

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

LOC THI THUY

**THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE
FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA
FROM 1991 TO 2016**

DOCTORAL THESIS

**FIELD OF STUDY: HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST,
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS, AND NATIONAL
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS**

Code: 62 22 03 12

HA NOI - 2018

**Work completed at
Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

Supervisors: 1. Assoc.Prof. Dr. NGUYEN VIET THAO
2. Assoc.Prof. Dr. TRAN THO QUANG

Reviewer 1:

Reviewer 2:

Reviewer 3:

**Thesis is defended in front of Institute-level Thesis Evaluation Board
Meeting at Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

At ... 2018

**Thesis can be accessed at National Library
and Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

INTRODUCTION

1. Subject urgency

After the end of the Cold War (12/1991), with the collapse of the Soviet Union (a traditional ally of Cuba) and the socialist system, Cuba was in a complete and deep crisis. The country lost 85% of trade turnover, 95% of the oil supply and 57% of the food production. At same time, GDP decreased by 35% and real wage reduced by 25%. During this period, US authorities also intensified anti-Cuban measures through the Torricelli Act (1992) and Helm-Burton Act (1996) to suffocate the Cuban economy. Facing this situation, the Cuban Party and State set out the economic reform at the IV, V, VI and VII Congresses with the motto "Gradual and orderly selection", aiming to make the country escape from the socio-economic crisis in the "Special Period in Time of Peace " and accelerate economic reforms through the "Updating the socio-economic model" policy.

The author decided to select the topic of the process of struggle for national independence in Cuba instead of other countries because the Cuban revolution has its own characteristics, not only in Latin America but also in the world: Cuba is the only socialist state in the Western Hemisphere, located just under the "armpit" of the enemy - the American empire, but it survives and stands still despite the fierce demolition; free policies on education, health and social security are considered important weapons, demonstrating the superiority of the socialist regime that the Cuban Party and people are building. The period from 1991 to 2016 is also considered the most prominent landmark, showing vividly and clearly the struggle for national independence and socialist construction in Cuba in the new context: the successes and failures of the reform and update of the socio-economic model during this period will be learned by the Cuban Party's and State's leaders for better development in the next phase; to help Cuba strengthen, consolidate and reform its socio-economic development step by step, thereby strengthening the leadership role of the Communist Party to the country and people; Cuba's experience in maintaining good social security, education and health policies during this period will continue to be seen as a

comparative advantage for this island nation to develop economically and defend socialist regime strongly in the future.

As a scholar in Vietnam, a country with many similarities with Cuba: having the same ideology; having to carry out the struggle for national liberation against the invasion of America and its henchmen; having the same goal and path to socialism and both suffering from US embargo policies ... after 30 years of implementing the "Doi Moi", Viet Nam has had some important achievements: maintaining social and political stability; securing national independence and sovereignty; constantly improving people's life; elevating the position of Vietnam in the international arena ... This is an important reference lesson for Cuba, especially when the island is promoting economic reforms aimed at step by step pulling the economy out of crisis; improving the lives of the people; taking advantage of international community's support to request the United States to completely lift the economic embargo.

With the above insights, the author has decided to select the topic: *"The process of struggle for national independence in Cuba from 1991 to 2016"* as a doctoral thesis in the field of History of the Communist, International Workers, and National Liberation Movements.

2. The purpose and tasks of the thesis

2.1. The purpose of the thesis

The thesis focuses on analyzing and clarifying the reality of the struggle for national independence in Cuba from 1991 to 2016 in the fields of politics and diplomacy, economy, security and defense, sociocultural. After that, the author continues to assess the achievements and limitations, some characteristics and issues of the struggle for national independence in Cuba and relates to the experience of Vietnam.

2.2. The tasks of the thesis

- Giving some notions of national independence and struggle for national independence, and then analyzing the factors influencing the struggle for national independence in Cuba from 1991 to 2016;

- Analyzing the objectives, tasks, content and implementation of the process of struggle for national independence in Cuba from 1991 to 2016

through two phases: 1991-2004 and 2004-2016 in the fields: Politics-diplomacy; economy; security-defense; socio-cultural;

- Evaluating Cuba's achievements and limitations and some typical features of the struggle for national independence during the 1991-2016 period.

- Raising a number of issues for the process of struggle for national defense in Cuba in the coming time and relate to Vietnam's experience in the struggle for national independence in the period 1991-2016.

3. The research object and scope of the thesis

3.1. Research objects: guidelines, policies (objectives, tasks, content) and the implementation of the struggle for national independence in Cuba from 1991 to 2016.

3.2. Research scope

- *Regarding the content of the thesis:* focusing on the struggle for national independence in Cuba in the fields of politics and foreign affairs; economy; security-defense; sociocultural.

