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MODERNIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND NATIONAL INTERESTS

The article studies modern approaches to the theory of modernization and its reconciliation with the realities of the current world. A critical analysis of postmodernization and postmodern state, which is presented as an alternative to modernization, is given, and it is claimed that it is no more sustainable and efficient in the face of global challenges. A brief look at the modernization models of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kazakhstan and China is given, and it is stated that the modernization process serves the purpose of reaching the level of development of advanced countries without jeopardizing national interests and values. In some cases, global crises make it necessary to accelerate modernization processes, especially political modernization, and carry out reforms in order to increase the efficiency and flexibility of state institutions against the background of changing socio-economic requirements. The fact that the principles of Western liberal democracy are in the leading position in international law and the charters of a number of international organizations, and their indoctrination to developing countries, in some cases contradicts the national interests of those countries. Therefore, while determining the path of development, besides referring to foreign experience each state should focus on its national interests and rely on its national characteristics.

Key words: modernization, postmodernization, development, global challenges, national interests.

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Мақалада модернизация теориясына заманауи көзқарастар және оның қазіргі әлем шындығына сәйкес келуі қарастырылады. Модернизацияға балама ретінде ұсынылған постмодернизация мен постмодерндік мемлекетке сыни тұрғыдан талдау жасалып, оның жаһандық сын-қатерлер алдында тұрақты әрі тиімді еместігі айтылады. Әзірбайжан, Түркия, Қазақстан және Қытайдың модернизация үлгілеріне қысқаша шолу жасалып, жаңғырту үдерісі ұлттық мүдделер мен құндылықтарға нұқсан келтірмей, алдыңғы қатарлы елдердің даму деңгейіне жету мақсатына қызмет ететіні айтылады. Бірқатар жағдайларда жаһандық дағдарыстар әлеуметтік-экономикалық талаптардың өзгеруі аясында жаңғырту процестерін, әсіресе саяси модернизацияны және мемлекеттік институттардың тиімділігі мен икемділігін арттыру мақсатында реформаларды жеделдетуді қажет етеді. Батыстық либералдық демократия принциптерінің халықаралық құқықта және бірқатар халықаралық ұйымдардың жарғыларында жетекші орын алуы, дамушы елдерге олардың сіңуі кей жағдайда бұл елдердің ұлттық мүдделеріне қайшы келеді. Сондықтан әрбір мемлекет даму жолын анықтай отырып, шетелдік тәжірибеге жүгінумен қатар, өзінің ұлттық мүддесін басшылыққа алып, ұлттық ерекшеліктеріне сүйенуі керек.

Түйін сөздер: модернизация, постмодернизация, даму, жаһандық сын-қатерлер, ұлттық мүдделер.

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Модернизация в контексте глобальных вызовов и национальных интересов

В статье исследуются современные подходы к теории модернизации и ее согласование с реалиями современного мира. Дается критический анализ постмодернизации и постмодернистского государства, которое представляется как альтернатива модернизации, и утверждается, что

оно не является более устойчивым и эффективным перед лицом глобальных вызовов. Дается краткий обзор моделей модернизации Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kazakhstan and China and констатируется, что процесс модернизации служит цели достижения уровня развития передовых стран без ущерба для национальных интересов и ценностей. В ряде случаев глобальные кризисы вызывают необходимость ускорения модернизационных процессов, особенно политической модернизации, проведения реформ с целью повышения эффективности и гибкости государственных институтов на фоне меняющихся социально-экономических требований. Тот факт, что принципы западной либеральной демократии занимают ведущее место в международном праве и уставах ряда международных организаций, и их идеологическая обработка в развивающихся странах, в ряде случаев противоречит национальным интересам этих стран. Поэтому каждое государство, определяя путь развития, помимо обращения к зарубежному опыту, должно ориентироваться на свои национальные интересы и опираться на свои национальные особенности.

Ключевые слова: модернизация, постмодернизация, развитие, глобальные вызовы, национальные интересы.

Introduction

Some scholars (Inglehart, Wayne, 2000) criticize modernization for being pro-Western and Eurocentric. Contemporary modernization theorists (Blokker, 2005; Martinelli, 2005; He, 2015) admit classical modernization theory's deficiencies and present valuable works to update it and make it relevant to present-day social, economic and political realities. Theorists also recognize that Europe-driven scientific advance and economic development, democratic values and political institutions are the basis of modernity on the one hand, and, on the other hand, declare availability of various paths that lead to modernization considering the factor of cultural diversity in the world (Martinelli, 2015). They support the idea that modernization programs should incorporate multi-variance given country-specific aspects and development status disparity (Blokker, 2005). Hence, modernization process should not necessarily replicate Western practice and result in extreme liberalism or postmodernism and weakened national state sovereignty; every country's right to determine its own way of development and notion of "modernity" shall be recognized.

