student at Thai Nguyen University of Technology must harbor love for their alma mater, possess the desire and determination to change the destiny of their institution, and courageously venture forth to learn and explore new perspectives and solutions to contribute to its advancement and prosperity.

Keywords: willpower, dedication, aspirations, determination, youth generation...

I. INTRODUCTION

During his lifetime, President Ho Chi Minh once proclaimed, "Our country is an agricultural one, when agriculture flourishes, so does our nation". This assertion acknowledges and affirms the significance and role of agricultural production in the existence and development of the national economy during that era. In the current phase, as the entire nation is resolutely striving to achieve the goals of industrialization and modernization, and if he were alive to witness the monumental achievements we have attained in this

endeavor, President Ho Chi Minh would undoubtedly assert: "Our country is an industrial one, when industry flourishes, so does our nation". Indeed, as we are aware, the status and power of our Vietnam have undergone a complete transformation. In the midst of deepening globalization, Vietnam has the opportunity to develop in all aspects of societal life and particularly in the economic realm, especially in the field of industrial production. If we awaken and fully utilize our inherent potential, undoubtedly, we will take even greater strides in our industrialization and modernization strategy. Among the significant sources of potential lies within educational institutions such as Thai Nguyen University of Technology – the university that nurtures and supplies high-quality human resources for the industrialization of our national economy. Consequently, igniting the talents, intellect, and fervor of the youth generation at Thai Nguyen University of Technology will hold immense significance. In this process, revisiting and studying the journey of national salvation undertaken by the young Nguyen Tat Thanh (Ho Chi Minh) will provide us with invaluable guidance and insights.

1. Embarking on the path to national salvation: Nguyen Tat Thanh's journey

The colonial forces of France initiated armed aggression against Vietnam in 1858, officially establishing their dominion over our nation in 1884. Against the backdrop of the Nguyen dynasty's loss of leadership and betrayal of national interests, numerous patriotic movements, following various ideological orientations, emerged throughout the country. Notable among these were movements rooted in feudal ideologies, such as the Can Vuong movement led by Emperor Ham Nghi and the Yen The peasant movement led by Hoang Hoa Tham. Despite garnering significant attention,

these movements ultimately faltered due to the obsolescence of feudal ideologies in the face of contemporary challenges.

Subsequently, movements with tendencies towards bourgeois leadership also flourished, exemplified by the Dong Du movement led by Phan Boi Chau and the Duy Tan movement led by Phan Chau Trinh. While these movements achieved some degree of success, they were eventually suppressed by the strength of the adversary. These failures underscored the ineffectiveness of bourgeois democratic ideologies in addressing the historical demands of the nation at that time.

In light of these realities, Nguyen Tat Thanh recognized a crucial insight: what was lacking in the struggle for national independence was not merely physical strength, but rather a profound sense of patriotism and unwavering determination, embodied in a correct path to salvation. With fervent patriotism and bold thinking, imbued with acute intelligence, Nguyen Tat Thanh resolved to explore the path to liberation for his compatriots. Rising above the limitations of his era and contemporary nationalist intellectuals, driven by the desire to liberate a nation deprived of its sovereignty, enslaved and impoverished, Nguyen Tat Thanh decided to embark on the journey to save his country with burning determination: "Freedom for my compatriots, independence for my homeland, these are all I desire, these are all I understand"¹. This inevitably led to a pivotal historical event not only for the individual Nguyen Tat Thanh but also for the Vietnamese nation as a whole. This event took place on June 5, 1911, at the Port of Dragons, where he officially set sail to seek the path to national salvation aboard the *LatoucheTréville*.

During the initial period of searching for the path to national salvation (1919-1920), Ho Chi Minh found himself perplexed amidst fervent debates, confessing, "I know very little about political matters... I do not yet understand what a party is, what a union is, let alone the difference between socialism and communism... I know very little about the October Revolution and Lenin; intuitively, I feel a sense of solidarity with the Russian Revolution and its leader, but I have not read any of Lenin's works"². In early 1919, he joined the French Socialist Party with a simple rationale: "Simply because it is the only organization in France that advocates for my homeland, the only organization that pursues the noble ideals of the French Revolution: LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY"³.

