

**Éva Bóka: Modernization and Value System (The Western World, Turkey and East-Asia). L'Harmattan Publisher, Budapest, 2017.**

The book deals with the meeting of different countries representing different cultures aiming to modernize. It concentrates on one of the most important ruling idea of our age which is modernization. It searches the meaning of modernization in the case of Europe, the European Union, the United States of America, Turkey, China, South-Korea and Japan in a historical perspective (18-20<sup>th</sup> century). The European countries, Turkey, China, South-Korea and Japan are in Eurasia, and their contacts represent the meeting of Europe and Asia: a dialogue about state and international organization. The United States of America is in North-America and had close cultural contacts with Europe during history. The book concentrates on the stereotypical belief in modernization as a unique Western European product, and searches the answers of the United States, Turkey, China, South-Korea and Japan to the challenge of “European modernity” in the period of European expansion, colonisation, decolonisation and neocolonialism (18-20<sup>th</sup> century).

The following themes are discussed: the meaning of modernization; European modernity; the modernity of the United States of America; Europe-Turkey relations as modernization; Japanese modernity; New-Confucian modernization in China; modernization in South-Korea as a Confucian capitalist experience.

The book is based on the most important political essays, projects and legal documents of modernization of states and international relations opposing wars and aiming to establish a peaceful world. It searches also the problems of colonisation and neo-colonisation. Influenced by the ideas of Karl Polányi on the political and economic origins of our time in *The Great Transformation*<sup>1</sup> and by the ideas of Keynes on the reform of capitalism<sup>2</sup> the author also searches the oppositional state and international organization ideas of a money based fictive economy which developed as a result of a laissez-faire economic modernization. It presents the problem of modernity, Western market expansion and colonisation from the point of view of a peaceful state and international organization contributing by this to the most important collection of articles on modernity.<sup>3</sup> The comparative search of the idea of modernization proved to be innovative regarding the dichotomy Westernization versus modernization. The research showed that modernity had two main oppositional directions from the point of view of state and international organization: the supporters of a peaceful world federation versus the supporters of a centre-periphery world system. It showed also that modernization is an international phenomenon, but Westernization is a Western idea. The book concentrates on the search for alternative modern state and international organization ideas through an intercultural dialogue in the direction of a peaceful state and international organization

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Polányi (1957): *The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of our Time*. Beacon Press, Boston

<sup>2</sup> John Maynard Keynes (1926): *The End of Laissez-faire*. Published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf at The Hogarth Press, London

<sup>3</sup> Malcolm Waters (ed.) (1999): *Modernity. Critical Concepts*. Vol. 1. Modernization, vol. 2. Cultural Modernity, vol. 3. Modern Systems, vol. 4. After Modernity. Routledge, London and New York, is the most important publication on modernisation discussing modernity from the point of view of modernism, cultural history, culture, social changes, cultural values, political aspects, economic aspects, and postmodernism.

aiming to avoid the troubles and conflicts caused by a fictive liberal world economy.

In the Western thinking modernization is a complex historical phenomenon: it means industrialization and the emergence of the liberal capitalist world system, and the ideology of Westernisation. Western modernization is thought to be unique because it could contribute to the disintegration of classical agrarian societies world-wide, and it helped them to become modern. But Western interpretations of modernization, in the most cases, forget the fact that the Western world could not become modern without the cooperation and reactions of the other – non-Western – countries and peoples. In Turkey, Japan, China and South-Korea the economic and political elite had been in deep thinking about modernization and Westernisation from the beginning of colonization. The necessity to adopt the results of modern Western science and technology and to reform the economy and the education following Western knowledge was accepted in general, but to become Western (Westernisation) was rejected in the most cases.

Modernization changed the landscape. The dynamic of industrialization, technological development, and business capitalism created a modern world with a common outlook but with big differences in the livelihood among countries and peoples worldwide. Western European society changed more deeply than the countries belonging to other civilisations during the emergence of a modern capitalist world system. But history showed that capitalism could be successful on non-Western social bases, too. In East Asia mixed forms of state capitalism emerged in opposition to the Western liberal capitalist model. The real question is whether the East Asian New-Confucian societies, and other non-Western societies could elaborate alternative capitalist economic models.

The book consists of an introduction and of six historical essays.

The introduction investigates the meaning of modernization.

