

MODERNIZATION THEORY: WESTERN CONNOTATIONS ON ECONOMICS

Valentyn Velychko,

*PhD in economics Associate professor,
National academy of Fine Arts and Architecture,
e-mail: V.Velychko@naoma.edu.ua,
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8335-9128>*

Classical modernization theory is not a single theory, but a general term for theoretical achievements of modernization research in different fields and by different scholars. If classified according to the research field, classical modernization theory is divided into political modernization, economic modernization, social modernization, personal modernization, and cultural modernization theory. In different fields and regions, modernization has different characteristics, for example, political democratization and rule of law, economic industrialization and specialization, social urbanization and mobility, personal openness and participation, cultural rationalization And universal junior and secondary education.

Modernization in economy became a worldwide phenomenon since 18th century or even earlier, in times of the British industry revolution. It refers to the frontier changes and the global competition for pursuing, achieving and keeping the world's advanced level in industry, science and technology.

American sociologists, economists, and political experts in the 1950s have being carried out modernization studies one after another.

In June 1951, at the academic seminar sponsored by the Economic Growth Committee of the American Society for Social Sciences some related issues such as poverty and imbalanced economic development have been discussed. Participants came into conclusion that the use of the term "modernization" shows that the transition from an agricultural society to an industrial society is more appropriate.

For major developed countries, the first modernization took roughly 210 years (1763 to 1970), and the second modernization will take roughly 130 years (1971 to 2100). The time boundary of the second modernization is basically the same as that of Ronald Inglehart, a professor of political science at the University of Michigan, who took 1970 as the starting point of post-modernization in developed countries in his book on modernization and postmodernization (Inglehart, 1997)

It was in line with the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) timetable of that time.

Groningen University scholar Angus Maddison in his book on growth and interaction in the world economy regarded 1973 as the starting point of the fifth stage of economic development since the Industrial Revolution. The five stages of Angus Maddison's economic development are: 1820 to 1870, 1870 to 1913, 1913 to 1950, 1950 to 1973, and 1973 to 1992 (Maddison, 2005)

Angus Maddison specially touched upon the Western Europe–China Dichotomy. The most solidly documented evidence on the long-term evolution of income levels relates to Western Europe and China. Two thousand years ago, these

were the two most-advanced areas in terms of technology and institutions of governance. Income levels were probably similar until the fifth century, when the Western half of the Roman Empire collapsed under barbarian invasion. Its decline was reinforced in the seventh century by the Arab capture of Spain, North Africa, and most of Western Asia, which ended Western European commerce in the Mediterranean.

There was no comparable collapse in China. From the second half of the tenth century until late in the thirteenth, there was significant progress in China. The Song dynasty successfully promoted intensive rice agriculture, and the center of gravity of population moved from North China to the area south of the Yangtze. From 1300 to 1850, population grew faster than in Western Europe, but per-capita income stagnated. The century after 1850 was disastrous. Civil wars and foreign invasions reduced per capita income by more than a quarter.

Some authors went out from the Western realities and tried to apply the modernization theory internationally as well. In 1958, Daniel Lerner published the book "The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernization in the Middle East", which believed that the Arabian modernization might be the transition from traditional society to modern society (Lerner, 1959).

In 1959, the Comparative Political Committee of the American Academy of Social Sciences held a political modernization seminar, and subsequently published "Politics in Developing Areas" (Almond and Coleman, 1960).

Western Europe's economic ascension began about the year 1000, continued to 1820, and accelerated thereafter.

As for China Western Europe caught up with Chinese income levels in the fourteenth century. By 1950, European per capita levels were ten times higher than the Chinese levels. The experience of China in the past half century, and particularly since the 1978 economic reform, shows clearly that divergence is not inexorable. China's economic resurrection has involved a very significant element of catch-up (Maddison, 2005).

In the 1960s, in the West a series of influential monographs on modernization research were published, and modernization theory was basically formed.

For example, "Stages of Economic Growth: Declaration of Non-Communism" (Rostow, 1960), "Political Modernization of Japan and Turkey" (Ward and Rustow, 1964), "Modern Political Science" (Eppert, 1965), "Modernization and Social Structure" (Levi, 1966), "The Momentum of Modernization: A Comparative Historical Study" (Black, 1966), "Resistance and Change in Modernization" (Esenstadt, 1966), "International System And Social Modernization" (Nettle and Robertson, 1968), "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development and Politics" (Huntington, 1968)

In the 1970th and 1980th, modernization theories faced many challenges, and at the same time they were comprehensively developed, forming a colorful modernization theory.

Although in the classic modernization theory different fields and different scholars have different interpretations of modernization, everyone generally accepts

the two basic connotations of modernization, which are generally consistent with the basic meaning of modernization.