- *Regarding space:* The Republic of Cuba in the context of struggle for national independence

- *Regarding time:* The research period was from 1991 to 1996. Year 1991 was the time when Cuba held the 4th Congress of the Communist Party, the first Congress of the Economic Reform. This was also a difficult period for Cuba because after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba lost a strategic ally in politics and economics. On the other hand, this was also the time when American government tightened its embargo policy against Cuba through the creation of the Torricelli Act (1992). Year 2016 marked the 25th anniversary of Cuba's economic reform and Cuba's 55th anniversary of the socialist revolution. That year also marked the fifth year of Cuba's implementation of the policy of "Updating the socio-economic model" and conducting the Seventh Congress of the Communist Party.

4. Rationale and research methodology

4.1. Rationale

The thesis is based on the basic views of Marxism-Leninism of the time; national issues and national self-determination rights; class issue and class struggle; the Cuban Party and State's notion of struggle for national

independence mentioned in the Political Documents at the 4th - 7th Congress of the Communist Party and Jose Marti's Ideology, the ideology of the leader Fidel Castro.

4.2. Research methodology

The thesis uses basic methodology of dialectical materialism, historical materialism of Marxism-Leninism. The author also uses several other methods such as historical method, comparison method, analytical method and inductive method to present the thesis.

5. The new scientific contributions of the thesis

- The thesis can help readers to approach the process of struggle for national independence of a small socialist country standing next to an empire, a capitalist superpower. This is also the longest struggle in history (lasting nearly six decades) in breaking the blockade, embargo, and isolation of the United States.

- The thesis evaluates achievements and limitations of the objectives, tasks, content and the implementation process in the fields that the Cuban Party and State have conducted during the period 1991-2016 for the process of struggle for national independence.

- From achievements and contributions in the process of struggle for national independence in Cuba, it can be generalised into some characteristics of the struggle for national independence in Cuba during this period.

- The thesis also contributes to the enrichment of reference materials for research and teaching on international relations, the history of the communist, international workers and the national liberation movement of Vietnam.

6. The structure of the thesis

Besides the introduction, conclusion, list of references and annexes, the content of the thesis is divided into 4 chapters, 10 sections.

Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. WORKS RELATED TO THESIS

1.1.1. Work of Vietnamese authors

** Group of works relating to the concept of protection of national independence*

Some of the books are: "*National independence of developing countries in the trend of globalization*" by Thai Van Long; "*National sovereignty in the trend of globalization and the problem posed to Vietnam*" by Nguyen Hoang Giap and Phan Van Ray. The authors focus on analyzing the process of defending the national independence of developing countries based on theoretical and practical issues of national sovereignty and globalization. Recommendations for Vietnam to strengthen national independence could be a valuable experience for Cuba in the process of international integration.

There are also several articles, which are published in national journals, mentioning the notion of national independence of Jose Marti, national liberation hero of Cuba. Some outstanding articles are as follows: Pham Xuan Nam with articles "*Héxé Máctin the Teacher of Cuban Independence*", Journal of Historical Studies, 178-17878 or "*Hôxé Mácti – Great culturalist and Apostle of Cuban Independence*" Americas Today Journal, Vol. 2 - 1995; in the article "*The idea of national independence and social progress of José Martí and CuBan revolution*", Nguyen Ngoc Mao and his colleagues praised Jose Marti's spirit and progressive ideology of national independence in the struggle for national liberation, which was the thought foundation for the Party and people of Cuba in the tireless fight against the Spanish colonialism and United State Imperialism to firmly defend the 1959 revolution.

** Group of works relating to Cuban revolutionary history and the leading role of Fidel Castro to the revolution*

Some of the books are: "*Understanding the Revolutionary History of Cuba - National Liberation in the period of 1953-1959*" and "*The Republic of Cuba*" by Pham Xuan Nam. The author presents the

overviews about the country, the people as well as the career, patriotic and revolutionary ideas of Jose Marti (Great Patriot, Father of Cuban Independence). The author also clearly analyses the struggle process of Cuban against United States invasion (1902-1952) and Cuban national liberation revolution under the leadership of Fidel Castro and the 26/7 Movement against the Batista dictatorship (1952-1959) and ended with the historic January revolution leading to the birth of the socialist state of Cuba in the Western Hemisphere on January 1, 1959.

Writing about Fidel's role, there are some typical books such as *"Fidel Castro: The Legendary Man"* by Hoang Duc Pham and Pham Quoc Tuan; *"Fidel: The confrontation with 10 American presidents and the assassination conspiracies of the CIA,"* by Nguyen Van Phuoc (translated); *"My Life - One hundred hours with Fidel Castro"* by Do Tuan Anh and Hoang Manh (translated). The authors talk about the ingenious leadership of President Fidel, who has kept Cuba on the road to building and developing the country. At the same time, they also give the reader a better understanding of the character, talents, bravery of Fidel, aa hero, a historical figure, a man who has dedicated his life to the revolution and the people of Cuba.