The first essay deals with European modernity. Europeans “monopolized modernization”: they regard liberal capitalism, human rights and globalization as a unique phenomenon which made the world modern. Therefore “European modernity” is a very popular, and at the same time discussed idea of our age which needs a deeper investigation first of all from the point of view of its value system, and of its state and international organization principles. The author searches how the European ruling elite imagined and protected European modernity in the period of Europe's expansion (colonisation, decolonisation, neo-colonisation), and how was opposed the fictivity of laissez-faire capitalism, and the tragic impasses of economic and social organization by some European democratic thinkers. The emphasis is on the opposition of conflicts and wars.

The second essay discusses the modernity of the United States which is based on a modern constitution of a federal republic under a president, on a credit and debt system, industrialization, liberal market capitalism, expansion, and on a self-conscious missionary ideology of democracy, freedom and human rights. It deals with the shaping of a US model as a model of a modern state and international organization. It shows how did Americans reform their contradictory society after the establishment of a modern federal constitutional state serving the interests of an aristocratic capitalism in the period of industrialization, and later, during the first crisis of the laissez-faire business capitalism. The aim is to search the driving forces of the state and international organization of the United States, and her contribution to the emergence of a modern peaceful world.

The third essay deals with the history of the Europe-Turkey relations, and concentrates on the modernisation of Turkey in a historical perspective. European countries and Turkey have a centuries old historical relationship: Turkey is the member of the European balance of power policy since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Ottomans used European

informations to maintain the Ottoman Empire in the framework of a balance of power policy. When modernization and reforms needed to keep the empire alive the Sultans modernized. When revolution and fight was necessary to safeguard freedom and independence Kemalism established a statist economic model. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Turkey went through a great social and economic transformation. The country was challenged by European imperialism till the end of World War II. Then the struggle between the Soviet model and the liberal Western model determined the place of Turkey in the world system. For Turkey the American superpower and the European Union, pursuing liberal free market economic policy, were acceptable allies because of geopolitical reasons. Turkey applied for the membership of the European Community and continued the modernization of the country following the *acquis communautaire*. Currently Turkey is in search for her own way in a multi-polar world system which developed after the collapse of the bipolar world.

The fourth essay examines the history of modernization of China in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries when after China's forced opening during the Opium War the European trend of modernization influenced and challenged Chinese development. It deals with the answers given by important Chinese thinkers - among them K'ang Yu-wei, Sun Yat-sen and Deng Xiaoping - to the challenges of Western modernization in the period of colonization, decolonization and neocolonialism. It also searches Chinese alternative social and economic organizational ideas and practices in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The fifth essay traces the historical way of Japan's modernization following Western patterns, and safeguarding Japanese traditions. In 1868 the Meiji restoration brought down the Tokugawa shogunate, the country opened and started to be involved in the process of modernization (liberal market economy and industrialization) with the aim to defend independence. Meiji reform encouraged the creation and development of an industrial economy which expanded rapidly. At the centre of the industrial economy were the large integrated conglomerates, the *Zaibatsu* which survived, in a modified form, to dominate postwar Japanese economy. Japan followed German patterns, and the state protectionist economy of Friedrich List. It became an expansionist power in East and Southeast Asia. The country could not avoid to develop extreme forms of national defence during the Second World War. Between 1945-1952 Japan which was proud of its achievements as Asian moderniser became under American occupation. With American help, and based on own energies the country became an economic superpower. Japan is modern but not Western, it could safeguard its cultural traditions.

The sixth essay analyses the modernization in South-Korea. The Korean Peninsula has a geographically important position at the crossroad of the Chinese, Japanese, Russian and the American political interest spheres in East Asia. The political meeting of Korea with these main powers was not peaceful. Korea was forced many times during history to defend from numerous foreign invasions. For the South Koreans modernization meant surviving, to live in peace, to remain free and to be prosperous. Therefore they should find the means of a Korean-type modernization which could be acceptable for the Western powers, for the South Korean people, and which could be attractive for the North Koreans, too. In this the rethinking of the Confucian tradition of the country could serve as a means to find a South Korean way of economic, financial and political modernization based on the values and principles of a Confucian society.

The aim of the author is to contribute to understand the state and international organization aspect of the idea of modernization, and its role in the shaping of a modern state and international system with the hope to find ways towards a peaceful world.