Unified in his pursuit, Nguyen Tat Thanh remained steadfast in his intellectual axis, aiming

to liberate colonial nations, recognizing that their desire for liberation must precede all else. Hence, upon receiving the answer "Third International solidarity with colonial oppressed nations" and reading Lenin's Theses on National and Colonial Issues, he voted for the Third International, endorsing the third international and wholeheartedly trusting Lenin.

With his astute political acumen, Nguyen Tat Thanh, from his participation in the French Socialist Party, resolved to choose the revolutionary path pioneered by Lenin: "Lenin's Theses deeply moved and inspired me, shedding light and instilling unwavering confidence! I was overjoyed to the point of tears. Sitting alone in my room, I exclaimed as if addressing a crowd: 'O oppressed and suffering compatriots, this is what we need, this is the path to our liberation'⁴, that is, national liberation through the proletarian revolution.

Throughout his revolutionary activities, he traveled extensively, read extensively, and understood extensively. Despite encountering various theoretical doctrines, Nguyen Tat Thanh affirmed: "Nowadays, there are many theories, many ideologies, but the truest, surest, and most revolutionary ideology is Leninism"⁵. Arriving at this conclusion was not entirely straightforward; it was a culmination of patriotism, scientific temperament, intellect, courage, vision, and perspective, but above all, it was driven by the ambition to rescue the nation and its people from the shackles of slavery.

He wrote: "Initially, it was patriotism, not yet communism, that led me to follow Lenin, to follow the Third International"⁶. This was the path that led Nguyen Tat Thanh - Nguyen Ai Quoc to Marxism-Leninism, finding the correct, scientific, and revolutionary path to national salvation that met the historical needs of the nation, resonated with the people, and was in line with the spirit of the times following the victory of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917.

Thus, by the end of 1920, after enduring numerous trials and tribulations in his quest, through meticulous, scientific exploration and research, Nguyen Tat Thanh found the correct path to national liberation for our people - the path of proletarian revolution. He declared: "For me, everything is clear now; my task is to return home, to gather the masses, enlighten the masses, and lead the masses in revolution".

With his talent, prestige, and role, Nguyen Ai Quoc convened and presided over the Unification Conference leading to the establishment of the Communist Party of Vietnam on February 3, 1930.

From then on, our nation embarked on the struggle for independence, freedom, and socialism under the rightful leadership of the Party - "the foremost factor determining the victory of the Vietnamese revolution"⁷

In summary, the journey of Nguyen Tat Thanh's quest for national salvation embodies several fundamental meanings:

Firstly, it exemplifies the willpower, determination, and courage to think and act of the young Nguyen Tat Thanh, a feat not easily accomplished, especially in the historical context of that time.

Secondly, it demonstrates the independent thinking and autonomy of Nguyen Tat Thanh, evident in his choice to venture to the West in search of the path to salvation, steadfastly refusing to follow the directives of contemporary predecessors. Furthermore, despite encountering various revolutionary doctrines and organizations in France, he ultimately chose Marxism-Leninism and participated in founding the French Communist Party...

Thirdly, patriotism is not merely confined to contemplation or sentimentality; it is demonstrated through concrete actions and tangible deeds. True patriotism extends beyond mere thoughts and feelings, manifesting in tangible contributions and active engagement with the welfare of the nation and its people.

Fourthly, patriotism lays the groundwork for sincere international relations, fostering transparency and goodwill between Vietnam and nations across the globe. It's remarkable but true that during the struggle against French colonialism, the Vietnamese revolution received sympathy, support, and assistance from none other than the French people themselves.

Fifthly, staying true to the oath of loyalty by departing with the intention to return, guided by the principle: departing to gain insight into life, returning to save oneself and assist others. Specifically, from the age of 13, Nguyen Tat Thanh harbored a desire "to travel abroad, to see France," "to become acquainted with French civilization", not merely to satisfy the youthful aspirations for knowledge, but to "seek out" the secrets behind the foundation of Western civilization and strength; to "fully understand" the "business practices" of the powerful nations that Vietnamese patriots hoped could help their country break free from colonial domination; and, "after observing their methods, I will return to assist our people".

