

THE CREATION OF THE PARTY'S THEORY OF SOCIALISM AND THE PATH TO SOCIALISM IN VIETNAM FOR MORE THAN 35 YEARS OF RENOVATION - A VIEW FROM SOLVING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORIENTATION OF GOALS AND STEP-BY-STEP DETERMINATION OF SOCIALISM VALUES IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD

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***Abstract:** The author argues that from the founding conference of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1930, the Communist Party of Vietnam affirmed the path of national independence and socialism for the entire revolutionary cause of the country. Especially, since the renovation in 1986 the Party has applied and promoted the theory of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought creatively to build and form a new understanding of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam. The author analyzes some outstanding features of the new model of socialism in Vietnam, such as The theory of the socialist-oriented market economy; The theory of building a socialist rule of law State of the people, by the people and for the people; The building a value system and culture of Vietnamese people in the new context; the theory of Party building and consolidation; The theory of socialist democracy; Theories on national defense, security and foreign relations.*

***Keywords:** Communist Party of Vietnam, Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, Model of socialism, Renovation.*

Right from the founding conference of the Communist Party of Vietnam on February 03, 1930, the Party affirmed its goal of making bourgeoisies' civil rights revolution and land revolution to advance toward a communist society, at the same time, formed the path of national independence and socialism for the entire revolutionary cause of the country. The renovation work

under the leadership of the Party since 1986 has remained in line with that goal and path, applying and promoting the theory of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought creatively to build and form a new understanding of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam in today's national and world context. Through each Congress,

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our Party has made new progress regarding this fundamental issue based on summarizing the realization of the socialism goal and ensuring the socialist orientation in combination with step-by-step determination of socialism values during the renovation and development of the country.

Our Party has creatively applied scientific socialism theory to the renovation process, established the development value system in building socialism, and especially determined and developed theory on the transition period to socialism by 2045.

During the renovation process, the Party has pointed out 6 features of the socialist model which is further developed into 8 features, demonstrating the continuous development in the Party's theoretical awareness of the socialist model - socialism goal in Vietnam; namely: 1- Rich people, powerful country, democratic, just and civilized society; 2- Being owned by the people; 3- Having a highly developed economy based on modern production forces and appropriate, progressive production relations; 4- Having an advanced culture deeply imbued with national identity; 5- People have a prosperous, free and happy life and have conditions for comprehensive development; 6- Ethnic groups throughout the country show the equality, solidarity, mutual respect and help; 7- Establishing a socialist rule of law-based state of the people, by the

people, and for the people led by the Communist Party; 8- Having friendship relations and cooperation with other countries around the world¹.

To achieve that goal, we have to closely follow the orientation of accelerating the industrialization and modernization of the country in association with the development of (a knowledge-based economy; developing a socialist-oriented market economy; building an advanced culture deeply imbued with national identity; raising awareness of people and improving people's living standards; realizing social progress and justice; ensuring national defense and security, social order and safety; implementing foreign policies on the principles of independence, self-reliance, multilateralization, diversification, peace, friendship, cooperation and development, and proactive and active international integration; building a socialist democracy, promoting the will and strength of national unity in combination with power of the era; building a socialist rule of law state of the people, by the people, and for the people; building a clean, strong and comprehensive Party and political system.

The theoretical achievements of our Party within the understanding of the socialist model have always been accompanied by the identification of a goal system with the basic and most important values that Vietnam is

aiming for, i.e. “Rich people, powerful country, democratic, just and civilized society”, determining and orienting the development vision by 2045. Our Party has pointed out that, to realize that goal system, we have to master and deal with the following major relationships: “between stability, innovation and development; between economic innovation and political innovation; between compliance with market rules and assurance of socialist orientation; between the development of productive forces and building and step-by-step improvement of socialist production relations; between the State, the market and the society; between economic growth and cultural development, progress, social justice, environmental protection; between building and defending the socialist Vietnamese Fatherland; between independence, self-reliance and international integration; between the Party’s leadership, the State’s management and the people’s ownership; between practicing democracy and strengthening the rule of law and ensuring social discipline”².

Breakthroughs, creativity, and new developments in theory on the basis of summarizing the realization of the socialism goal, the assurance of the socialist orientation, and the step-by-step determination of socialism values during the renovation and development of the country, are shown in the following main aspects and fields.

The theory of the socialist-oriented

market economy is the creativity and breakthrough in the Party’s theoretical thinking in the renovation process.

