

Contextualizing Modernization within the Jordanian Context

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Abstract

This research study posits that, in the Jordanian context, Modernization's anomalous illustration of progress is issue-ridden due to the fact that 1) Modernization views progress strictly within the confines of financial profit and 2) the model of Modernization is unadoptable to Jordan within the Jordanian context. Initially, this research study clarifies Modernization's primary principles. Then, this research study illustrates the issue with dealing with the financial sector of a given country as the yardstick of measuring progress. Precisely, this research study defines the important sociological issues that the citizens of Jordan are facing on a regular basis as they pursue national self-actualization. Afterwards, this research study discusses the model of Modernization in reference to the Kingdom's absence of a strong financial basis upon which Modernization could thrive.

Keywords: Modernization, industrialism, Traditionalism, citizenship

1. Introduction

Modernization involves the level at which states depict industrialism (Peet and Hartwick, 2009, p.121). Its main characteristics are illustrated through political, economic, cultural and individual aspects. Additionally, although some characteristics are impossible to be seen on an independent basis – strictly speaking – these concepts together form the skeleton of the model of Modernization. Moreover, these aspects are obligatory of Modernization. For example, regarding the political aspect, the model of Modernization posits that citizenship is fully engaged with political and cultural shifts (Peet and Hartwick, 2009, p. 122). Regarding the economic aspect, the model of Modernization holds that citizens actively contribute to national labor through particular aims and tools (Inkeles and Smith, p.324). Regarding the cultural aspect, the model of Modernization holds that a society must be an active conglomeration of all of its parts, including beliefs, norms, attitudes and values (Inkeles and Smith, p. 324).

Despite the connectedness of these aspects, Modernization works within a strictly black and white schema with no grey area between private-public lives. Thus, the model of Modernization actively aims at determining the factors that prevent some countries from "catching up" to others in terms of the above-mentioned aspects which make up its theoretical underpinning. Importantly, after determining these aspects, it encapsulates them within the concept of traditionalism. Traditionalism, in the view of Modernization, is associated with backwardness in terms of initiative, technological advances, and political / economic / cultural / social change (Peet and Hartwick, pp. 121, 122, 125). The above-mentioned, moreover, sheds light on the model of Modernization's overarching aims – that is, to develop stronger relations between those societies that are seen as backwards and those societies that are seen as advanced (Peet and Hartwick, p.16). Enabling this contact, then, will ease the ailments of backwardness that are influencing countries to remain retrogressive. The model of Modernization thus seeks to serve as the vehicle for changing society to a modernized (characterized by public-life) schema from traditionalism (characterized by private life). This goal can only occur by two methods, however – introspectively, via the creation of requisites associated with progress and through extrovert means – between relationship building with backwards and progressive states. An outline discussion of the model of Modernization thus will allow for greater insight into the requisites necessary for this relationship-building to occur (Rostow, 1959).

2. The Model of Modernization

With reference to the development and creation of requisites associated with progress, the model of Modernization posits that progress originally took place in the United Kingdom independently and autonomously (Peet and Hartwick, p. 127). Seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain, moreover, was at the time viewed as the original concept for progress, which Modernization attributes to technological advancements in the labor sector, including agriculture. Moreover, this era was characterized by a sociopolitical culture which allowed for democracy to be taking shape as a basis for progress (Peet and Hartwick, p. 127).

Regarding the relationship building that was necessary to take place with retrogressive states, the model of Modernization would have it that progress should be propagandized into lesser developed states through a schema which capitalizes on the need for sovereignty through progress (Rostow, p.5). Illustrating the manner in which relationships are built, the model of Modernization has it that propaganda was used to illustrate better lives for the poor and suffering in terms of longevity of life and greater access to creature comforts (Rostow, pp.5-6). It is crucial, however, in understanding the model of Modernization, that this methodology is claimed to have been solely pursued by the United Kingdom in an autonomous manner. Indeed, according to this model, the United Kingdom is the only state that has autonomously pursued progress by setting up the requisites necessary through scientific and technological advancement to allow progress, while all other nations have flourished through relationship building with Britain (Peet and Hartwick, pp.127-128).

3. Progress as Financial Profit

While contextualizing the model of Modernization's anomalous reflection of progress as financial profit, this research study posits that financial growth should not be the sole umbrella, or yardstick, with which progress is measured. Rather, this research study holds that human development is a global concept which could be warped through such an anomalous view. Furthermore, applying such an anomalous view to a third-world, developing nation like Jordan ruins the chance for national self-realization, as the Kingdom has historically had ties, as it does now, with the United Kingdom. Thus, according to the model of Modernization, Jordan can never uniquely pursue national self-realization as it is a byproduct of the United Kingdom's influence, as all other nations are. It is indeed true that the United Kingdom has historically had a strong influence on the creation of Jordan. In fact, Jordan itself would arguably not be existent today if the United Kingdom had not officially established it through its nineteen-twenty-two proclamation through Churchill (The Guardian, How Churchill Helped to Shape the Middle East We Know Today).

Precisely, it is due to the model of Modernization's depiction of progress through extrovert relationship-building that makes the effects of the United Kingdom's relations with Jordan issue-ridden. This research study holds, contrarily, that human progress should not be measured by extrovert relationship building, but rather by the development capacities of its state's citizenships (Sen, p.10). Accordingly, one might ask to what extent the Kingdom of Jordan has enjoyed healthy progress resulting from its relationship building with the United Kingdom. In fact, because the model of Modernization has viewed progress through the prism of financial profit, the potential of Jordan's human development has been waned. This is the case firstly because the Kingdom's basis for progression came about not as a result of the citizenship's will but because the United Kingdom has influenced that will, effectively staving off, through its ignorance of "traditionalism," key components of Jordanian culture. Thus, Jordan's progress has been externally limited rather than taking a unique shape of its own.

4. The Inadaptability of the Model of Modernization to the Jordanian Context

Accordingly, due to the fact that the Kingdom suffers from an absence of a notable financial market, the model of Modernization put forth in the above-mentioned is theoretically unattainable for the country. Therefore, the model of Modernization is null in terms of its ability to be implemented and adopted on a national level. This is evident by the fact that the Kingdom has no clear division between public and private life, as is the case put forth by the model of Modernization. This is made even clearer by the fact that traditional institutions still reign supreme even in public life. Thus, the model of Modernization is doubly issue-ridden because it is not globally adoptable, as is put forth by the model (Peet and Hartwick, p. 129). Thus, Jordan's undeniable success as a progressive nation (an island of progress, indeed) should not be measured by an outdated model of Modernization imposed externally by a model based off of the United Kingdom's way of pursuing national self-actualization. Rather, Jordan's undeniable success towards progress should be measured by the individual and collective efforts put forth by its active and engaged citizenry along the political, cultural, economic and social spheres.

5. Conclusion

To summarize the basis of this research study's position, the model of Modernization's anomalous view of progress as financial gain does not allow for credit to be given to various institutional issues of dire importance to Jordan's citizens, including basic human development needs. Although financial gain is important for any nation,

it would be unrealistic to measure a developing nation's progress with the yardstick of an outdated model of operation based on the United Kingdom's manner of pursuing national self-actualization. Accordingly, the financial sector of a given nation cannot be viewed as the umbrella of a nation's progress, but rather simply as another measuring tool for a given state's human development progress.

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