

Tạp chí Lý Luận Chính Trị Và Truyền Thông

Tạp chí điện tử tiếng Anh - Tập 29, Số 1 (2023)

Ngày nhận bài: 23/03/2023 | Ngày phản biện: 14/04/2023 | Ngày xuất bản: 25/05/2023

Tác giả: Thi Kim Hau BUI (Academy of Journalism and Communication)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' discovery of the working class with its worldwide, historical mission of abolishing capitalism, building civilized socialism, and communism has disturbed and intimidated the bourgeoisie. In "The Communist Manifesto," Marx and Engels wrote, "It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the specter of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself." (1) Today, hostile views from many sources aim at Marxism-Leninism both worldwide and in Vietnam. They employ many predictable modes of attack to deny the worldwide, historical mission of the working class. It is necessary to continue to protect and affirm the lively scientific and practical bases of implementing the worldwide, historical mission of the working class in countries such as Vietnam. On the other hand, it is important to criticize distorted and hostile views of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class.

1. The Marxist-Leninist view regarding the inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class is still relevant and valuable in the present era.

At the beginning of the 1840s in the 19th century, from the viewpoint of historical materialism, Marx and Engels had studied the proletariat, discovered its worldwide, historical mission, and considered its position as an objective political mission. The development of the regime of 'private property' inevitably gave the worldwide, historical mission to the workers themselves, not by other means. According to Marx and Engels, "The proletariat is enforcing the sentence that the 'private property' has made for itself while giving birth to the proletariat as well as the sentence that hired labors have made while producing the wealth for others and the misery for

themselves.”(2) With Marx and Engels, the inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class is manifested in all areas of society.

Regarding the economic inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the proletariat, they wrote, “The concentration of the production means and the labor socialization has reached the point that they no longer fit into the “shell” of the capitalism. That “shell” breaks. The capitalist private property has come to an end. The plunderers are deprived”.(3) Only then, the working class and other social classes have an economic basis to eliminate all oppression, exploitation, injustice, and increasingly meet human needs.

When analyzing the social inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class, Marx and Engels also exposed the hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie when offering ‘charity’ so that workers could realize the exploitative nature of the bourgeoisie. Engels pointed out, the “British bourgeoisie do the charity for their benefit. They don’t give anything freely, and they consider their giving to be a trade. The bourgeoisie pretends to be compassionate, but only when they see the benefits.”(4) Moreover, their ‘charity’ could not cover up the calamities that the cyclical crisis of capitalism had created on proletariat life. Therefore, Engels also associated the inevitability of the historic mission of the working class with the inevitability of the “‘regular crisis’ of capitalism, the crisis pushed workers into ‘poverty’ and forced them to find the way out of poverty in the society, etc.”(5)

Regarding the political inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism clearly states, “The bourgeoisie has completely monopolized the political dominance in the modern parliamentary state since the establishment of great industry and world market; The modern state government is only the whole bourgeoisie’s management committee. If the proletariat want to fight against the bourgeoisie, it must self-organize into a class; if the proletariat becomes the ruling class through the revolutionary way and as the ruling class uses forces to exterminate the old production relations, it as a class will simultaneously exterminate these production relations, the conditions for the existence of class antagonism, classes and also their own domination.”(7) Lenin also affirmed, “Every class struggle is the political struggle; the workers’ movement can only overcome the embryonic and

infantile classes, becoming a class movement when the movement turns to political struggle.”(8)

Regarding the inevitability from cultural-ideological approach, Marx and Engels asserted, “The communist revolution is the most radical break of the past inherited property relations; unsurprisingly finding that it ruptures most thoroughly with the past inherited ideology in its development process.”(9) In the construction of socialism in Russia, later to become the Soviet Union, Lenin emphasized the inevitable task of cultural construction and development asserting, “That is the task we must advance” (that is what we should do), it is necessary to understand and enhance the cultural level of the masses.”(10)

