

## The Modernization of Society is a Tool Leading to Civil Society

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**Abstract:** *It is known that a country that has entered the path of independent development chooses a specific development model and carries out reforms in every aspect of society in its implementation. Uzbekistan is going through the process of building a free civil society. A number of programs and concepts serving to achieve the intended goal have been adopted and reforms aimed at liberalization, democratization, and modernization of the political, legal, economic, and cultural spheres are being implemented.*

*In this article, we aimed to study the essence of the concept of modernization, the approaches formed to it. In it, the important features of the process of modernization of the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres of society were scientifically based, and the specific aspects of the reforms carried out in the way of establishing a free civil society in our country were analyzed.*

*Methods such as systematic analysis, comparison, generalization, and deduction were used to study the nature and forms of modernization.*

*The analysis of literature on the topic showed that modernization is a comprehensive process that represents the establishment of new, modern, advanced social and economic relations, characterized by the emergence of paradigmatic changes in science.*

*Modernization means not only westernization, the transition from traditional to modernity, but also the achievement of social, political, legal, and economic development while preserving the important aspects of national identity, the transition to a society with full provision of people's welfare and human rights and freedoms.*

**Keywords:** *traditionalism, modernity, modernization, society, economic transformation, politics, law, culture, democratization, liberalization, civil society.*

### INTRODUCTION

Modernization is a complex process that involves the renewal of all areas of human and societal activity, transitioning from traditional to modern practices, and achieving higher stages of development. This process occurs simultaneously with paradigm shifts in the field of science.

The foundation of modernization theory is the idea of progress, and its emergence is driven by objective socio-economic factors.

As is well known, the development of a country and the transition to advanced relationships occur through fundamental qualitative changes in every aspect of social life. Overcoming traditional values that hinder social changes and economic growth, and replacing them with values that encourage innovative activities of economic entities—such as creating and distributing new technologies, and establishing new organizational-economic relations—takes place through the process of modernization.

Modernization is a process that leads to the systematic change, development, and improvement of social reality, and it is relevant to all areas of societal development. The primary factor in economic, socio-

political, spiritual, and cultural modernization is, first and foremost, the emergence of changes in the scientific worldview.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS**

Modernization (from French modernisation, *modere* meaning "new" and English modernization) is a social process that expresses the advancement of agrarian, historical, and modern societies to a new stage during the period of industrialization and the rise of modern society. It refers to changes and improvements in accordance with contemporary requirements. It necessitates the modernization of all aspects of society: the economy, politics, social, and spiritual-educational spheres.

French scholar É. Durkheim interprets modernization as a process of social differentiation that leads to the social division of labor [1;108]. German sociologist M. Weber examines modernization as a rationalization process driven by the efforts of economic entities to maximize their personal economic profits [2;38-39].

According to the model of social development proposed by representatives of the American functionalist school in the 1950s and 60s, the key factor that reflects the essence of the modernization process is the emergence of modern approaches that replace traditional values, which hinder social progress and economic development [3;47].

According to the liberal interpretation of modernization theory, modernization refers to the transition from traditional to modernity, i.e., Westernization. Proponents of liberal modernization theory argue that all countries develop according to a single timetable and model. For modernizing countries, the focus is on market economies, new information technologies, the development of communication networks, social mobility, rationality, pluralism, and the establishment of an open society where democracy prevails. This liberal approach to the study of modernization has been critiqued from several perspectives. For example, radicals emphasize the ideological dominance inherent in spreading Western values and models, which may not be suitable for other civilizations. Conservative theorists, on the other hand, highlight the importance of considering the national and historical features of developing countries in terms of political activity, institutionalization, political stability, and the maintenance of order. These national features influence the direction and character of development processes, potentially leading to internal contradictions (as demonstrated by the experiences of CIS countries).

The criticisms of the liberal approach to modernization are justified by social reality. However, in developing countries, only well-thought-out reforms that take into account national and regional characteristics will lead to overcoming internal contradictions and reaching higher stages of renewal and development. Thus, modernization is not a spontaneous process; it reflects a transition from a centrally managed social order to a free competitive one. The state plays a crucial role in modernization processes (as seen in Germany and Japan). Specifically, while liberalization processes are being implemented in every sphere of society in our country, the state assists in the functioning of market mechanisms through various tools (such as maintaining a competitive environment, ensuring the free activities of economic entities, promoting the production of goods necessary for society, etc.).