(1) Refers to the profound changes that occurred in the developed countries in since the 16th century, especially after the Industrial Revolution;

(2) Refers to the development process of developing countries catching up with the world's advanced level in different fields.

Regarding the general characteristics of the modernization process, scholars have reached a basically consistent view. In the 1970s, Professor Samuel Huntington from Harvard University summarized it into the following nine characteristics; in his view, from a long-term perspective, modernization is not only inevitable, but also popular.

Modernization is considered as a revolutionary process. The transition from traditional society to modern society can only be compared with the change of human origin and the change from primitive society to civilized society.

Table 1

Modernization has some typical features:

Complicated	contains changes in all areas of human thought and behavior
Systematic	changes in one factor will affect and affect changes in various other factors
Global	originated in Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries, but it has now become a worldwide phenomenon
Long-term	entire change involved in modernization will take time to resolve
Staged	process of modernization in all societies may distinguish different levels or stages
Process	modernization is a process of convergence. Traditional society exists in many different types, but modern society is basically similar
Irreversible	although there may be temporary setbacks and occasional setbacks in certain aspects of modernization, modernization as a whole is a long-term trend
Progress	in the period of transformation, the cost and pain of modernization are enormous; in the long run, modernization increases human happiness in terms of culture and material

Almost in sync with modernization theory research, Western scholars have studied the future progress of developed industrial countries and have proposed many new theories. For example, post-capitalist society concept was proposed by British-German sociologist Ralph Dalendorf in his book on class and class conflict in Industrial Society (1959). American philosopher Steven Best and Douglas Kellner in their monograph on postmodern theory (1991) made substantial introduction to postmodern developments to put light on the transformation from the modern to the postmodern period.

Some Western thinkers argue that post-industrial social theory and post-modernism are the components of post-modernization theory. They are the reflection of post-modernization theory in the fields of social economy, ideology and culture.

In fact, as mentioned earlier, some scholars called the post-modern stage the end of the Second World War, and some scholars called the developed society since the 1970s the "post-modern society." This shows that the contradiction of the concept of "postmodern" has already occurred. Moreover, "modern" is a widely accepted concept of time, which has been used for hundreds of years. It is not easy to change it.

The time of the "postmodern" concept is not self-sufficient, and it will inevitably affect the spread and application of post-modernization theory. In a sense, the post-modernization theory is based on the classic modernization theory. It does not completely transcend the constraints of the classic modernization theory.

Knowledge society, information society, network society and digital society theories are connected with post-industrial society and post-modernism and closely related to classic modernization theory leading to the post-modernization theory.

Postmodernism originated in western developed countries. According to the Webster's Dictionary, postmodern refers to the trend of thought that emerged in the Western art, architecture, and culture in the mid-20th century (Postmodern, 2020). It analyzes the problems and crises of modern society, opposes the philosophy and practice of the modernization movement, and advocates the revival of traditional elements and technology. Some postmodernists tend to deny and deconstruct modern thoughts, and some postmodernists pay more attention to the construction and creation of postmodern society. Some postmodernists divide social development into three stages, namely traditional society, modern society, and postmodern society; however, they do not form a consensus on the time meaning of "postmodernism".

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From the perspective of modernization theorists, post-modernization is also a research area of modernization research, which is about social development in developed countries. For example, Professor D.Black from Princeton University published a book on comparative modernization.

After him a number of authors were discussing "highly modern societies", which are often referred to as post-industrial societies.

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The classifications of modernization theories are actually the theoretical dilemmas of modernization itself. We cannot question whether modernization or post modernization theories exist or not. Modernization is rather the cause of a historical

period and the result of the same historical period. Whether there are doubts about modernization is equivalent to doubting whether this historical process exists.

However, the uncertainty of key factors, the fuzzy boundary between traditional society and modern society, and the two types of "key factors" and "polarity" The logical paradox between the theories makes us have to think about another question, namely the rationality of the existing modernization theories.

On this point, the anti-modernization theory's attack on the universal mode of modernization undoubtedly provides us with an excellent angle of thinking. We can say that the anti-modernization theory is correct. The essence of the anti-modernization theory lies in using modern means to maintain the traditional value orientation, and using modern forms to resist modernization.

Therefore, the anti-modernization theory can only be reduced as part of modernization theory. However, if we continue to use this reverse thinking logic, deny the existence of key factors and stages of modernization, and acknowledge the uncertainty of key factors and the indivisibility of modernization phases, then it will undoubtedly help us to have deeper understanding of modernization theory.

In general, Western scholars carried out modernization research for 50 years (1950-1990th), and finally formed a modernization theory system. However this theory has many inherent shortcomings and has received various criticisms. For example, this theory cannot explain the progress of developed industrial countries since the 1970s, but it is still considered to be used to explain the revolution of human civilization since the Industrial Revolution. Thus, no other social science theory can completely replace it. We might call it the classic modernization theory and proceed with new connotation findings.

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