** Group of works relating to the factors that affect the process of struggle for national independence in Cuba*

Writing on this topic, there are some typical books: Doctoral thesis *"The causes and effects of the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union to the revolutionary process of the world today"* by Ngo Hoan in 1995 mentioned the negative impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union on the situation of Cuba, especially in the political and economic fields; *"Globalization-regionalization, opportunities and challenges for developing countries"* by the Institute of Social Sciences Information, and the book *"Globalization for Developing Countries"*; *"Some International Political Issues in the Present Period"* by Nguyen Hoang Giap, Nguyen Thi Que, Thai Van Long and Phan Van Ran, and the monograph *"International Relations Curriculum"*, by the Institute of International Relations - Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics; *"Global Issues in the First Two Decades of the 21st Century"* by Nguyen Trong Chuan;

"Peace-cooperation and development: a big trend in the world today" by Le Minh Quan; "Latin America a dynamic region" by author Do Loc Diep. The above-mentioned works also point to the greatest global problems facing humanity: globalization and the downside of globalization, terrorism, local wars, natural disasters, climate change, poverty, etc. These are the same issues that Cuba is facing. These are the difficulties that affect the process of defending national independence in Cuba in the present and in the future.

** Group of works relating to US policy towards Cuba*

There are some notable books: "American Foreign Policy in the 1990s," by Pham Van Que; "United States commitment and openness" by Le Ba Thuyen; "The issue of economic sanctions in US foreign policy" by Nguyen Thai Yen Huong. The authors have mentioned the tightening of the US economic embargo on Cuba through the Torricelli Act (1992) and Helm-Burton Act (1996). They are considered strict acts for Cuba after its loss of political allies, the Soviet economy. Cuba's economy experienced difficulty, and it is now worse. This was considered an important strategy in shaping American policy after the Cold War.

** Group of works relating to economic construction and development of Cuba*

Studies on Cuba's achievements in economic and social development in order to fight against the US embargo and build the nation have featured a number of articles published in the Proceedings of the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution held at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, on December 31, 2008: "Cuba's outstanding achievements in building and developing the country" by Nguyen Thi Que; "Cuba strengthens struggle on the ideological front" by Phan Van Ran; "Achievement in implementing social policies of Cuba during 50 years of socialism construction" by Ngo Chi Nguyen; author Pham Xuan Nam with the article "50 years of economic and social development of the Republic of Cuba under the banner of national independence and socialism"; "The Achievements of Socio-economic Reform in the Republic of Cuba from 1993 to Present" published in the Journal of Historical Research... Most works praise Cuba's achievements on economic, political

and social fronts. At the same time, they also affirm the right guidelines in accordance with the conditions of the country; the clever leadership of the Cuban Communist Party has given it an increasing role in the region and in the world, especially in the spirit of international solidarity in helping Latin America countries fight against illiteracy and achieve free healing and surgery... In addition, the success of the Party and State also help Cuba to firmly defend national independence, the road to socialism, regardless of the US embargo and demolition activities of hostile forces inside and outside the country.

Particularly, in a presentation by Prof. Ruvislei Gonza'lez Seaz, an economic expert at the Center for Economic Research, Cuban Foreign Ministry, there was a talk on "*Updating Cuban socio-economic model and new scenarios*" at the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, on March 24, 2016. The author focuses on three main issues: *first*, outline the policy of "updating the socio-economic model" in Cuba; *second*, the Cuban situation in new scenarios and *last*, the reality of Cuba's economy. In addition, the author also assessed the achievements and limitations of the Update of socio-economic model in Cuba after five years of implementation. However, the level of the above content is only a general statement, not a detailed analysis of the causes of success or limitations in the implementation process.

1.1.2. Works by Cuban and foreign authors

** Group of works about the history of Cuban revolution*

There are a number of books: "*Moncada*" by Marta Rojas; "*Fidel Castro: la Revolución Cubana 1953-1962*" (Fidel Castro: Cuban Revolution 1953-1962) by Adolfo Sánchez Rebolledo; "*Breve Historia de la Revolución Cubana*" (A Brief History of Cuban Revolution) by Arnaldo Silval; "*The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy*", Oxford University Press Publisher, etc. The above-mentioned works mainly summarize the revolution by the people. The authors also emphasize the factors that helped Cuba win the Revolution and the factors that hindered the development of Cuba, which was the US intervention in the problems of Cuba. At the same time, there were also insights into Cuban society and highlighted the problems Cuba faced especially in the

context of Cuba's dependence on the Soviet Union in the 1970s. The Cuban leader long failed to diversify its subsidized economy in terms of education and health.

** Group of works relating to the factors that affect the struggle for national independence in Cuba*

There are a number of books: "*Govbachev-Riot: August even from inside*" by author Lukialov.A. Pavlov.V and Cruiskov.V; "*US-Latin America Relations: A New Direction for a New Reality*" by Charlene Barshefsky, James T. Hill; "*China's geo-strategy towards Latin America in the new century*", by Zhu Hong Bo, Liu Wen Long. The authors write about the change in US policy towards Latin America in the context of international and regional change and volatility. It emphasizes the change of US policy towards Cuba through the tightening of the embargo by the Torricelli Act (1992) and Helm-Burton Act (1996). With these two laws, Cuba was completely isolated from outside diplomacy and economies.