The society must be prepared for the moral and economic changes that occur during the process of modernization. Therefore, the strategic measures developed by political authorities, their successful implementation, and their long-term plans are of significant importance in this process.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The modernization process occurs in various forms, such as economic, socio-political, and cultural-educational. Economic modernization refers to the intensification of the reproduction process, which is achieved through an increase in the level of labor division, the extensive use of modern energy equipment in production, the transformation of science into productive forces, and the development of

rational production management. The essence of economic modernization lies in the transformation of the production method and the economic structure into a modern balanced open market system, where the dominance of the private sector is preserved alongside other sectors such as the state, cooperatives, and joint-stock ownership. It encompasses the following innovations:

- Replacing human physical labor with inanimate energy sources such as steam, electricity, or nuclear energy in production, distribution, and transportation systems.
- Distinguishing economic activities from other types of activities.
- Accelerating the replacement of labor tools with complex technologies.
- A sharp increase in the quantity and quality of the secondary (industry and trade) and tertiary (services) sectors, at the expense of the reduction of the primary sector (extraction of natural resources).
- Strengthening the specialization of economic activities—production, consumption, and distribution.
- Creating guarantees for the growth of industrialization and the expansion of economic production.

Economic modernization does not only imply the development of modern productive forces but also overcoming technological dependence. The main focus here is primarily on the ability to create advanced scientific and technical ideas, implement research and development (R&D), and focus on exporting the results of these activities. In Uzbekistan, which is striving to enhance its competitiveness through the liberalization of its economy, modernization, and diversification of production, the implementation of projects in production, transport-communication, and social infrastructure, as well as a vigorous investment policy and the full utilization of scientific potential, are essential elements in overcoming technological dependence.

Foreign experts, including Professor A. Tarasevich, Doctor of Economics at St. Petersburg State University of Economics, acknowledge that Uzbekistan, unlike many other "brother" countries of the former USSR, chose a gradual approach to transitioning to market relations. After the collapse of the USSR, Uzbekistan not only maintained its economic potential but also managed to modernize, technically and technologically re-equip, process raw materials in-depth, and produce competitive products for both domestic and foreign markets [4].

Globalization demands that each country integrate into the world economy and be able to take advantage of the scientific and technological achievements of its partners. It is natural that the attempt to modernize the national economy separately from others will lead to failure. The modernization process requires the expansion of relations with European and Asian markets, focusing on the introduction of innovative technologies and the production of new types of goods in demand on the global market [5].

For this reason, President Sh. Mirziyoyev emphasized the necessity of new approaches to further developing the economy and achieving sustainable growth. He stated, "It is crucial to form the state's innovation renewal program and prepare a new generation of specialists and investors who will effectively use innovation and investment. For this, Uzbekistan needs a strong national idea and a national program for technological development and modernization of the internal market. This program should create the opportunity to bring Uzbekistan among the most developed countries of the world as quickly as possible" [6].

Thus, modernization is not only about increasing the production of certain types of goods but also about the rapid connectivity from one information technology to another. Modern modernization is based not only on the expansion of economic activity but also on serving as a catalyst for technological and social changes worldwide, aiming for an equal status in the relationships between different economic systems. Modernizing the economy implies the creation of institutions such as free entrepreneurship and private

property, which prioritize commodity-money relations, and entails the individualization of the labor process, the increased role of creative activity in production, and above all, the development of private property, free competition, and banking institutions in the context of a modern socio-economic system.

Today, the principle of the growth of social production linked to science has become an objective reality for modern modernization. Regardless of the country's territorial scale or natural conditions, the success of modernization processes depends on technological innovations and their application, which rely on a relatively developed scientific and intellectual potential. The level of modernization is determined by the structure and condition of science and the economy, as well as the political and socio-economic development goals of society. Efforts in our country to increase intellectual potential, particularly in science, and the development of natural sciences, are aimed at achieving a unified goal. "That is, Uzbekistan must be competitive globally in the fields of science, intellectual potential, modern personnel, and high technologies" [7].

