

THE LAW ON THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRODUCTIVE FORCES AND PRODUCTION RELATIONS AND THE CURRENT APPLICATION OF THIS LAW IN VIETNAM

A LEI DA RELAÇÃO DIALÉTICA ENTRE FORÇAS PRODUTIVAS E RELAÇÕES DE PRODUÇÃO E A APLICAÇÃO ATUAL DESTA LEI NO VIETNÃ

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Abstract: The history of society's development is the history of movement and development, the interchange ability of socio-economic forms from low level to high one. The movement and development of socio-economic forms is due to the dialectical mutual interaction between productive forces and production relations, between infrastructure and superstructure. In this article, the author analyzes the basic contents of the law on the dialectical relationship between productive forces and production relations and the current application of this law in Vietnam. The results show that the practical requirements of the process of building socialism in Vietnam today reveal that the problem of perceiving and creatively applying the law of the dialectical relationship between productive forces and production relations is an urgent requirement, and this is also a way to protect and develop the theory of Marxism-Leninism, thereby making it really vital, persuasive and guide our actions to the chosen destination, which is to successfully build socialism.

Keywords: The law. Dialectical relationships. Productive forces. Production relations. Vietnam.

Resumo: A história do desenvolvimento da sociedade é a história do movimento e do desenvolvimento, a capacidade de intercâmbio das formas socioeconômicas do nível inferior para o superior. O movimento e o desenvolvimento das formas socioeconômicas se devem à interação dialética mútua entre forças produtivas e relações de produção, entre infraestrutura e superestrutura. Neste artigo, o autor analisa o conteúdo básico da lei sobre a relação dialética entre forças produtivas e relações de produção e a aplicação atual dessa lei no Vietnã. Os resultados mostram que as exigências práticas do processo de construção do socialismo no Vietnã hoje revelam que o problema de perceber e aplicar criativamente a lei da relação dialética entre forças produtivas e relações de produção é uma exigência urgente, e esta também é uma forma de proteger e desenvolver a teoria do Marxismo-Leninismo, tornando-a realmente vital, persuasiva e orientadora das nossas ações para o destino escolhido, que é construir o socialismo com sucesso.

Palavras-chave: O direito. Relações dialéticas. Forças produtivas. Relações de produção. Vietname.

1. Introduction

A society that wants to exist and develop needs to have material wealth to satisfy the increasing needs of people. Those things are not available in nature, so people have implemented the productive labor. The process of productive labor is the process by which people use labor tools to act on natural forces to create material wealth - that relationship is called productive forces. In that process, people have to interact with each other to create the wealth. That relationship is called production relations. Therefore, it can be said that the main production method is a unity between two aspects: productive forces and production relations. Between these two sides of a mode of production, there is always a reciprocal relationship, thereby forming the law of the relationship between productive forces and production relations. This is the basic law that governs the entire course of human history. Studying this law will help us understand why, with the advent of historical materialism, Marxism has become the most radical materialist philosophy. The application of that law will determine the success or failure of the Vietnamese revolution.

2. Research Methods

The main research methods used in this article are: historical and logical methods; analysis and synthesis; a systematic approach; comparing and combining theory with practice to clarify the content of the law on the dialectical relationship between productive forces and production relations and the application of this law in Vietnam now.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. The concept of productive forces and production relations

Productive forces express the relationship between man and nature in the production process. Productive forces demonstrate the level of conquest of nature and the practical capacity of human activities (Ministry of Education and Training, 2006).

Productive forces consist of 2 factors: laborers and means of production

Laborers are human beings who possess certain qualities such as: health, knowledge, experience, techniques, skills, production techniques, labor qualifications, and they can participate in the production process.

Means of production are all material factors involved in the production process (except human). It is a unity between two factors: labor materials and labor objects.

The means of labor are the unification between labor tools and other material elements of the production process such as warehouses, tanks, bridges, roads, etc. (called the infrastructure); in which, labor tools are the decisive factors of labor productivity.

The object of labor is human beings that use labor tools to act on it to produce material wealth. It includes those that are available in nature and those that have been preliminarily processed by human hands.