** Group of works about US policy towards Cuba and bilateral relations*

It is recognized that the nature of Cuba's struggle for national independence during the period 1991-2016 was a process of struggle against US embargo policy. Therefore, the study of American policy towards Cuba has largely been focused.

In general, foreign authors have analyzed and clarified the US embargo policy on Cuba and the damage that Cuba has suffered from the policy. Some of the books include "*The Cuban Embargo: The Domestic Politics of American Foreign Policy*" by Patrick Jude Haney; "*US Policy towards Cuba: Since the Cold War*" by Jessica Gibbs and "*The United States and Cuba: Intimate Enemies*" by Marifeli Pérez-Stable. Most of the authors write about the US embargo policy against Cuba through the Helms-Burton Act. They emphasize American embargo policy in two terms of President Bill Clinton and efforts to promote democracy under President George W. Bush (senior). At the same time, they systematize US-Cuba relations after the Cold War and analyze long-standing tensions in bilateral relations in the 21st century. On the other hand, the authors

also predict the impact of domestic policy on US foreign policy of embargo against Cuba.

** Group of works relating to the guidelines and policies of the Cuban Party and State, and the process of building and developing the economy of Cuba.*

Writing about the guidelines and policies of the Cuban Communist Party at the Fourth and Fifth Congress, there are a number of works: article "*Congress documents will be submitted to a broad discussion*"; article "*Raúl Castro Urges Cubans to Remain Alert to U.S. Efforts to Alter Communist System*" by Victoria Burnett; "*These reforms will update the Cuban model and spur economic growth*" by Omar Everlery Perez. The socio-economic reform is not new; the new thing here is the new perception of the role and importance of the private sector (non-state sector) and this means that the market must play a growing role in the Cuban economy. This is considered the initial success of the Cuban government.

1.2. FOCUSED ISSUES OF THE THESIS

Based on the results of previous researches, the thesis will focus on solving and clarifying the following issues:

Firstly, the thesis will analyze the subjective and objective factors affecting the process of struggle for national independence of the Republic of Cuba from 1991 to 2016;

Secondly, the thesis will explore some notions of national independence, struggle for national independence in Vietnam and in the world; study and analyze the objectives, tasks and contents of the Cuban Party and State about for the struggle for national independence in the fields of politics, diplomacy, security, defense, economy and culture, in the two periods of revolution: the "Special Period in Time of Peace" (1991-2004) and the period of accelerating economic reform and implementation of the policy "Updating the socio-economic model" (2004-2016). At the same time, the thesis will compare the implementation of these two phases.

Thirdly, the thesis will evaluate the achievements and limitations of Cuba's struggle for national independence from 1991 to 2016, thereby identifying some of the characteristics of this process in Cuba, with some issues of the struggle for national independence in Cuba and developing countries, including Vietnam in the coming time.

In summary, the thesis will analyze and clarify the reality of the struggle for national independence in Cuba in the period 1991-2016. At the same time, it will also bring forward some new points in the fields of politics, diplomacy; security and defense; economy; These are the recommendations that the author has boldly put forward so that the Cuban Party and State can consult, formulate guidelines and policies in line with the country's conditions and circumstances in the coming time.

Chapter 2

NOTION AND FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA FROM 1991 TO 2016

2.1. NOTION OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

General notion of national independence: From the Vietnamese dictionary, the term "independence" of a country is both adjective and noun. In adjective term, "independence" is understood as not to be dependent on another country or nation, whereas on the noun term, "independence" is the state of a country or a sovereign nation without dependence on other countries, or other nationalities.

General notion of struggle for national independence: Struggle for national independence is understood as to firmly protect the independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity of the nation; to protect the party, the state and the people and the socialist regime; to protect the process of innovation, industrialization and modernization; to protect national interests; to protect the national culture; to maintain a peaceful environment, political stability, national security and social order and safety.

2.2. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA

2.2.1. Subjective factors

2.2.1.1. Overview of the Republic of Cuba

Cuba (officially the Republic of Cuba, Spanish: Republica de Cuba) is a country located north of the great Angti archipelago of the Caribbean Sea and Central America.

Cuba has about 11.16 million people, of which more than 65% are white European (Hispanic), 25% are hybrid, 10% are black. In addition, there is a small group of people of Asian descent (mostly Chinese). About religion, Cuba has more than 80% of the population following Christian, the rest are other religions: Protestant, Jewish and Muslim. These characteristics of the population have created cultural cohesion and created a unique culture in Latin America.

The official language of Cuba is Spanish, which is mixed with some of the original Idio languages, African and a few from English and French.

