

# Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism Is a New Doctrine of Socialism

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Marxism-Leninism is, according to the *Juche idea*, "the preceding doctrine of socialism"<sup>1</sup> . Because of the transition to the era of independence, "history demanded that the world outlook of the working class be completed a new".<sup>2</sup> According to Kim Jong Il, it was Kim Il Sung who "excellently solved the historical task of raising socialism on a new foundation" and "established the *Juche idea* and creatively developed the theory of socialism on this basis."<sup>3</sup> This theory was based on the experience of the Korean Revolution. Kim Jong Il points out that the Korean people began the struggle for socialism "in a situation of backwardness of colonial and semi-feudal society".<sup>4</sup> He goes on to say that "under unusually difficult conditions the revolution was realised and the construction mastered"<sup>5</sup> because the party united the masses organisationally and ideologically around itself and the leader in the spirit of the *Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism*. Since the party gave priority to ideological work and the transformation of man in the construction of socialism, it was able to accelerate the construction and consolidate the revolution.

The new theory of socialism promulgated by the *Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism* also distinguishes between socialism and communism, considering socialism merely as a preliminary stage to communism: "Socialism and communism differ from each other only in their stage of development and maturity; they are a society of the same type with the common political-economic and ideological basis. Socialism, as a low stage of

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Ibid

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Kim Jong Il: "Some Questions about the Ideological Foundations of Socialism", in: Kim Jong Il, Selected Works 1999, vol. 10, p. 95

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Kim Jong Il, Socialism is a Science, Pyongyang 1994, p. 10

4

Ibid, p.11

5

Ibid

communism, has a communist character as its inherent specifics. Therefore, the further development and perfection of socialism is a process of building communism."<sup>6</sup>

Since *Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism* sees ideological consciousness as the main factor in the development of society, it also regards the transformation of people's ideological consciousness as a priority in the building of socialism.<sup>7</sup> Instead of giving priority to people's material interest, the lever "of education in the spirit of socialist ideology should be used."<sup>8</sup> If material stimulation is considered paramount, socialism cannot be built: "If only material interest is put in the foreground, people will degenerate into egoists who have only their personal interests in mind, so that society will sink into stagnation and the foundation of socialism will be torn down."<sup>9</sup>

In 1994, Kim Jong Il wrote his programmatic paper "Socialism Is a Science" - at a time when the victory of Western capitalism seemed to be a definitive one after the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the American philosopher Francis Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history.<sup>10</sup>

In it, Kim Jong Il expresses his opinion that the current state of the world cannot be a stable final state because it is full of internal contradictions and capitalism produces too much suffering. Capitalism does not gradually conquer all countries, but creates inequality in the world. The sovereignty of the masses cannot be realised in an antagonistic class society; one based on private property always produces growing social inequality, exploitation and oppression.<sup>11</sup> According to Kim Jong Il, the "traitors to socialism" had spread "illusions about capitalism" "in order to restore this outdated society"<sup>12</sup>. To a certain extent, however, he also blames the "historical limitations" of the

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Kim Jong Il: Some Questions about the Ideological Foundations of Socialism, in: Kim Jong Il, Selected Works vol. 10, p. 105

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Cf. Kim Jong Il, The slander of socialism is inadmissible 1993, p.16

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Ibid

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Ibid

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Fukuyama, Francis: The End of History 1992

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Cf. Kim Jong Il, The slander of socialism is inadmissible 1993, p. 2

12

Ibid, p. 9

"previous doctrine of socialism"<sup>13</sup>, by which he means Marxism-Leninism, for the difficult situation in which the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies found themselves at the end of the 1980s. According to Kim Jong Il, however, it was precisely these weaknesses that were eliminated by *Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism*: "The historical task of raising socialism on a new ... foundation was excellently accomplished by the *Juche philosophy*. The historical task of raising socialism on a new foundation was excellently solved by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung founding the *Juche ideology* and creatively developing the theory of socialism on this basis... The theory of socialism systematised scientifically by Comrade Kim Il Sung puts the main emphasis on man and places the masses at the centre."<sup>14</sup> In contrast, he said, in the countries where socialism had failed, there had been a failure to develop and perfect the theory of socialism. However, he said, it was necessary to "constantly develop and perfect the socialist ideology and firmly equip the masses with it so that they unswervingly make socialism their creed. They will have faith in socialism when they are firmly convinced of the correctness of the cause of socialism."<sup>15</sup>

*Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism* makes it clear that the masses are the subject of the social movement. Therefore, the emphasis must be placed on the ideological sphere: "In socialist society, the re-education of man and ideological transformation prove to be a more important and urgent task than the creation of material-economic conditions. Only when priority is given to the re-education of man is it possible to consolidate the subject of the revolution, strengthen its role and successfully build socialism."<sup>16</sup> But this is precisely what was neglected in the real existing socialism of the Eastern bloc: "If in socialist society decisive importance is attached to the objective material-economic conditions.... while neglecting the ideological re-education of the masses and failing to consolidate the subject of the revolution and strengthen its role, the whole socialist construction cannot be properly advanced and the economic construction itself cannot be free from stagnation. Not infrequently, such phenomena occurred in certain countries that once shaped socialism. The renegades of socialism used this as an opportunity,

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13

Ibid, p. 6

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Ibid, p. 5

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Ibid, p. 6

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Kim Jong Il, *Socialism Is a Science* 1994, p. 8 f.

engaged in the game of 'perestroika', they thus perpetrated counter-revolutionary acts and brought about the destruction of the socialist economic order itself."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the machinations of foreign powers, Kim Jong Il sees the causes for the failure of socialism in Eastern Europe also in the lack of sovereignty of the Eastern bloc states. Instead of creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to their own conditions, they blindly copied the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup> According to Kim Jong Il, these states of Eastern Europe had "simply adopted the guiding principles of Marxism-Leninism ... Since time has changed and the concrete reality of the country is different, socialism cannot be properly established if the existing experience is absolutised or dogmatically adopted."<sup>19</sup>

Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism is this new doctrine of socialism for our age, which has processed the experiences of the socialist movement throughout its history and drawn the lessons from history.

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Ibid, p. 9

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Cf. Kim Jong Il: "Some Questions about the Ideological Basis of Socialism", in: Kim Jong Il, Selected Works Vol. 10 1999, p. 90 ff.-.

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Kim Jong Il: "The socialism of our country is the socialism of our stamp, in which the Juche ideology is enforced", in: Kim Jong Il, Selected Works vol. 10, Pyongyang 1999, p. 488