Production relations are basic person-to-person relationships formed in the production process. Production relations represent the social aspect of the production process (Ministry of Education and Training, 1999).

The production relations include the following basic aspects: - Person-to-person relationship with respect to ownership of means of production; - Person-to-person relationship in the organization of management and division of production labor; - People-to-person relationships in product distribution.

3.2. The dialectical relationship between the productive forces and production relations

Productive forces and production relations are two sides of the same mode of production. They exist and regulate each other, agree with each other. In which, the productive forces decide on the production relations, and the production relations affect back to the productive forces. This is the basic law that governs the entire movement and development of human society (Hanoi National University, 2008).

The decisive role of the productive forces for the production relations is shown on two sides that are consistent with each other: In the mode of production, the level and property of the productive forces and the production relations are the same. Therefore, when there are inevitable changes in the productive forces, the production relations also require certain

changes in the aspects of ownership, organization, management and distribution. This change can take place with different speed, level, and scope. In other words, the production relations must match the level and property of the productive forces.

The reason why the productive forces can decide on the production relations is because:

In the mode of production, the productive forces is a dynamic factor, a revolutionary factor. It constantly changes. Moreover, the production relation is a conservative, stagnant, relatively stable factor and tends to be more backward than the development of the productive forces (as described in the concept).

In a mode of production, productive forces are the content; and production relations are the social form of the production process. In the relationship between content and form, content determines form; form depends on content; the content changes first, then the new form changes accordingly. Therefore, the productive forces is the decisive factor in the change of the production relations (The Central Council, 2001).

Due to the settlement of basic needs in society, on the one hand, it is the increasing demand of society, which to satisfy that need must produce material wealth, and on the other hand, it is in production labor, and human beings always have the need to reduce labor but must achieve high productivity and produce a lot of wealth. That inevitably requires people to improve labor tools, improve techniques, improve skill levels, improve management organization...it means that it needs to develop the productive forces. Along with the development of the productive forces, production relations also formed and changed to suit the level and nature of the productive forces. That suitability is the driving force for the productive forces to thrive; is the state in which all aspects of the production relations “create full conditions” for development of the productive forces.

In a society with antagonistic classes, the contradiction between the advanced productive forces and the backward production relations is expressed as the contradiction among the antagonistic classes, and it is resolved by the class struggle, but the culmination of this contradiction was a social revolution. First of all, it is necessary to remove the outdated and backward production relations, establish a suitable new production relation, and pave the way for the productive forces development.

Production relations are governed and determined by the productive forces. However, production relations also have relative independence and impacts on productive forces again. The impacts of the production relations on the productive forces take place in two directions: When the production relations are not suitable with the productive forces, they help promote the development of the productive forces. When the production relations are not suitable with the productive forces, they inhibit the development of the productive forces. However, the impact or inhibition of the production relations is only temporary because the productive forces always play a decisive role.

A production relation is said to be suitable to the level and nature of the productive force when it creates the preconditions and conditions for the factors of productive force (workers, means of labor, objects of labor) to combine harmoniously with each other for normal production and bring high-labor productivity. For example, a production relation must be established so that wherever there is an object of labor, there must be a worker; and the tools of labor must correspond to the level and skill of the workers...Only then can the production relation considered suitable for the productive forces. And the production relation will no longer be suitable for the level and nature of the productive forces, in the following cases: - When the production relations is outdated, backward, compared to the productive forces; - When the elements of the production relations are not developed synchronously, they do not create a unified whole of the production relations, especially the formalization of ownership of the means of production is one step ahead of other aspects.

3.3. The current application of the law on the dialectical relationship between the productive forces and the production relations in Vietnam

Before the reform, there used to be a view that the production relations must go first to pave the way for the development of productive forces. The implementation of that viewpoint has led to the massive establishment of new production relations (mainly the mode of public ownership) and we considered them as the socialist production relations, despite the low level and backwardness of productive forces. At this stage, due to haste, subjectivity, voluntarism, the desire to proceed quickly, we defy the objective law and want to “skip” the capitalist stage simply and mechanically. Specifically, it is wrong when we want to quickly abolish the private

capitalist economy and the individual economy so that there is an absolute dominant socialist economy soon. This shortcoming stems from the incomplete understanding of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the transition period to socialism and especially the incorrect self-perception of the law of production relations in accordance with the development level of the productive forces in the specific conditions and circumstances of our country.