The Republic of Cuba is a socialist country, the Communist Party is the only force leading the State and society. Thus, Cuba's political system is completely different from that of Latin America and the Americas.

2.2.1.2. Experience of struggle for national independence in Cuba before 1991

National independence and socialism were maintained and strengthened; high unemployment left by the previous regime was completely eradicated; the knowledges and skills of workers were paid proper attention and upgraded. However, besides the achievements, Cuba faced many difficulties due to natural disasters, epidemics, diseases and "defects, subjective mistakes in economic management which had been detected by the board of leaders of the Party and State since 1985".

2.2.1.3. The role of the leader

Fidel Castro played an important role in enhancing Cuba's role and status in the international arena. He made Cuba from an unpopular country into the "stronghold" of socialism in Latin America and the West; Cuba had always been at the forefront of developing the leftist movement to construct a new "socialist society in the twenty-first century" in Latin America without the presence of the United States.

Raul Castro was the promoter of the economic reform process and set out the "Updating the socio-economic model" policy in Cuba in a socialist orientation; He also played an important role in implementing the policy of multilateralisation and diversification of international relations, which helped Cuba expand diplomatic relations with Latin American

countries and other countries around the world. At the same time, Cuba could break the siege and isolating diplomacy imposed by United States.

2.2.2. Objective factors

2.2.2.1. Regional and global situation

After the end of the Cold War, there were some certain characteristics and trends of the international situation such as the collapse of the socialist system, globalization trend, peace, cooperation and development, the revolution of science and technology had directly impacts to the struggle for national independence and the building of associationism in Cuba. The impacts could be divided into two reversible directions through a number of characteristics and trends: Globalization (especially economic globalization) was an objective trend that attracts more and more participating countries, including Cuba. This trend had been dominated by some developed countries, emerging economies and transnational capitalist corporations and had contained many conflicts, both positive and negative effects, both cooperation and struggle; Peace, cooperation and development continued to be the mainstream of the world and to attract all nations, including Cuba.

In Latin America, the regional context profoundly affected the struggle for national independence and socialism in Cuba through the following aspects: the development of the American Left Movement Latin and the birth of ALBA; the impact of intra-Latin American integration on Cuba; Latin America was becoming a place of great interest in world powers, especially China and Russia.

2.2.2.2. Policies of big nations towards Cuba

During the nearly three decades struggle for national independence of Cuba, policies of big countries such as US, Russia, EU, China also had a great impact on the island in various directions.

**** For the United States***

The US government wanted to achieve certain specific goals such as: transforming Cuban political regimes and bring Cuba back to capitalism once again; threatening Cuban political stability, social order, territorial integrity, national sovereignty and national independence; Then, the United States could restrain the development of the Latin American leftist

movement and establish influence in the region that was considered a traditional American influence.

*** *For EU***

On the one hand, EU policies helped Cuba to integrate more deeply into the international community and to affirm its role in the world. On the other hand, it also set new requirements and missions for Cuba, especially when the United States, China, Russia and some other large countries were increasing their presence in Cuba and then in Latin American.

*** *For China***

The Chinese strategy had given Cuba a more counterbalance in its relations with the United States. However, it also posed a problem for Cuba when the economic dependence would become political dependence, which Cuba had encountered with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. This was a threat to Cuba's national independence, especially as the United States and China were increasingly influencing and directly competing in Latin America.

****For Russia***

When Putin continued to rule in Russia, Russia would continue to strengthen its position in Latin America and compete with the United States and other major powers through the strategic relation with Cuba. However, it also posed challenges to Cuba's national independence as major countries would increase their competitiveness and turned the country into a place of influence among the superpowers, like what happened during the Cold War.

Chapter 3

REALITY OF THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA FROM 1991 TO 2016

3.1. OBJECTIVES, TASKS, AND CONTENTS OF THE CUBAN PARTY AND STATE ON STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

3.1.1. Objectives

General objectives: to maintain national independence; to ensure the continuity and irreversible nature of socialism, the development of

national economy and the improvement of people's lives, combined with the formation of necessary morals and political values of the people; to continue to firmly strengthen the socialist Cuba that was independent, sovereign, democratic, prosperous and sustainable.

Specific objectives: During the period from 1991 to 2016, the specific objectives of the Cuban Party and State was continuously adjusted through the Congresses of Communist Party to maintain the socialist orientation and economic development, improve people's lives and fight against US embargo policy.

3.1.2. Tasks

To achieve the objectives, the Cuban Party and State identified specific tasks as follows:

Firstly, to resiliently fight and request the US to completely eliminate the hostile embargo policy against Cuba, which was a condition for Cuba to continue to develop and build socialism successfully. At the same time, to intensify and take initiative in integrating the country into regional and international areas.

Secondly, to gradually change the mindset of economic development, to accelerate the process of economic reform and to maintain good social security policies.