Despite of criticism towards the classical modernization theory (Chew, Lauderdale, 2010) it has gained new aspects and retained popularity in some non-Western countries, especially developing ones. Another intriguing trend is that modernization models in a number of non-Western states seem to play the role of self-defense against some principles of liberal democracy, globalization that blurs national borders and strengthens interdependence, and increasingly popular postmodern mindset. They prefer to put forward new and more conservative models of modernization or a new state building which considerably differ from the

classical modernization theory and declare national characteristics and interests of a given state to be the central element of the process.

We view modernization policies within ideological framework as ideologies play a crucial role in shaping domestic policies of countries (Haas, 2012). Liberal theorists and researchers tend to have a negative view of non-liberal or illiberal democracies and in some cases consider them non-democratic (Zakaria, 1997; Puddington, 2017; Muis, 2018).

However, this doesn't bother some leaders, including the Prime Minister of Hungary Victor Orban, who believes that "a democracy does not necessarily have to be liberal" (Orban, 2014). It allows us to say that being successful or building a strong nation state becomes more important and attractive than being or remaining dedicated to liberalism and even democracy.

Arguments and methodology

By relying on examples of certain countries (Azerbaijan, China, Kazakhstan, Türkiye), we argue that modernization in the 21st century has a very different spirit and goal than the classical modernization aspirations. Modernization in the 20th century was mostly about an expression of admiration of less developed countries towards the developed western countries and their desire to be like them. However, modernization in latest decades is more about finding alternative ways to quickly reach the development level of liberal western countries, besides, not excluding the opportunities that allow benefiting from experience and knowledge of the West. Unlike classical modernization, contemporary modernization mindset has a more cynical approach to liberal democracies and views

them more as rivals rather than role models. From the perspective of international relations, modernization is the international competition between different civilizations which are affected by national interests and the international environment (He, 2012).

The article provides different models of modernization which are studied through the method of comparative analysis. Generalized considerations and conclusions were obtained from the analysis of individual models and relevant studies.

Challenges of globalization and ideological viability

As it is known globalization provokes a number of challenges with respect to present modernization concepts and countries as follows:

- As many critics charge, globalization process and increase in economic interdependency were not equally favorable for all countries: it raised inequality, and poverty and unemployment rates soared and living standards went down in least developed countries. Globalization helps economic accomplishments to reach many parts of the world, but it also paves the way for financial and economic crises to spread around the globe very fast;

- Cross-border criminality – weapon sales, drug peddling, organ harvesting, human trafficking, terrorism and cybercrime easily transcend national borders and put national states, primary object and subject of modernization, face to face with many challenges;

- Pandemics – COVID-19 outbreak in China and its spreading to all parts of the world in just a couple of months has demonstrated vulnerability of healthcare and economic systems of all countries and safety of humankind in the period of massive interconnections and migrations.

- Conservatives often worry about impact of globalization in cultural, moral and ideological areas, which can shake ideological foundations of a state by eroding national identity and national ideology. The non-material impact of globalization is not only about popularization of Western culture and lifestyle. Globalization also sets the stage for further expansion of extremist and radical mindset and lifestyle, and subcultures (Ogbonnaya, 2013);

- It is no secret that global geopolitical confrontation among great powers has not faded away, but rather gathers momentum and has become more obvious since the end of the Cold War. Great powers attempt to influence comparatively smaller countries using both “soft power” and “hard power”

and sometimes “sharp power” (Nye, 2018) (another form of “hard power” named by Joseph Nye, which denotes use of information manipulation and misleading in order to achieve their malicious objectives) and to have a control over their domestic and foreign policies.

We will also focus on globalization-driven security problems that seriously challenge liberal democracies.

Even though postmodernization is viewed as a new modernization theory (He, 2012), some researchers set postmodernism or postmodernization as an alternative to modernization. Ronald Inglehart, who has presented a revised theory of modernization and is one of the founders of postmodernization theory, indicates decline in importance of strong leadership, decreasing state participation in economic process, increase in self-expression and political participation, preferring personal desires over traditional family set-up and arising of a new and non-conventional family model, losing of absoluteness of religious doctrines, decline in affiliation of individuals with the Church, religious organizations and religious communities, replacement of xenophobia and fundamentalism with curiosity towards different values and considering them exotic, among postmodern values (Inglehart, 1997).