Thus, before the reform period, our Party was aware and wrongly applied this law when pushing the production relations too far away from the productive forces, while there were still many different levels of the productive forces, but they attributed them to two forms of ownership: public and collective ownership. Besides, our Party also defied the law of objectivity, hastened, eliminated the non-state economic sectors and the collective economy in order to formalize the socialist production relations.

This mistake led to very harmful consequences, caused the socio-economic life of our country to fall into a serious crisis. Resolution 10 of the Politburo on the reform of agricultural economic management clearly stated: "One of the reasons why production is slow to develop is because we don't master the law of the production relations in accordance with the development level of the productive forces." (Communist Party of Vietnam, 1988). Theoretically, we have falsified the principle of the conformity of the production relations with the productive forces. From there, a mistake arose in building the economic structure, management structure, distribution structure; and we did not properly handle the relationship between economy and politics, economy and culture.

At the beginning of the reform period (Congress VI-1986), our Party has overcome and corrected mistakes and shortcomings in the construction and development of productive forces (industrialization and modernization) and has adjusted the production relations accordingly (developing a multi-component commodity economy in the direction of socialism, that is, allowing many types of production relations to coexist, in which the State economy not only plays the leading role, but also together with the collective economy to become the solid foundation for the national economy).

Thus, the especially important and key issue in the dialectical relationship between the productive forces and the production relations is reflected in the suitability or non-suitability of the production relations with a certain level of development of the productive forces. One of the important criteria of this conformity or non-conformity is the labor productivity of society.

Because, in the end, labor productivity is the most important thing, it determines a social order. Failure to properly understand (or simply understand) the essence of this thought will lead to disastrous mistakes in making policy and human practice. During the renovation and construction of socialism in our country before the reform period, we were still confused in both building the productive forces, the production relations, and dealing with the relationship between them.

Therefore, in perception as well as in practice, it should not absoluteize the role of “promoting”, “paving the way” of the production relations. This role can only have a positive impact when it adapts to a certain level of productive forces. In the production relations, it should not absolutize the ownership relation of the means of production, but disregard (or not pay enough attention) the role of organizational relations, production management relations and the product distribution relations.

Previously, as commented, we have not satisfactorily resolved this production relations; at times, there were places where the entire production relations was attributed to the ownership relations; and the unification of cooperatives, nationalization with socialization. At the same time, we absolutized the role of “going ahead” and “paving the way” of the production relations (which was essentially the ownership relations of the means of production at that time). That has made the “gap” between the productive forces and the production relations wider, and thus, causing our economy to fall into a serious crisis in the late 70s and early 80s of the 20th century.

At present, the comprehensive reform of the country with the requirement of building a modern industrial production method requires us to scientifically, comprehensively and thoroughly solve the relationship between the productive forces and the production relations as well as relationship between the infrastructure and the superstructure of the society.

Special attention should be paid to the fact that it is possible to ignore the capitalist regime and transition to socialism, but it is impossible to ignore the preparation of the necessary preconditions, especially the economic ones for that transition. In other words, capitalism can be ignored, but it must be done so that this omission does not violate the natural historical process of development.

In order to reach the level of “an industrialized country with modern material and technical foundations, a reasonable economic structure, an advanced production relations

which are suitable to the development level of the productive forces, the high material and spiritual life, the solid defense and security, rich people, a strong country, a fair and civilized society” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 1996). On the one hand, we must accelerate industrialization and modernization in all fields, on the other hand, we need to focus on developing a multi-sector economy which operates under the market mechanism with the management of the State and follows the socialist orientation. Here, if industrialization and modernization create the necessary productive forces for the new social regime, the development of a multi-sector economy is the key to building an appropriate production relations system.

We make revolutionary changes in all three areas: productive forces, production relations and superstructure - the constituent parts of the new socialist form. In which, making efforts to develop productive forces is the top central task, creating a solid economic premise for the birth of the socialist mode of production.