Regarding the international inevitability, Marx and Engels pointed out, “The communism is not only the cause of workers but also the cause of all humans”.(11) Thus, “the proletariat as well as the communism can only exist on the scale of world history, that means the activity of the proletariat can only exist if it is the “world-historical” existence. The world-historical existence of individuals is the individuals’ existence that is directly associated with the history of the entire world.”(12)

It can be seen that, from analysis of the construction and development of capitalism, the bourgeoisie, the working class, and its liberation struggle, Marx and Engels came to a scientific conclusion, “The collapse of the bourgeoisie and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.”(13) In his era, Lenin proved more specifically that the worldwide, historical mission of the working class was inevitable when capitalism changed from free competition to imperialism. Also, according to Lenin, the inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class in the imperialist time was demonstrated by the maturity of the communist movement, the national and colonial liberation movement, and the democratic liberation movement among slowly developing nations, of which Vietnam is a prime example.

As a result, all revolutionary and scientific ideas about the inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class are the results of research into Marxist-Leninist classical thinking on the objective movement of society in general, and capitalist society in particular, as it developed in all fields of society both nationally

and internationally. These events are examples of the inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class, the laws of the working class struggle, laws discovered by the founders of scientific socialism and "absolutely not based on ideas and principles invented or discovered by a world reformer. These principles generally express the actual relations of an existing class struggle." (14)

Today, although capitalism makes adjustments to cover up its intrinsic limitations and shortcomings, and even though humans change rapidly and unpredictably, that directly influences the development of the working class, the arguments about the inevitability of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class remain valid.

2. The Vietnamese working class is the leading revolutionary class through the vanguard of the Communist Party of Vietnam - an objective inevitability in the current process of international integration.

In Vietnam, during the current process of international integration, the Vietnamese people have continuously trusted the leadership of the working class through the vanguard of the Communist Party. In this respect the working class with "its great historical mission is the revolutionary leadership class through the vanguard of Vietnamese Communist Party, and the core force in the class alliance among the working class, the peasantry and intelligentsia." (15)

In the current environment, the socialist-oriented market economy has diversified the social class-strata in the early stage of the socialist transition. However, the trend of coming together, with the transformation among social classes and strata, is an objective trend in the socialist-oriented development of society at the end of the transitional period. Currently the Vietnamese working class includes manual labor as well as scholarly and educated workers who engage in production industries as well as the service industry. In addition, this group includes engineers, technicians, and researchers who incorporate developing scientific and technical advancements to industrial production. This includes different businesses such as state enterprises, private enterprises, foreign-invested enterprises, joint-stock companies, and laborers employed in agriculture and forestry. Amid the robust scientific and technological development in various fields of material production, many technicians and engineers

carry out their function as skilled workers, administrators, and production managers. This has required changes in both the quantity and quality of employees in the working class. The modern scientific and technological revolution and the emergence of the knowledge economy have promoted the development of the current Vietnamese working class and created new points compared with the previous working class. The working class which stands as the most crucial part of the production force is increasingly liberated from manual labor and increasingly experiences reduced working time. As a result, their material and spiritual life in the Party's goal of social development has been increasingly improved. The Communist Party of Vietnam has asserted, "The growth of the Vietnamese working class is prerequisite to ensure the success of the national renewal, industrialization and modernization." (16)

Indeed, the Vietnamese working class has gradually elevated its worldwide, historical role and mission toward international integration. In light of the vanguard of the Communist Party, the Vietnamese working class has achieved encouraging initial achievements. The Vietnamese working class has made positive changes by rapidly increasing quantity, structural diversity, and significant improvement in quality. In some key economic sectors such as production of electricity, oil and gas, electronics, information technology, and telecommunications, the number of workers is rapidly increasing. Simultaneously there has been strong development in some manufacturing and export processing industries including garment and textile production, footwear assembly, and seafood processing.