The values mentioned by Inglehart mostly belong to the liberal Western culture. Although many of them are of universal nature, some of them are persistently rejected in many parts of the world. However, it is important to note the confrontation between postmodernism and liberalism as well. Postmodernism opposes metanarratives, yet metanarratives like human rights, liberty, democratic governance and free market economy are pillars of liberalism. But some postmodern theorists attempt to align postmodernism with liberalism and present postmodernist liberalism (Szahaj, 2005). In general, postmodernism theories are predominantly built on modern (or Western) liberalism. As C.He states, postmodernization theory has more practical value for advanced countries for having completed classical modernization and need new theories to guide them (He, 2012).

Therefore, while analyzing relevance of modernization theory for many non-Western communities, we will draw attention to the challenges both postmodernism and liberalism face today. Postmodernist governance and liberal values have been challenged by processes of a global scale.

We can determine two main crises of postmodernization and postmodern governance as follows:

1) Postmodernist governance faces difficulties caused by global problems and challenges of the 21st century;

2) Stalemate of postmodernist governance at the backdrop of existing problems provokes crisis of postmodern values.

We can have a look at the above-stated problems by the example of processes inside the European Union. Robert Cooper considers the international relations system based on modern national states to be strongly prone to conflicts. Therefore, he presents the European Union as an alternative to traditional modern national states, calling the EU a “postmodern system” or a “postmodern imperialism”. He denotes reciprocal interference into domestic policies of the states, joint intelligence, collective defense, borders losing their significance, increase of transparency and interdependence as characteristics of postmodern imperialism (Cooper, 2002).

The established system of stable state-to-state relations within the European Union has indeed sharply decreased the likelihood of an intervention of one national state to another, among other pros of the system. However, some EU members on the government level criticize the Union for inequality and injustice within the system. For instance, Hungary’s V.Orban has even expressed his goal “to construct a new state built on illiberal and national foundations within the European Union” (Orban, 2014). Later he renamed his thesis as “Christian democracy” (Hungarian PM sees shift to illiberal Christian democracy in 2019 European vote, 2018).

Despite of its strong sides, the EU fails to demonstrate effectiveness in combating non-traditional sources of threats, in particular when it comes to terrorism and its implications and pandemics. Waves of terrorist attacks across European countries in recent years and expanding religious extremism signal the European Union is seriously fraught with homeland security problems.

Besides the mass inflow of refugees, the European Union had also to tackle the challenge of terrorists’ penetration into Europe. Emerging challenges resulted in rejection of many suggestions made by central authorities of EU by member states, border strengthening measures in light of expansion of national state sovereignty provoking thereby a crisis of values of liberal democracy and the idea of “Europe without borders” and the Schengen zone. Parallel to the developments above, rise of euroscepticism in public opinion led to holding referenda on whether to remain or not in the European Union in some member states.

Brexit happened in 2020. Besides, we witness right-wing parties winning more votes at elections and enhancing their visibility and role in political arena. These demonstrate serious ideological, political and structural crisis of the European Union, which is deemed to be the foremost postmodern state case (Ksenofobiya ve sagh radikalizminin yukselishi: Avropa Ittifagi sinag garshisinda, 2015). Strengthening right-wing and Islamophobic views and enhancing their visibility and role in political arena clearly undermine tolerance as postmodernism-inherent value (however, this value is of pre-modern or traditional essence in some societies, including Azerbaijan) and leads to violation of human rights, which has a specific place in postmodern liberalism.

As many countries in the world, EU members were also challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some member states, such as Italy, experienced the worst outbreak of the pandemic and serious healthcare crisis. The abovementioned challenges lead to the fact that EU member states do not always trust with EU institutions in problem resolution and seek their own ways to tackle the challenges on their own. Regarding the issues, such as access to vaccines and post-pandemic recovery, we see that overall wealthier countries, regardless of their political systems, produce better results.

All stated above brings us to the conclusion that postmodern policy and postmodernist governance face serious difficulties and failures in reacting to challenges like terrorism, radicalism, protection of national security, illegal migration and pandemics, and are not ready to tackle these problems more effectively than more traditional policies. Today, when the importance of security factor is growing, sovereignty and strong internal security of a national state, the key product of modernity, are of more functional nature. Given the threats like terrorism, extremism and organized crime have structured their global networks, national states need to combat these perils not separately, but together with other countries and international entities, of course, maintaining their sovereignty.