This needs to be suitable with the development of the productive forces. It is also necessary to gradually establish the socialist production relations from low level to high one with a diversity of ownership forms. Public ownership must be the result which is consistent with the law of real socialization process. This result cannot be created by the administrative and coercive measures. Moving from the in-kind relationship to the commodity-monetary relationship, returning to the natural law of economic development. Implementation of many forms of distribution; choosing the distribution according to labor results and economic efficiency as the main distribution.

Thus, the point of view of Marxism-Leninism shows that the infrastructure of all socio-economic forms includes many production relations. However, after establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, and carrying out the construction of a socialist society, the Communist parties and the workers in the socialist countries only implemented two basic production relations which are respectively two economic components: the national economy and the collective economy - This is essentially not in line with the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. In the process of renewing the awareness and the construction of socialism, socialist countries have implemented many economic sectors, but essentially, it is the performing many relations of production. Likewise, in our country, we had implemented a model of two economic sectors before the reform period (1986). Since the reform period, we have been building a socialist-

oriented market economy with many economic sectors, but it is actually the implementing many production relations in a socio-economic form. Reforming the socialist infrastructure is essentially the correct implementation of Marxism-Leninism's viewpoint.

Building socialism, ignoring capitalism and creating the qualitative changes in society in all fields are the very difficult and complex cause that requires going through a long transitional period with many transitional stages and forms of economic and social organization. In the fields of social life, there is an interface and a struggle between the new and the old.

The theory of the socio-economic form shows that each socio-economic form has its own productive force, or in other words, it has a material - technical basis. To have socialism, it is necessary to have modern material and technical facilities brought about by the scientific and technological revolution. However, our country progressed to socialism from a popular economy with small production, main manual labor. The most important thing, this economy lacks, is a big industry. Therefore, we must carry out industrialization and modernization. In this day and age, industrialization must be associated with modernization to reach the level of modern technology that mankind has created. Industrialization and modernization in our country are aimed at building material and technical facilities for socialism. That is the central task during the transition period.

Currently, Vietnam is accelerating the cause of industrialization and modernization, striving to turn our country basically into a modern industrialized country as soon as possible. This is also a decisive factor against the danger of economy lags further behind many countries in the region and the world. Successful implementation of the cause of industrialization and modernization is one of the decisive factors in the success of the cause of building the socialism in our country.

While affirming the role of productive forces, the theory of socio-economic form has shown that the development of production forces must be associated with the establishment of an appropriate production relations. In the cause of building the socialism in Vietnam, our Party affirms: "Development of modern productive forces is associated with the construction of a new production relation which is suitable in all three aspects: ownership, management and distribution"(Communist Party of Vietnam, 1996).

To be in line with the development of productive forces, our Party advocates the use of "Many ownership forms of means of production, and many economic sectors". At the same

time, “A consistent and long-term implementation of the policy of developing a multi-sector commodity economy that operates under the market mechanism with the State's management in line with the socialist orientation. That is the very socialist-oriented market economy.” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 1996).

Building and developing a socialist-oriented market economy is in line with both the development trend of the times, the requirements of productive force development, and the process of building an independent, autonomous economy in combination with an active integration into the international economy. In which, the Communist Party of Vietnam plays a decisive role in accelerating the country's development along the socialist path. We have a scientific basis to believe that the path of transition to socialism, which bypasses the capitalist regime of our country, is a suitable and feasible path.

4. Conclusion

The law of the dialectical relationship between the productive forces and the production relations is the most basic law which governs the movement and development of social life as a natural-historical process. In the conditions and circumstances of Vietnam, a country with a backward economy, a low starting point, a transition to socialism, and the “ignoring” the capitalist regime..., the application of this law to the implementation of industrialization and modernization of the country is more decisive. The practical requirements of the process of building socialism in our country today reveal that the problem of perceiving and creatively applying the law of the dialectical relationship between productive forces and production relations is an urgent requirement, and this is also a way to protect and develop the theory of Marxism-Leninism, thereby making it really vital, persuasive and guide our actions to the chosen destination, which is to successfully build socialism.

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