As of early 2007, the total number of industrial workers in Vietnam stood at about 9.5 million people, accounting for 11% of the population. By mid-2012, according to a Steering Committee report based on the nationwide census of business economic establishments, more than 14.5 million employees are working in agencies, units, and enterprises. The number of workers and employees in the enterprise sector is 10.9 million, of which women account for nearly 45%. According to the General Statistics Office report, as of early 2018, the total number of workers in Vietnam accounted for about 13% of the population and 24% of the social labor force.

An increasing number of skilled workers with college or university degrees work in production and business management, scientific and technical research, and management associated with production and conducting business, or direct production. Staff with university degrees account for 80% in banking, 50% in the aviation industry, and nearly 30% in electricity production and management. Tens of thousands of scientific and technical staff, production managers in business enterprises, and high-level and skilled workers have been actively employed. These workers bring their skills to broadly applied high-value initiatives. An increasing number of educated workers have joined the working-class. The quality and scale of vocational training for workers has continuously improved. According to the Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs, in Vietnam, there are 155 vocational colleges, 305 vocational schools, 867 vocational training centers, and over 700 other educational institutions participating in vocational training. After graduating from high school, the number of students enrolling in vocational schools is increasing. The professional qualifications of teachers at vocational schools and colleges are also increasingly upgraded to meet the current requirements of international integration.

In addition, the working class of Vietnam has made great efforts to fulfill its role as the driving force in the alliance among the working class, the peasantry, and intellectuals led by the Party. They have made outstanding direct contributions to the country's development. This fulfills a critical socio-political basis of the Party and State. Jobs and living standards of the working class have made great strides forward through the models of alliances, associations, and cooperation among workers, ranging from farmers to intellectuals to other social strata in the process of production.

Thus, the success of the worldwide, historical mission of the Vietnamese working class in the national liberation revolution and the early achievements of the country's industrialization and modernization verify that the great worldwide, historical mission of the Vietnamese working class is one of a revolutionary leadership class led by the vanguard of the Vietnamese Communist Party. This forms a decisive part of the objective inevitability of the current international integration.

3. Identifying and critiquing some negative misconceptions of the worldwide, historical mission of the Vietnamese working class in the current international

integration process.

From the end of the twentieth century, the negative criticism of real socialism in general and the worldwide, historical mission of the working class in particular continued to move swiftly around the world. This attempt to sabotage the world revolutionary movement and the construction of Vietnam's socialism was based on false assumptions about the failure of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

A series of bourgeois scholars have continued to launch malicious arguments, hiding behind biased research of human life in the context of the strong development of the modern scientific-technological revolution amid globalization. They have aimed to distort and negate Marxism-Leninism and the doctrine of the working class' worldwide, historical mission. These scholars have built their careers by taking advantage of the rapidly changing process of bourgeois democracy's methods of operation. These nominal scholars have seized on some mistakes of organization and operation of democratic principles in some socialist countries. Using exaggerated claims and analysis they have attempted to deny the existence and development of socialist democracies in other regions of the world, thereby concluding the inevitable supremacy of democracy.

Some bourgeois scholars, including Alvin Toffler, believed that the mission of building a new civilization's democracy did not belong to the working class. He maintained it belonged to an 'elite' group in the new civilization's society. He wrote, "... elites set up social goals, and industrialists and anti-industrialists become brothers." (17) So Toffler praised and encouraged the intelligentsia in the capitalist society, because he thought this class could build a new democracy in a civil society. For socialism this was an extremely dangerous argument. Because of his worldwide influence as an intellectual, his popular writing made people doubt the worldwide, historical mission of the working class and stay away from Marxism-Leninism.

Moreover, there were also some arguments made by democratic socialists. They divided laborers into two groups, 'blue-collar laborers' and 'white-collar laborers.' They did not consider 'white-collar laborers' to be part of the modern working class.