3.1.3. Content

** In the field of politics and diplomacy*

The political leadership of the Cuban Party and State has always been complementary and developed through the Congresses of the Communist Party, but the overarching goal of the revolution during 1991-2016 period was still: "To maintain national independence, protecting and improving socialism, creating socio-economic foundation, to continue to grow as the crisis passes."

In the diplomatic field: The foreign policy of the Cuban Party and State in two phases (1991-2004 and 2004-2016) was adjusted to accommodate the rapid changes in the domestic and international situations.

** In the economic field*

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, led by President Fidel and Raul Castro, Cuba consistently adjusted its economic policies in two

stages of country development: 1991-2004 and 2004-2016 through Congresses, aiming to overcome the internal difficulties of the country and promote economic development.

** In the field of security and defense*

In order to firmly defend national independence, socialism and national security, the Cuban Party and State, during the period 1991-2016, identified the following measures: respecting and promoting the role of the Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces; maintaining the three armies (main army, local army and guerrilla militia); continuing the fight that required the United States to return unconditionally Guantanamo base to Cuba; strengthening military cooperation and military technology exchange with Russia, China, Vietnam and some Latin American countries: Venezuela, Nicaragua.

** In the socio-cultural field*

During the period 1991-2004 and 2004-2016, especially at the Sixth Congress, the Cuban Party and State put forward many contents in the socio-cultural field: strengthening cultural identity; continuing to improve the quality and seriousness of teaching at all levels in order to improve the effectiveness of Cuban education; step by step rearranging the network of schools, raising the capacity of teachers in front of pupils and students by equipping teaching equipments; considering "medical diplomacy" an important external channel for developing the country's economy and enhancing Cuba's position on the international stage.

3.2. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS OF THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA

3.2.1. The Cuban "Special Period in Time of Peace" (1991-2004)

3.2.1.1. In the field of politics and diplomacy

Firstly, Cuba issued a new Constitution in 1992 and revised the Constitution in 2002. These were considered critical measures to maintain domestic political stability in the context of socio-economy going through serious crisis.

Secondly, the Cuban Party and State have promoted political education and ideology to promote solidarity, unity within the party, between the party and the people for protection of the socialist regime and

against the US and hostile forces' conspiracy to destabilize social and political aspects.

3.2.1.2. In the economic field

Firstly, the change in economic development policy helped Cuba achieve positive results and gradually escape the crisis; maintain social-political stability in the country; uphold national independence and socialism in the context of the US tightening embargo.

Secondly, tourism and biotechnology became a key economic sector of Cuba. This was the "salvation" to help Cuba solve immediate economic difficulties and create the basis for other economic sectors to develop. At the same time, it helped Cuba to be more self-reliant and less dependent on outsiders.

3.2.1.2. In the field of security and defense

Firstly, Cuba maintained and consolidated the revolutionary security forces in order to help stabilize the order in the country, protect the Party, the State and the people against the demolition of the enemy.

Secondly, Cuba advocated the reform of the Armed Forces to firmly protect revolutionary achievements and to help maintain the stability of social order and national sovereignty.

3.2.1.2. In the socio-cultural field

Firstly, maintained the patriotic ideology of Jose Marti in the field of culture was considered an important task for Cuba to defend revolutionary results.

Secondly, the achievements in education and health not only helped Cuba to survive economic difficulties but also to improve its role and position in the international arena, thereby gaining support and sympathy from the international community against the strict US embargo policy.

Thirdly, the achievements of social security laid the foundation for Cuba's stability.

Apart from the above results, the process of struggle for national independence and socialist construction from 1991 to 2004 in Cuba also faced some difficulties and limitations as follows:

Firstly, the US maintenance of the longstanding embargo on Cuba kept this island country politically, diplomatically and economically isolated and made it fall into a deep crisis.

Secondly, Cuba encountered difficulties from the demolition of the US and hostile forces.

Thirdly, due to Cuba's heavily dependence on the Soviet aid, after the Soviet Union collapsed, the island nation was not able to withstand external influences.

3.2.2. The Cuban period of continual implementation of economic reforms and "Updating the socio-economic model" policy from 2004 to 2016

3.2.2.1. In the field of politics and diplomacy

Strengthened the close relationship between the Party and the people in order to create unity in the entire society.

Completed the political system to meet the country's development needs in the new conditions

With the motto of diversification and multilateralisation in international relations, the Cuban Party and State expanded diplomatic relations with many countries in the region and in the world. Cuba also gradually improved its foreign relations with the United States to break the sieged, isolated and hostile condition lasting nearly six decades.

3.2.2.2. In the economic field

The biggest highlight of the economic reforms is the policy of "Updating the socio-economic model". This measure helped Cuba step by step escape from the domestic economic difficulties; build a diversified economy; expand international economic relations and become the destination of many foreign investors. These achievements contributed to the creation of "internal forces" to help Cuba protect national interests.