The socialist-oriented market economic institution was formed during the renovation period starting from the 6th National Congress and has been increasingly fully understood by our Party, i.e. “an economy that operates fully and synchronously, following the rules of the market economy, while ensuring the socialist orientation suitable to each development stage of the country; a modern market economy on the basis of international integration, under the management of the socialist rule of law State, led by the Communist Party of Vietnam, with the aim of “Rich people, powerful country, democratic, just and civilized society”³.

Clearly recognizing and promptly remedying the limitations and mistakes of the bureaucratic, subsidized and planned economy in the pre-renovation period, theoretical understanding of the socialist-oriented market economic institution is *a creative development* that has been increasingly perfected and become a fundamental and profound theoretical contribution of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The 13th Party Congress affirmed that: “The understanding of the socialist-oriented market economy is getting more and more complete. The legal system, mechanisms and policies will continue to be perfected in line with the requirements of building a

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modern market economy on the basis of international integration. Market factors and types of markets have been gradually developed consistently, associated with regional and world markets”⁴. The socialist-oriented market economic institution has been gradually perfected on the basis of modernity, synchronization and integration.

The theory of building a socialist rule of law State of the people, by the people and for the people has been increasingly consolidated and developed in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the State's operations, meeting requirements and tasks of country innovation and development course.

The Party has determined more and more clearly that, the Socialist rule of law State of Vietnam is substantially the State of the people, by the people, and for the people, managing all aspects of social life by law, built on the basis of strengthening and expanding the great unity of all people, focusing on the alliance of working class, peasantry and intelligentsia, and led by the Party.

The socialist rule of law State of Vietnam is defined by its essential attributes, which become a principle in the model design of our state, i.e. *All power is vested in the people and belongs to the people.* State power is concentrated and unified by the people, without division of power, or “using power against power”. Although power is unified and not divided, in the state power structure, there must be power

assignment and coordination according to functions and tasks to ensure unity and focus on one single goal: “exercise and protect powers of the people”.

The contents on state building stated in Constitution 2013 have shown important progress of the Party regarding views and understanding of building a socialist rule of law State.

Developing creative theories, harmoniously and rationally handling the relationship between economic growth and the realization of social progress and justice, protecting the environment, and focusing on building a value system and culture of Vietnamese people in the new context.

Since setting out the comprehensive renewal policy, the Party has paid great attention to solving social problems, realizing social policies with the aim of fairness, equality, and social progress; especially, on the 13th National Congress, for the first time, in the Document, the Party defined that social policies are a means/tool for socialist orientation with the view: “*Full awareness and assurance of socialist orientation in social policies*”⁽⁵⁾.

In the important article “*Some theoretical and practical issues on socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam*”, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong convincingly points out the goals and objectives as the true values of Vietnamese socialism: “*We need a society with development truly for the sake of people but not for profit to*

prevent exploitation and trampling on human dignity. We need economic development associated with social progress and justice but not widening the gap between rich and poor and resulting in social inequality. We need a society of compassion, solidarity, mutual support, progressive and humanistic values but not of unfair competition and “dog-eat-dog” for the selfish benefit of a few individuals and groups. We need sustainable development in harmony with nature to ensure a healthy living environment for current and future generations but not exploitation and appropriation of resources, unlimited consumption and environmental destruction. And we need a political system where real power belongs to the people, for the people and serves the interests of the people not just for the wealth of a few individuals or groups. Are those good wishes the true values of socialism and also the goals and the path that President Ho Chi Minh, our Party and people have selected and are steadfastly pursuing?⁽⁵⁾

General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong clearly explained: *“A basic feature as an important attribute of the socialist orientation in the market economy in Vietnam is to associate the economy with society, unify the economic policy with social policy and economic growth with the realization of social progress and justice in each step and policy and throughout the development process”*⁽⁶⁾. It means that we do not wait until

the economy reaches a high level of development to realize social progress and justice, and we do not “ignore” social progress and justice to pursue economic growth. Rather, *each economic policy must aim at social development; each social policy must aim to create a driving force for economic development, promote lawful livelihood in hand with sustainable hunger eradication and poverty reduction, take care of people with meritorious services and those in disadvantaged circumstances.* This is a principled requirement to ensure a socialist-oriented healthy and sustainable development.