They believed that, when the knowledge economy developed, the number of 'blue-collar workers' performing mainly manual work would sharply decrease and 'white-collar workers' performing mainly analytical work would rapidly expand. As a result, they conclude that the working class, which "The Communist Manifesto" considers to be the main force opposing the bourgeoisie, has 'turned into a minority.' Today, the living standard of more than half of this minority has increased, so 'they don't need to make revolution anymore!

This argument serves no other purpose than to maintain the status quo for the existence of capitalism. It asserts that in time the working class will be abolished to be replaced by the development of the knowledge economy. Thus, while ignoring many of the main tenets of Marxism theory, they have built a simplistic thesis that the worldwide, historical mission of the working class is outdated. In the current trend of globalization, the above arguments have caused ambiguity and suspicion about the worldwide, historical mission of the working class in general and the Vietnamese working class in particular.

In Vietnam, despite recent innovative achievements, an increasing number of opposing views have appeared in various forms. These include 'letters of intent,' 'proposals,' 'party-ruled theory,' 'forums,' and in today's digital environment, through social networks of reactionary organizations and individuals at home and abroad. These views deny the innovative achievements of the proletariat ideology, and the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam and thereby attempt to deny the worldwide, historical mission of the Vietnamese working class.

Since its birth, Marxism-Leninism has asserted that every society exists and develops based on the production and consumption of material wealth in specific modes of production, with a specific labor force operating within its historical context. Increasingly modern production in the developed capitalist countries results from the industrial method associated with the knowledge economy, where the working class is undoubtedly a typical subject of that production process. Currently, in capitalist countries, the working class is still the labor force that determines the existence and development of modern society. Therefore, the political and social position of the working class in developed capitalist countries has not been reduced but continues to

be raised. This is not by accident. The bourgeoisie never voluntarily gives benefits to the working class. The gradually increased benefits to the working class result from workers' constant struggle against the bourgeoisie through many forms such as strikes, demonstrations, and negotiations between employees and employers. Once again, this objectively verifies the role of the worldwide, historical mission of the working class in the socialist revolutionary process.

In Vietnam and other socialist countries, the working class's economic, political, and social standing has changed since the working class took power and built a new social system. Freed from the status of hired slaves, the working class has become the owner of the country, of the society and of primary means of production. They have become the ruling class, assuming the ruling power through their vanguard, the Communist Party, which leads the entire society by renovating the old society and constructing a new one. The position and power of these socialist countries has been gradually progressing on the international stage. Systematically, the working class's objective position, role, and worldwide, historical mission are affirmed in the socialist revolution. This has become an irresistible trend.

Besides the achievements as the master of society, the Vietnamese working class still has many limitations and inadequacies, which affect its historical role and mission. The level of education, expertise, and professional skills of the Vietnamese working class is still low in comparison to the requirements of the country's modernization of its industry, which in turn affects its international integration. There is still an imbalance of the numbers of technical and unskilled laborers in many industries and fields. The lack of technical experts, good managers, skilled workers, and the surplus of unskilled laborers is quite dramatic in most fields and economic sectors. This is especially true in the key economic regions, industrial areas, and enterprises requiring modern equipment and technologies.

The foregone conclusion is that the number of untrained workers is still large. The minimum wage for workers is still low while living accommodations when provided are cramped. Modern safety and hygiene conditions are not guaranteed. Workloads are still heavy and hazardous while there are still many accidents. Labor law violations still take place, especially in the non-state and foreign-invested sectors. The intensity of

work and working hours is still very high, impacting workers' physical strength, especially in unskilled labor industries such as production of shoes, textiles, seafood processing, etc. In addition, the workers with high levels of education, expertise, and professional skills are often concentrated in the provinces and cities with developed industries.