The Cuban Party and the State advocated expanding international economic relations with many countries in the region and in the world to boost the country's economy.

Venezuelan support for energy and economy helped Cuba escape from domestic economic hardship in the condition of US embargo.

3.2.2.3. In the field of security and defense

Cuban gradually modernized the revolutionary armed forces in a neat and efficient manner, suitable to the country's socio-economic conditions; thus, firmly defended national sovereignty.

Cuba continued to maintain military co-operation with countries in the region and in the world in order to effectively respond to anti-American plots and reactionary forces

3.2.2.4. In the socio-cultural field

Cuba continued to maintain its leading position in Latin America and in the world in education and health. This was also considered a foundation that helped Cuba stabilize the society, develop the country's economy, bring the country out of difficulties, create a driving force to help other industries develop, contribute to firmly protect the revolutionary achievements.

Cuba maintained good social security policies.

Cuba still maintained a strong national identity and attained some achievements in cultural cooperation with the world, especially with the US.

In addition to the above successes, the process of struggle for national independence in Cuba during this period still faced some difficulties and limitations as follows:

The aging of generations of leaders in Cuba

The economy Cuba was too dependent on Venezuela, especially in term of energy; therefore, when Venezuela's economy fell into crisis, Cuba immediately fell into an energy crisis. This would make Cuba lose its economic independence.

Fidel's death had bad impact on the process of struggle for national independence in Cuba.

Chapter 4

EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA FROM 1991 TO 2016, SOME CHARACTERISTICS AND ISSUES

4.1. ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

4.1.1. Achievements

** In the field of politics and diplomacy*

Firstly, maintained political and social stability in the country, firmly protected national independence and the socialist regime.

Secondly, the process of reforming political thought in Cuba brought important achievements to the struggle for national independence.

Thirdly, the Cuban Communist Party was consistent with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism and the path to socialism.

Fourthly, Cuba promoted the expansion of cooperation with the region and the world

** In the economic field*

Firstly, the change in the economic thinking of the Cuban Party and State

Secondly, the process of international economic integration strongly helped Cuba develop the country's economy and enhance its regional and global role and position.

** In the field of security and defense*

The Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces were an important factor in firmly defending national independence and sovereignty in the context of US embargo policy that had been maintained and tightened since the Cold war.

** In the socio-cultural field*

With a policy on free education, health and social welfare, it helped to consolidate people's confidence in the road to socialism that the Cuban Party and State had chosen for nearly three decades.

4.1.2. Limitations

Apart from the achievements, Cuba's struggle for national independence also had many shortcomings, weaknesses and negative impacts on the process as follows:

Firstly, Cuba did not build a complete socialist model in "Cuban style"

Secondly, the inadequacies of operation and management of the economy

Thirdly, Cuba was a country of diverse cultures with different ethnicities and religions, so this was the opportunity for the United States and reactionary forces to take advantage.

4.2. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROCESS OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN CUBA IN THE PERIOD OF 1991-2016

Firstly, the struggle for national independence was always associated with the process of construction and socialism.

Secondly, a feature which limited the process of defending national independence in Cuba during this period was the aggression of the Cuban American community (unlike the Chinese community).

Thirdly, the struggle for national independence in Cuba was associated with the development of Latin American leftist movement, especially the leftist group ALBA.

Fourthly, the establishment of "Updating the socio-economic model" was considered a major policy to develop Cuban economy, to improve people's lives and to contribute to solid protection of national independence. Cuba's using "Update" instead of "reform", which was different from China and Vietnam, was considered a distinct characteristic of the Cuban revolution in this period.

Fifthly, the process of struggle for national independence and against embargoes had been the longest one (nearly 60 years), longer than that of Vietnam and 20 other countries that had been subjects to US embargo policies.

Sixthly, maintaining good policies on education, health and social security was a weapon to help Cuba fight any American plots and counter-revolutionary forces during the process of struggle for national independence.

Seventhly, the struggle for national independence in Cuba was closely linked to the high international obligations. This was the consistent policy of the Party and State to gain international support for economic development and to elevate the country status.

4.3. ISSUES FOR CUBA IN THE FUTURE AND RELATING TO VIETNAM'S EXPERIENCE

4.3.1. Issues for Cuba

Firstly, international economic integration, on the one hand, have been giving Cuba great opportunities such as economic development, expanding cooperation and enhancing its position in the international arena; On the other hand, it forces Cuba to always ensure the goal of protecting national independence associated with international integration.

Secondly, biotechnology, tourism, education and health should always be considered as important internal forces, solid economic

foundation to ensure national interests and Cuban people when the United States tightens the economic embargo.

Thirdly, the industrial revolution 4.0 has been bringing both opportunities and challenges to the process of protecting national independence and national sovereignty in the coming time.

Fourthly, the policy of economic embargo of President Trump to Cuba may be tightened in the future, which will create new risks and challenges to the process of protecting national independence of Cuba in the coming time.

