

Interview with Serve the People (Vietnam): Communists in a Revisionist Country¹

Valley of Pomars [*Vale dos Pomares*] Study Group

April 6, 2024

Thiago: We want to welcome you, and we salute your participation in this interview.

Luu: Thank you for inviting us to this interview. We are honoured to participate and answer your questions, comrades.

Thiago: When the Serve the people blog was created and what are its purposes?

Luu: The VDPV [*Vi Dân Phục Vụ*] blog was created in December last year. It has 4 main purposes. The first one was to digitalize and archive texts from China, specifically Chairman Mao, the Gang of Four, the Cultural Revolution texts, aside from that, other Marxist ones like Great Debate documents, Stalin, Kalinin and translating-archiving other works from other countries (like Brazil, Peru and The Philippines), we also want to publicize those works in Vietnamese for free for everyone to access. We want to push for the reconstitution of the Communist Party of Vietnam as a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party and for people to organize into practice, in the north and the south of the nation.

Thiago: What people represented the left line of the Communist Party of Vietnam from 1956 to the total restoration of capitalism?

Thăng: There is a rise of the right opportunist line, by the so-called “Nhan van-Giai Pham Group,” they tried to restore Capitalist culture by the so-called “art for the sake of art.” Chairman Ho Chi Minh was the main defender of Marxism in this struggle.

In the Great Debate, between Leninism and revisionism, Ho Chi Minh took on the Centrist line. But, this line was a grave mistake for it breeds the fertile ground for the rise of revisionism and opportunism and the restoration of capitalism in Vietnam later on.

Overall, in the history of the Communist party, the left line was defended mainly by Ho Chi Minh, but he also indirectly liquidated this line, when he shifted to Centrism, creating the vacuum that allowed Revisionism to takeover.

After his death in 1969, the Left Line was entirely liquidated. The remaining Party leaders, either fell into Centrism or Revisionism. Until now, there are no considerable group that represents the Left Line in Vietnam.

Thiago: How did the restoration of capitalism and bourgeois dictatorship happen in Vietnam? How do the State, the Party and the Vietnamese economy operate today?

¹<https://vidanphucvu.wordpress.com/2024/04/07/press-communique-of-the-interview-with-serve-the-people-editorial-by-vale-dos-pomares-study-group-gevp/>

Thắng: The bourgeois dictatorship in Vietnam started after the death of Ho Chi Minh and the usurpation to power by the revisionist clique, turning Vietnam into a semi-colony of the Soviet social-imperialists. The total restoration of capitalism in Vietnam began in 1986, when the Doi Moi reform turned Vietnam from a semi-colony of Soviet social-imperialism to a semi-colony of Yankee Imperialism and Chinese Social-Imperialism, reinforcing the semifeudal state.

(This part is additional notes by Lưu based on Thắng's answer, is not entirely accurate of what Thắng said, for that part didn't get noted in time) They adopt the theory of the productive forces, one similar to Deng in all sides. It liquidated the Party, turning it into a lapdog of foreign Imperialists. The state today is a police state, a bourgeois dictatorship. The economy is heavily controlled by the Yankee and Chinese Imperialists, the State is also heavily crony capitalist, for they cooperate with corporations and foreign Imperialists against the people in general and the Proletariat in particular.

Thiago: What are your criticism made of Ho Chi Minh's centrist deviation and the subsequent adoption of "Ho Chi Minh Thought" by his successors? Were there any prominent leaders in Vietnam "to the left" of Ho Chi Minh?

Lưu: There must be criticisms made of Ho Chi Minh's centrism, and we must recognize that he liquidated the left-line. We recognize that centrism is a very dangerous thing, even if it's not as openly anti-communist as the right line, but it creates an opening for the right line. We could compare his mistakes to Kim Il-Sung and other nations who took the same positions, when he died, in his testament, he didn't say to defend the line of Chairman Mao, but that he "regrets the split in the International Communist Movement", and in other instances, when asked on the problem, he told the Party cadres to "not intervene in the affairs of other nations", even if he was sympathetic to Albania and China, he also didn't really attack the right line, even then, he refused the conciliation with the Americans and accepting of capitulationist policies that the Khrushchevites tried to impose on us. However, Vietnam didn't struggle against anything else. About "Ho Chi Minh Thought", they [his successors] are dogmatic, taking his centrism as a dogma, focusing on his "revolutionary morals" and claim that People's War was systemized by Ho Chi Minh and not by Mao. They denied the influence of MZT on HMT, bastardizing the Ho Chi Minh Thought, saying that it is influenced by religions and reactionary ideals, turning it from a revolutionary theory to a reactionary theory. There were no representatives of the left line, only opportunists.

Thiago: What do you think of Chairman Gonzalo and his contributions of universal validity? How are anti-revisionism and Maoism viewed in Vietnam?

