

Institutional Reform in Vietnam: Between Democratic Aspirations, Party-State Control, and China's Regional Hegemony

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Abstract

This paper examines the interplay between one-party rule and external influence of China on Vietnam's political reform. It utilizes an analytical approach to analyze the influence of China on the Vietnamese government's ability to democratize and implement democratic reforms, to fill in the gaps of previous studies on the role of external factors, particularly China, in Vietnam's political reform. The findings suggest that China has played a significant role in consolidating the one-party system in Vietnam, such as an alternative political model of development, use of cultural diplomacy to influence policy decisions, threats to Vietnam's security, and the strengthening of economic relations. However, Vietnam faces internal pressures for increasing transparency and accountability towards multi-party system. Therefore, this paper recommends that Vietnam's government should balance its relationship with China by diversifying its economic partners and strengthening ties with democratic countries, while allowing more political freedom in decision-making processes.

Keywords: international political economy, Vietnam's democratic reform, examining the interplay between one-party rule and external influence of China, influence of China, China-Vietnam relations, one-party system, multi-party system

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