Fifthly, there are some issues for Cuba under the leadership of new President Miguel Diaz-Canel (assumes the chairmanship of Cuba on 19/4/2018)

4.3.2. Relating to Vietnam's experience

From the practical experience of protecting national independence and sovereignty of Vietnam after the Cold War, it is possible to provide some reference experiences for Cuba as follows.

Firstly, Vietnam's experience in building a party against the threat of "self-evasion" and "self-transformation" within the party.

Secondly, Cuba can refer to the experience of building blocks of great national unity

Thirdly, Vietnam experience in strengthening the modernization of the armed forces is valuable

Fourthly, the experience of Vietnam in clearly identifying "Partner" and "Object" in international relations.

Fifthly, Cuba needs to avoid the risk of economic and trade impotence.

Sixthly, Cuba needs to avoid the risk of "capitalism", "group interests" and "family backyard" in the process of building a market economy and integrating into the international economy.

CONCLUSION

Thanks to the great leadership, the strength of the national unity, the solidarity within the Party, between the Party and the people, with the carefree help of the socialist, leftist Latin – American countries, peace-loving and democratic forces all over the world, the Cuban Party and State led the country to overcome a difficult time of the "Special Period in Time of Peace" (1991-2004) and promoted economic reform and advocated "Updating of socio-economic model" (2004-2016) in order to progressively build and defend the country under new conditions and circumstances.

For nearly 30 years (1991-2016), the struggle for national independence in Cuba had achieved many important achievements such as: solid protection of national independence and socialism; crushing demolition activities of counter-revolutionary forces and US embargo policy; maintaining social-political stability in the country; promoting economic reform; promulgating many important reform policies; maintaining a free policy on education, health and social welfare, by: Cuba built a solid defense posture and strong people's security, promoting the revolution of regular and elite Armed Forces. At the same time, international relations with many important regional, sub-regional and international organizations such as CELAC, ALBA, etc. were expanded. Cuba has established diplomatic relations with many countries such as the US, Russia, China, EU, etc. These achievements have affirmed the correct leadership of the Cuban Communist Party and the State, headed by President Fidel, Raul, contributing to building a dynamic, self-destined socialist Cuba and providing a solid foundation for national independence and socialism.

The results of the struggle, construction and protection of national independence that the Cuban Communist Party and the people have achieved are glorious and recognized by international friends. But in this process, Cuba still has many shortcomings and faces the dangers and threats that directly threaten national independence: the violent resistance of hostile forces, the US economic embargo against Cuba;

impediments in managing the country's economy; Guantanamo's military base under the occupation of the United States ... Those have created challenges for Cuba.

In order to safeguard national interests and territorial integrity, in the coming time, the Cuban Party and State should set policies for national development (especially economic development); always ensure the objective of protecting national independence associated with international integration; biotechnology, tourism, education and health will be considered as important internal resources, strong economic foundations to ensure Cuba's national interests amid the US's tightening policy of economic embargo; the industrial revolution 4.0 and the change of leadership generation (from historical generation, Raul, to young generation, Diaz Canel) ... have been seen as opportunities, but they also pose significant challenges to the process of defending national independence and sovereignty of Cuba in the coming time; President Trump's economic embargo on Cuba may be tighter in the future, creating new threats and challenges for Cuba's national independence.

In addition, Cuba also needs to learn, exchange experience with other countries, especially with Vietnam. Vietnam and Cuba have an ideological similarity, both experiencing the US embargo policy and now facing a number of issues, including the demolition of reactionary forces through the channels of human rights and democracy. Therefore, the successes and failures of Vietnam are valuable lessons for the Cuban Communist Party in the struggle for national independence now and in the future.

LIST OF SCIENTIFIC WORKS RELATED TO THESIS

1. Loc Thi Thuy (2015), "Impact of Normalization Declaration on Cuban - US Relations ", *Americas Today Journal*, (4), p.12.
2. Loc Thi Thuy (2015), "The struggle for national independence in Cuba under President Raul Castro administration in the field of politics and ideology", *Americas Today Journal*, (11), p.16.
3. Loc Thi Thuy (2016), "The US Policy toward Cuba under President Obama administration since 2009", *Americas Today Journal*, (01), p.15.
4. Loc Thi Thuy (2016), "Assessing socio-economic achievements of Cuba in the period 2011-2016", *Americas Today Journal*, (8), p.9.
5. Loc Thi Thuy (2016), "The US President's Historical Visit to Cuba ", *Americas Today Journal*, (3), p.66.
6. Loc Thi Thuy (2016), "The Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba", *Americas Today Journal*, (4), p.66.
7. Loc Thi Thuy (2017), " Cuba's Impressive Achievements in Education and Health", *Americas Today Journal*, (2), p.59.
8. Loc Thi Thuy (2017), "Some Initial Comments on US Policy Towards Cuba under President Donald Trump Administration", *Americas Today Journal*, (7), p.61.