Thắng: As Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, we cannot fail to acknowledge the role and significant contributions of Chairman Gonzalo to Marxist theory. He defined Maoism as the third and highest stage of Marxism, asserting that Maoism is the Leninism of the era of imperialism and modern revisionism. Additionally, he made important contributions to Maoist theory such as the Militarization of the Communist Party, the

theory of Great Leadership, and the theory of Concentric Construction of the Party. These contributions are not only valuable for the Peruvian Revolution but also have universal relevance for the international socialist revolution. We must not forget this.

Regarding the influence of Chairman Gonzalo and his ideology in Vietnam, initially, he was only mentioned through campaigns to try to degrade his reputation by the government in power. In recent years, with the rise of the communist movement in Vietnam, the Question of Gonzalo has become an important, principal matter among communists in our country. Revisionists, Trotskyists, and pseudo-Maoists always seek to deny the role of Chairman Gonzalo and use propaganda tools of imperialists to oppose him. Additionally, there are the government loyalists and liberal forces who participate in this “campaign.” Thus, revisionists, reactionaries, and anti-communists have created some kind of “holy alliance” to oppose Gonzalo’s Thoughts and contributions. Therefore, the immediate task for Vietnamese communists today is to carry out a two-line struggle to defend Chairman Gonzalo, uproot the weeds of modern revisionism, and move towards the reconstitution of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

Thiago: How is the revolutionary movement developing in Vietnam and what are the current struggles of the masses in the urban and rural area?

Thăng: The current “leaders” of the organized revolutionary movement are petite-bourgeois. There are the so-called “Marxist” groups such as the “Red Flag League” and “Vietnam Young Marxists”. Those petite-bourgeois groups use memes to propagate and agitate, which is an action of bastardizing Marxism, for Marxism is a revolutionary science, and could not be expressed by memes. This action is most notable in Vietnam Young Marxists.

There is also the phoney “Maoists” like the “Red Flag League”. They denied Gonzalo and upheld Marxism-Leninism-MZT, denying the advancement of the revolutionary struggle. They also participate in useless debates online. These guys also try to make money on the scan of *Quotations by Chairman Mao Zedong*, instead of making it universal for the masses.

Luu: There are many strikes and disorganized revolutionary movements within the proletariat, who rise against their exploitative conditions. Many of the peasants are in conflict with the state for land, there has recently been an uprising where peasants tried to reclaim their land by armed methods, like in the Dong Tam Uprising, but they were suppressed quickly and brutally by the so-called “socialist” state. There were also protests and uprisings in the central highlands, however, some of them have fallen into influence by terrorist foreign reactionary groups and are not spontaneous like the others. The masses are ready and pushing for revolution, but they are still disorganized.

Thiago: What is the general impression that the masses have of the Communist Party? What everyday problems do the masses face and how are they exploited by capitalism and semi-feudalism today in Vietnam?

Luu: Inside the petite-bourgeois, there are two main camps, there is the opposition camp and the loyalist camp. The loyalist camp is usually from children of the bureaucrats and people that don't know much about the state. The opposition camp is mostly represented by loyalist to South Vietnam, all of them are anti-communists, while the loyalists appear to be communists, however they cast communism aside, being pro-state and anti-west.

Inside the peasants and the proletariat, we are not really sure, but from what we see, but most of them do not support the state outright, being mostly neutral about the situation. However, the opposition in these classes, specially the peasants and indigenous peoples, take up arms and rise against the state, they are brutally suppressed by the police forces. The only indigenous armed groups who do terrorist attacks are the ones sponsored by the United States and CIA agents, however, they do not represent all indigenous movements and peasant movements who oppose the state.

The condition of the proletariat in Vietnam is not what we would call good, because even the state claims that many workers live in poverty and hardship. There are many examples we can provide, their salary is not really good as the revisionists claim, they just get barely enough to survive, just how capitalism wants. The weekly hours are not that harsh and the conditions are not as bad as in laissez-faire capitalism or some other third world nations (like in Bangladesh or other asian nations), the Union controlled by the state do the bare minimum to support the workers and make them content so they do not organize.

A friend (who were 14 at that time) and a family member of mine worked in the sweatshops and they have bad health conditions, work long hours and do not get paid enough for their efforts.

Thiago: What is the semi-colonial relationship that Vietnam has today with US imperialism and Chinese social-imperialism?