Meanwhile, the level of education, expertise, and professional skills of labors in mountainous provinces, in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fishery production and processing, textiles, and footwear, is still low. Furthermore, the majority of workers transferring from agriculture have not been systematically trained. This situation is also influenced by the outdated thinking of small producers. This identifies a segment of workers that are slow to adapt to changing market mechanics. The political position of the working class does not fully express the class-consciousness, and the workers' political ability is unequal. Their understanding of the cause and effect of policies and laws is still limited. There is a segment of workers that has not been eager to join the Party and participate in the activities of socio-political organizations. The disparity between rich and poor, between the working and other social classes continues.

All of the above limitations have both objective and subjective causes. In fact, it cannot be denied that it has affected the unification of the working class, the expansion of the working class in the cause of industrialization, modernization, and international integration, and the implementation of the working class' worldwide, historical mission. This is a pretext for hostile forces to take the opportunity to distort and negate the historical mission of the Vietnamese working class in the current international integration. They are willing to publicly say that the Vietnamese working class is increasingly 'shrinking' and 'poor' and that it is not qualified to lead modern society. The worst argument might be that the Communist Party of Vietnam's senior leaders are highly educated, so 'intellectuals' lead the society. In opposition to those claims, there is enough scientific and practical data to affirm that:

First, the world's working class in general and the Vietnamese one, in particular, is not "shrinking." On the contrary, it is showing fast growth in both quantity and quality. Thanks to the development of science and technology, many new industries have increasingly emerged, and the production scale has become larger and larger. The

working class is still the leading and advanced force in that production.

Second, the achievements in the leadership of the Vietnamese working class through the vanguard of the Vietnamese Communist Party in the socialist revolution in general and in the current international integration, in particular, are statistically and scientifically undeniable.

Third, the historical mission of the Vietnamese working class belongs to the entire Vietnamese working class, through the vanguard of the Communist Party. It is objectively inevitable in the development of society. It does not belong to each person or individual segments of its leading workers, so it cannot be the uniformity of the leadership and a part of 'poor' workers.

Fourth, the Communist Party of Vietnam is still a party of the working class, taking Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought as its ideological foundation. The Communist Party of Vietnam organization consists of the best people from every social strata who have become enlightened by the Party's ideals and accepted the ideological stance of the working class. Therefore, the Communist Party of Vietnam is the Party of the Vietnamese working class and Vietnamese people.

Fifth, Vietnamese intellectuals who play an essential role in the national liberation revolution have been promoting their role in industrialization and modernization associated with the development of the country's knowledge-based economy. However, Vietnamese intellectuals are only a 'special' social class, not qualified to become the revolutionary leadership class. That historical mission has belonged to the Vietnamese working class through the vanguard of the Communist Party, which is an objective inevitability in the socialist revolution.

In conclusion, keeping in mind the objective and scientific spirit, each cadre, Party member, and citizen should be adequately aware of the worldwide, historical role and mission of the international working class in general and the Vietnamese working class in particular in the current international integration. Vietnam must resolutely combat against skepticism and negativity towards the worldwide, historical mission of the Vietnamese working class. A positive attitude will thereby contribute to building a

stronger Vietnamese working class, which will always be the 'core' and 'leading' class in service to Vietnam's national industrialization and modernization.

Tài liệu tham khảo

(1), (6), (7), (9), (13), (14) Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1995), Complete works, National Political Publishing House, Vol. 4, p.595, 599, 628, 626, 613, 615.

(2), (4), (5), (11) Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, (1995), op. cit., Vol.2, p.55-56, 764- 765, 710, 790.

(3) Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1993), op. cit., Vol.23, p.1059.

(8) Vladimir Lenin (1974), Complete works, Progress Publishing House, Vol.4, p.393- 394.

(10) Vladimir Lenin (1978), op. cit., Vol.44, p.218.

(12) Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1995), op. cit., Vol.3, p.51.

(15), (16) Communist Party of Vietnam (2008), Document of the 6th plenum of the Party Central Committee (10th tenure), National Political Publishing House, p.43-70, 47. (17) Alvin Toffler, Future shock, Vietnamese version, Information Publishing House, p.321.