Existing modernization models or alternative ways of development

Given the fact that developed Western countries rely on liberal democracy principles, we can claim by their example that liberal philosophy underlies reforms for expansion of human rights and liberties, civil society building, free and diverse media, free market economy and business development, and

migration and customs regulation facilitation. Conservatism in modernization expresses itself in adjustment of reforms to national interests, local culture and religious and moral values, by refusing to “copy and paste” reforms in Western countries.

Modern-day challenges and external influences that many states have to face, as well as specific reaction of those states to such exposure have resulted in modifications in modernization paradigm. For instance, in 1920’s, Türkiye abandoned traditionalism inherited from the Ottoman Empire and embarked on a course of modernization under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. At the very beginning, a portion of Turkish intellectuals believed modernization was just a bare “westernization” and took the path of rejecting Turkish national and moral identity (Bilgin, 2002).

But eventually, independent mindset emerged in this regard and they managed to get rid of perception of cultural “backwardness” of Türkiye as compared to the developed Western states. As for the current situation, besides ensuring compliance of its political system to modern democracy principles, the Justice and Development Party (AK Party), supported by significant part of Turkish population, prefers conservative approach derived from religious values on social issues. When the AK Party came to power in the early 2000s, it presented itself as a conservative democrat. While this meant the application of the principles of liberal democracy in the political sphere and cooperation with the West, it favored religious-conservative views on social issues. In recent years, the AK Party is considered to be in a nationalist conservative position, establishing stronger ties with countries that are close to Türkiye by ethnic and religious identities (Ozer, 2019). Indeed, Türkiye’s strengthened relations with Azerbaijan and the Turkic states of Central Asia, its active participation in the activities of the Organization of Turkic States, and the fact that it does not hesitate to openly disagree with the West – the United States and a number of European states – on matters of national interest, confirm the change in the AK Party’s policies.

Kazakhstan, like other former Soviet nations, went through the path of modernization during the USSR, and after gaining independence, it faced the need to develop on the basis of its national statehood and reach advanced countries. Former President Nursultan Nazarbayev highlighted protection of national culture and traditions as the crucial prerequisite for successful modernization. But he strongly opposed impulsive and total conservatism:

“However, this does not mean preservation of everything in the national culture. We need to separate those aspects which give us confidence in the future and those that hold us back” (Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan’s identity, 2017).

But at the same time, there are a number of problems including the dominance in the production structure of the primary industries, the low competitiveness of the manufacturing sector of the economy, corruption in government, the low level of education and, as a result, the lack of qualified personnel, that need to be addressed. According to A. Chebotaryov this is a good basis for continuing the process of political modernization within the framework of the official course pursued by the current President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. In addition, the emphasis is on the constant dialogue between the authorities and society and the involvement of its active part in resolving issues of national and local significance allows provide this process with serious public support (Chebotaryov, 2022).

Currently, political modernization in Kazakhstan – increasing the efficiency of state institutions and the transparency of state administration – is more in the center of attention. The ruling AMANAT Party plays an active role in this process as a supporter of the government both in the implementation of political reforms and in the direction of ensuring social justice. In Kazakhstan, personality, leadership factor and national values play crucial role as well, but in contrast to Türkiye, much more dedicated to the principle of secularism.

China pursues its own specific modernization line, and also promotes it globally. Although one-party socialist system is retained in political sphere, the country undergoes a rapid economic and social transformation. Since the end of 1970’s China has conducted open economy policy. “China-specific socialism building” concept became the country’s ideological beacon. Chinese modernization is deemed as cutting-edge industry, agriculture, science, culture, services, high living standards and adequate defense-based national state building (Dauyen, Aldabek, 2012). Patriarchalism, respect for older people and other principles stemming from Confucianism philosophy as a part of Chinese culture still remain one of the components of realities of modernizing China.

China makes attempts to assess the modernization theory in the context of contemporary global processes and to attract scholars from all over the world to this

process. China Center for Modernization Research founded within the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 2002 and several other Chinese universities and research centers have co-organized several International Modernization Forums since 2013. China doesn't hesitate to present its model of modernization and development which is called "socialism with Chinese characteristics" as an alternative and even competitor against Western liberal democracy.