Thăng: This is a great question! The relationship of the Vietnamese bureaucratic capitalist government with the Yankee Imperialists and the Chinese Imperialists is a one of the most special international relationships to the Vietnamese State. Firstly, the State called the relationship between them with both of those nation 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership'. They established this with China in 2008 and USA in 2023. They export capital and goods into Vietnam, set up factories and monopolize the market. This relationship deepens the exploitation of Capitalism and the semi-feudal relationship in Vietnam

(Luu addition in the notes): In terms of industry, citing data from the General Statistics Office, Ministry of Science and Technology, approximately 75% of Vietnam's technology and equipment originate from foreign countries, among which technology and equipment from developed nations such as the United States, South Korea, and the European Union have shown a slight increasing trend in recent years (data from 2022). Consequently, Vietnam cannot actually grasp many critical industrial technology

(such as oil refining technology, metallurgy, shipbuilding, etc.), thus the Vietnamese industry relies heavily on foreign capitalist conglomerates.

Furthermore, Vietnam is a “global sweatshop,” endowed with abundant resources and cheap labor. Therefore, Vietnam has become an ideal location for capitalist conglomerates from the United States, China, and other capitalist countries to export capital, establish factories and enterprises, invest, and control commercial capital in our country. The working class has to endure hardship with meager wages and harsh living conditions, while they do not enjoy the fruits of their labor, which are instead seized by the capitalist class.

Additionally, the exportation of goods from the United States and China has disrupted the Vietnamese market, as the revolutionaries of the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc movement once said: “If our goods are not bought from the Chinese, they are bought from the West.”

Vietnam’s agriculture is quite dependent on Chinese traders, as farmers’ goods always rely on the purchasing needs of traders. Therefore, they often encounter many difficulties if China imposes border closures. Moreover, the issue of “tenancy system” still persists in some small localities in central Vietnam, hence Vietnam still exhibits feudalistic characteristics.

Thiago: How are the history of Vietnam, the international communist movement and Marxism taught in Vietnamese schools and universities?

Thăng: There is a push for nationalism and nationalist propaganda in Vietnamese schools by the revisionist clique, they mask the settler-colonialism against indigenous peoples and other minorities under “the expansion of territory by reclaiming wild lands” that was once Champa and Chenla (Kampuchea Krom). That settler-colonialism was called “Nam Tien”, March to the South, and happened for centuries. They also liquidated and removed the history of the struggle for autonomy of the minority ethnic groups, which HCM supported.

(additional note by Lưu): there were autonomous zones in the Northern Mountains and the North West, and there were also Highland Autonomous People’s Movement in the National Liberation Front.

The revisionists omitted many important parts the international revolutionary movement. They also dogmatically teaches Marxism as theory without practice in universities, making students call it a “nightmare” and only study it to get pass university, instead of taking it as the scientific worldview. They teaches about the Great Debate as merely so-called “Sino-Soviet split” instead of the two-line struggle against revisionism. They try to get people into “trusting the Party’s line” uncritically. They immaterialize and trivialized Marxism in general.

Thiago: What is your opinion about Democratic Kampuchea and Laos? Is there any Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement in those two countries today?

Luu: It is a sensitive question for us. We recognize the national liberation of the Kampuchean people led by the Communist Party of Kampuchea against the military dictatorship and the American imperialists. We hold a neutral view of the policies implemented during their government, however, we understand that Pol Pot betrayed the Kampuchean Revolution by supporting the revisionist clique of Deng Xiaoping and the arrest of the so-called “Gang of Four.” Pol Pot fell to revisionism in his final years. We also oppose the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the Chinese Invasion of Vietnam, it was just a repeat of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviets. It was a war that served nothing but the profits of two social-imperialist blocs.

Laos is a semi-colony of Chinese social-imperialism today. This country owes China about 25 billion USD and has had to concede a lot of land and rubber plantations. In 2021, the Laos – China (Vientiane – Kunming) high-speed railway line was put into operation. In addition to tourism needs, this railway is also used to transport wood, rubber, food, and minerals from Laos to China. This railway is part of the so-called “Belt and Road Initiative” promoted by Xi Jinping clique.

The People’s Revolutionary Party was formed after the Second Congress of The Communist Party of Vietnam, while in the 1950s they were not a puppet of Soviet Social-Imperialism, but they became one in 1960s, falling to revisionism completely after the war and they achieved their independence, being occupied by fifty thousand Vietnamese soldiers, which signifies their dependency in revisionist Vietnam and the social-imperialist USSR. After the USSR fell, they became a semi-colony of China.

We also do not have any other information on the Communist Movement in Laos and Kampuchea, so we cannot say anything about this question.

ENDING NOTES

Thăng: We’re so grateful to this interview, it is not only the solidarity between the Vietnamese and Brazilian proletariat, but also a great example of proletarian internationalism in the class struggle, the national liberation struggle against imperialism and revisionism. Red Salute from Vietnam!

Long live the Communist Party of Brazil!

Long live the new democratic revolution of Brazil!

Long live the reconstitution of the Communist Party of Vietnam!

Long live the People’s War of Vietnam!

Down with American imperialism and Chinese social-imperialism!

Down with reformism, revisionism and opportunism!