A Socialist society is a society with progressive and humane values, based on the common interests of the whole society in harmony with the legitimate interests of people, which is qualitatively different from competitive societies for the personal interests of individuals and groups⁽⁷⁾, thus, building social consensus instead of social opposition requires favorable conditions. In the socialist political regime, the relationship between the Party, the State and the people is the relationship between actors pursuing the same goals and interests; all the guidelines of the Party, policies, laws and activities of the State are for *the interests of the people and people’s happiness-centered.*

Further developing theories on the role and mission of the Party, especially on Party building and consolidation, and a clean and strong political

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system to ensure the correct and wise leadership of the Party towards the cause of national reform and building and defending the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The Party defines that Party building and consolidation is a fundamental, important, urgent, and decisive task for the entire cause of building and defending Vietnam itself, the survival of the Party and the regime and the sustainable development of Vietnam. The theory of Party building and consolidation is expressed in the *higher awareness of the relationship between Party building and consolidation, the connection of these two aspects with building a clean and stable political system*. The theory of Party building and consolidation is also reflected in *the higher awareness of the structure of Party building work*. The document of the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam emphasized that in the coming years, special attention must be paid to Party building and consolidation which should be further strengthened comprehensively in terms of politics, ideology and morality, organizations and personnel. It is the development of awareness of the structure of Party building work.

Especially, the 13th National Party Congress has determined that “Strengthening the Party building and consolidation and a clean and strong political system” is the most important and indispensable requirement in the

process of more and more widespread national reform and international integration to improve the Party's leadership and ruling capacity, contribute to enhancing the effectiveness and performance of the political system, promote socialist democracy, and ensure the synchronization and compatibility between economic and political innovation for the quick and sustainable development of Vietnam.

Inheriting Ho Chi Minh's thought, our Party has developed the theory of strengthening the building and step-by-step perfection of the socialist democracy, strong promotion of the right to mastery and the main role of the people in the development of socialism in Vietnam

The political model and general operating mechanism are the Party's leadership, the State's management and the people's right to mastery. Democracy is the essence of the socialist regime, both the goal and the driving force of socialist building; building a socialist democracy and ensuring that power truly belongs to the people is an important and long-term task of the Vietnamese revolution. We advocate to constantly promote democracy, and build a truly socialist rule-of-law State of the people, by the people and for the people, on the basis of an alliance between workers, farmers and intellectuals led by the Communist Party of Vietnam. The State represents the people's right to mastery, and at the same time, is the

organizer of the implementation of the Party's guidelines; has a mechanism for the people to exercise their direct right to mastery and representative democracy in all fields of social life and participate in social management. We realize that the socialist rule-of-law State is *fundamentally* different from the bourgeois rule-of-law State in the fact that the rule of law under capitalism is essentially a tool to protect and serve the interests of the bourgeoisie, while the rule of law under socialism is a tool to manifest and exercise the people's right to mastery, guarantee and protect the interests of the majority of the people. Through law enforcement, the State ensures the conditions for the people to be subject to political power, and carry out a dictatorship with all actions that infringe upon the interests of the Fatherland and the people. At the same time, we determine great national unity is a source of strength and a decisive factor to ensure the sustainable victory of the revolutionary cause in Vietnam and constantly promote equality and solidarity among nations and religions ⁽⁸⁾.

Developing theories on national defense, security and foreign relations, ensuring the supreme interests of the nation-state; actively, proactively and deeply integrating into the international community on the basis of resolutely maintaining independence, self-reliance, unity and territorial integrity.

In the context of complicated changes in the domestic and international

situation, our Party has made innovations in theoretical awareness of the nature and characteristics of the two tasks: national construction and defense, and preservation of National security. On that basis, the Party determines that strengthening national defense, and maintaining national security, political stability, social order, and safety is an important and regular task. We aim at persistently and resolutely defending our country's independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, strategic interests, and survival; persistently and resolutely defending the socialist regime (defending the Party, socialist State and the ideological foundation of the Party), persistently and resolutely protecting the people and national cultural identity.

The consistent guideline of our Party is independence, self-reliance, peace, cooperation and development, for the supreme benefit of the nation-state, and for a rich, strong, prosperous and happy socialist Vietnam. In the context of today's unpredictable changes in the world, the new development in our Party's external relations policy aims at multilateralization, diversification of relations, proactive and active international integration; raising our country's position in the international arena, becoming a reliable friend and partner and a responsible member of the international community, contributing to the cause of peace, national independence, democracy and social progress in the world./.

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