2. Reflections on the current generation of students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology

"The term 'young generation' is not entirely explicit, as depending on different perspectives and approaches, the connotation of the concept will vary, thereby leading to differences in the identified subjects. In this article, the author tentatively defines the 'young generation,' especially the young generation of Thai Nguyen University of Technology (TNUT), consisting of three main groups: young leadership, young faculty, and all students of the University. These three groups, due to their different levels of capability, emotions, and roles, naturally have differences in understanding, absorption, and learning of the spirit, ideology, and ethics of Nguyen Ai Quoc - Ho Chi Minh. Specifically:

2.1. For the young leadership team

The rejuvenation of leadership cadres is a righteous policy of the Party and has achieved significant results. In recent years, TNUT has successfully transitioned its leadership from the 1960s generation to the 1970s. From the Party Committee, the University Council to the University of administrator of TNUT, the majority belong to the 1970s generation, especially the key leadership team of all units, mostly in their 1970s, even some in their 1980s. With an enthusiastic and mature young leadership team, we are entirely hopeful for a new phase of qualitative development for the University...

Drawing inspiration from Nguyen Tat Thanh's unwavering commitment to seeking the path of national salvation, it is hoped that the collective leadership of the University will have a candid, objective, and scientific view of the institution's current state, in order to formulate appropriate solutions and steps forward to leverage strengths and gradually overcome weaknesses. In recent times, the University Council has been implementing a comprehensive array of solution-oriented projects to foster breakthroughs. Notably, the financial regulations of the University aim to prepare the best groundwork for the autonomous university policy of the Ministry of Education and Training. According to Associate Professor Dr. Ngo Nhu Khoa - Secretary of the Party Committee, Chairman of the University Council, in various forums, this regulation is expected to foster a spirit of dedication and enthusiasm among all staff in the institution. With the philosophy of "more work, more rewards; less work, less rewards" serving as a driving force, we are motivated to work with zeal, responsibility, and effectiveness.

2.2. The young cadre team

This constitutes a significant portion of the teaching and administrative staff of TNUT. Recognizing, harnessing, and maximizing the role and capabilities of this segment will be of immense value to the current and future development of the institution. As a young cadre myself, upon researching and understanding Nguyen Tat Thanh's determination to seek the path of national salvation and observing the work processes of colleagues of the same age group at the University, I dare to draw several lessons:

Firstly, assimilating and embracing the spirit of "leaving to return" of Nguyen Ai Quoc. In particular, given the current situation where many young teaching staff members, after being provided with opportunities by the University to study abroad and enhance their qualifications, choose not to return to the institution for work and dedication.

Secondly, boldly expressing personal opinions in the spirit of contribution to the university's development process.

2.3. The students of TNUT

This is the largest force of TNUT, and arousing and harnessing the youthful vigor of this force is not only significant for the development of the University but also for society as a whole.

Today's young generation lives, studies, works, and contributes during a period of peace and development, with opportunities for learning exchanges, cultural integration with the region, and development. We have our nation's history as a pillar, our national culture as a foundation, and exemplary youths such as Tran Quoc Toan, Ly Tu Trong, Vo Thi Sau, Phan Dinh Giot, Tran Thi Ly, Nguyen Van Troi... to emulate.

To live up to the many generations of predecessors, we must equip this force with deep knowledge in professional fields, life experiences, and essential living skills, enabling them to be more confident in their thoughts, words, and actions, and to be more proactive and creative with new ideas and lofty aspirations. Another important aspect that every young person must possess is courage, determination, willpower, and decisiveness to make breakthroughs, leave a mark, excellently fulfill tasks, achieve new successes, assert themselves in the collective and society, and live and contribute to the homeland.

II. CONCLUSION

Today, the country is undergoing strong renewal, primarily demonstrated through its extensive integration into the global economy. The essence of globalization always has a dual nature.

Alongside positive impacts, globalization also brings about "haziness" for national entities in determining targets and partners, confrontation or dialogue, progress or regression. The process of international relationship linkage makes the boundary between these two poles even thinner. Vietnam, in particular, has to confront hostile forces with extremely complex and increasingly dangerous variations of sabotage policies. The allure of money in an open era isn't difficult to seduce youth, inherently dynamic in absorbing world cultures, but not yet mature in perception. We must not forget Hitler's declaration that to invade a country, first blacken its youth. The enemy always remembers this when implementing the strategy of "peaceful evolution", with the ploy of "depoliticizing" youth. Now more than ever, the Party needs to thoroughly adhere to President Ho Chi Minh's views on the enemies of the revolution, guiding the policies and actions of the entire nation.

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