

## FOREWORD

In this second book on Ho Chi Minh, a sequel to her *Ho Chi Minh: The Heart and Mind of a Patriot*, Dr. Dai Trang Nguyen offers us a broader and intriguing perspective on Ho Chi Minh and issues related to his underlying values and nation building, including how he approached the challenges of unification, national independence, and various aspects of economic and social development. In fact, few topics of nation building and development escape the attention of the author in her detailed reading of the *Ho Chi Minh Collection*, a collection of his papers, speeches, and letters.

This diverse array of topics, combined with the many influences that contributed to Ho's thought, which gave him great breadth, flexibility, and complexity, makes the book an interesting and enjoyable read. In addition, the author's research into Ho is also a personal search for answers to questions of poverty reduction in countries with legacies of a colonial past, a search conditioned by her early life in Vietnam and her years in the overseas Vietnamese community in Canada.

Though Ho had many admirable qualities, the book is not an appraisal of him or his policies. Rather, it is a positive review of his life and leadership through his writings and speeches. This provides insight into the values, priorities and policies of this complex and important man. To give just one example of the substance of the book, a number of Ho's views on economic planning and management appear very relevant today. It shows that the serious challenges to good economic management are not unique to an ex-colonial economy, to a centrally planned economy, or to a market economy but rather are common to all. There are many such gems in this book about Ho's thinking and statements that might surprise the reader, which makes it all the more worth reading.

~ Richard R. Barichello  
Director, Centre for Southeast Asia Research,  
University of British Columbia