Upon regaining independence in 1991, Azerbaijan also faced necessity to catch up the development rate of the most progressive nations. The key question that concerned ideologists and state rulers was: How can we reach development stage and high living standard of the leading Western states without compromising sovereignty and national identity?

The relevant statements of Ilham Aliyev, the country's President clearly indicate that Azerbaijan's path of development incorporates convergence model of traditions and modernity: "Our commitment to national values is expression of will of Azerbaijani people. Besides, Azerbaijan applies global foremost practices which are acceptable for us. Azerbaijan follows large-scale modernization policy. We can witness the signs of modernization in virtually all areas of our life. We will continue our adherence to this policy hereafter" (Ilham Aliyev attended the Third Congress of World Azerbaijanis, 2011).

According to S.Hasanova, modernization course taken in Azerbaijan in recent years, as well as government-backed economic liberalization, support for civil society development, the rule of law and democratic statehood building indicate that democratization is real yet it has a specific nature. The author believes we cannot expect a global society with homogenous and common morality as a result of modernization and globalization from perspective of universality of liberal moral values emerged in the West; the differences will always

persist, however, consolidation of universal human values and mutual respect for others' values is possible (Hasanova, 2022). The ideas above confirm that it makes sense to shape a fundamentally new, original, nation-specific ideological basis instead of copying certain existing models while establishing ideological foundations of modernization.

Azerbaijan's state-supported ideology of Azerbaijanism is viewed as a mixture of traditionalism and modernity, which includes some or many aspects of nationalism, patriotism, etatism, economic liberalism, multiculturalism, pluralism and respect to human rights and freedoms. Such blend of conservative and liberal values is aimed at protecting national sovereignty and national identity from influences of globalization and westernization in the process of political, economic and social transformation and modernization.

In last few years political modernization in Azerbaijan has entered a new stage. This wave of reforms has mostly been forced by severe crush of oil prices since 2014 that revealed fragility of oil dependent economic and social development in the country. The oil crisis made it impossible to continue to shed oil money into various areas of economy to push development which was highly ineffective because of increased corruption, fraud, stealing money, miscalculation of expenditures, etc.

The similar problems were observed in some other oil producing countries including Russia and Kazakhstan, where the governments had to undertake some political steps and reforms to prevent chaos and instability inside their countries, while Venezuela had to experience the worst political and socio-economic crisis.

The recent global oil crisis and its economic effects at a national level have stimulated public administration and political reforms in Azerbaijan in recent years (Table).

Table 1 – Main directions of political modernization in Azerbaijan in last decade

POLITICAL MODERNIZATION IN AZERBAIJAN	
Public administration reforms	Political reforms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of more flexible public service agencies and bodies that diminish bureaucracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institution of a Special Representative of the President of Azerbaijan - State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations (ASAN Service) under the President of Azerbaijan - Agency for Sustainable and Operative Social Provision (DOST Agency) under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population of Azerbaijan • Fighting corruption and bribery within the system and personnel reforms in the government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing political culture and improving political atmosphere by expanding dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - within the political system - between the government and political parties - among political parties • Increasing competitiveness and transparency in elections

In Azerbaijan, where political and economic modernization is progressing in parallel, the ideology of Azerbaijanism, supported and propagated by the state, ensures the harmonious reconciliation of national and universal values, as well as conservative and liberal views.

Results and discussion

Hence, to sum up, challenges of globalization has led the following major modifications of modernization theory and concepts:

1. Discussions and debates are held in scientific literature on the relevance of the theory of modernization, and contradictory approaches are put forward;

2. Recognition of non-linear development replicated in modernization concepts, preference is given now to multivariance in modernization approaches and its implementation;

3. Reality of formation of global information space and increasing interdependency have put protection of national identity and sovereignty

among main objectives of some modernization concepts while striving to reach development goals;

4. Despite of domination of the West in construing theoretical foundations of modernization as well as other areas of life, modernization process didn't result in establishment of ultraliberal Western values many other developing societies and replacement of national mindset with Western one. There exists an established opinion that each country and society can determine its own path of development and its own concept of «modernity».

In spite of some criticism and emerging new theories, modernization theory still retains both theoretical and practical importance and relevance in contemporary scientific literature and state practices.

Thus, present day global problems and security challenges mainstream the modernization theory universally for the sake of the future of national state and welfare of peoples. Modern approaches to this theory allow its application in accordance with political and socio-cultural characteristics and national interests of each country.

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