In the political sphere, modernization occurs with the development of the legal structures of national sovereign states, the real separation of branches of power, the establishment and strengthening of political democracy. Expanding the participation of the people in making important decisions for the country's life, increasing the political activity of the population, the development of multiparty systems, the emergence and development of open pluralistic political systems are important signs of political modernization. Thus, modernization is a systemic process that involves long-term, periodic changes. The formation of a new, strong political order with clearly defined political roles, the strengthening of laws and rights that harmonize relations between the state and citizens, the increase in the number of citizens with political rights, and the growing involvement of individuals and various social groups in the social and political life of the country are all elements of political modernization.

Looking at history, the process of political modernization began in the West with the emergence of centralized national states. The deepening of these processes led to the establishment of centralized states in Europe and America, the formation of constitutional systems, the systems of state governance organs, political parties, electoral systems, the emergence and improvement of civil society and its institutions. Furthermore, this process led to the expansion of the influence of centralized bourgeois states, the rise of colonial empires (early 16th century), and the development of imperialism, a methodical activity aimed at dividing the world into subordinate territories and influence zones.

Political modernization demands the formation of certain political institutions, through which the real participation of the population in the governance system and the influence of the masses on producing concrete solutions are ensured. Important aspects of political modernization include:

- Step-by-step improvement of the political system in the formation of a modern sovereign state;
- The expansion of the state's role;
- The expansion of the scope and importance of the legislative branch, which unites the state and citizens;
- The increasing involvement of social groups and citizens in political life.

The process of political modernization, characterized by the formation and development of institutions such as parliaments, political parties, public organizations, and associations, is being implemented gradually in Uzbekistan. The process of forming a new political system depends on the level of political democracy and the liberalization of the country's social and political life. The establishment of democratic principles in the worldview of citizens and their political and legal awareness, culture, and activity are largely interconnected. The strategic importance of these tasks is reflected in the establishment of democratic principles in social and political life and the formation of the people's political position. This, in turn, demands the improvement of political democracy mechanisms, the



liberalization of political parties' activities, the renewal and democratization of state governance, and strengthening the role of political parties in the modernization of the country.

Political parties are an essential component of the political system of civil society and play an important role in the development and improvement of parliamentarism. The democratic operation of political parties, their expression as independent organizations, and the financial support of their activities have become a crucial political necessity in ensuring that parliament, as the legislative body, can fulfill its duties and ensure the viability of the legal state under the principle of separation of powers. Strengthening the role of parliament and political parties in the modernization of the country became an important milestone in the development of the country when, based on the "Concept of Deepening Democratic Reforms and Developing Civil Society in Our Country," the constitutional order was established to review and approve the Prime Minister's nominee proposed by the political party that won the elections, and the introduction of the institution of a vote of no confidence against the government.

In the period from 2017 to 2021, the first priority direction of the Strategy of Action for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan focused on deepening democratic reforms aimed at improving the state and societal structure, as well as enhancing the role of parliament and political parties in the modernization of the country. This is related to the implementation of key democratic principles, such as the people's participation in the management of the state and society, the free will of the people, awareness of legislative activities, participation in the adoption of laws, and the subordination of elected bodies to voters, which ultimately leads to an increase in the population's socio-political activity. The new development strategy of Uzbekistan for the period 2022-2026, based on the principle of moving from the "Strategy of Actions to the Strategy of Development," which consists of seven priority areas, is a logical continuation of reforms aimed at increasing the well-being of the people, transforming economic sectors, accelerating the development of entrepreneurship, ensuring human rights and interests, and forming an active civil society. The goals outlined in this strategy are based on the principle of "human dignity" and serve as the foundation for the country's future development.

In general, social modernization implies the formation of an open society. This process is manifested in the stable and balanced stratification of society, high levels of mass consumption, improved quality of life, and the emergence and development of civil society institutions. The role of civil society institutions continues to grow. Systemic changes in democratic governance are accompanied by the development of civil society institutions, the transfer of certain powers to them, and the further strengthening and improvement of their legal status.

In our country, efforts are being made to implement important reforms based on advanced foreign experiences, such as consolidating the concept of a "consumption basket" in legislation to determine the necessary income for a decent standard of living, implementing the concepts of "Smart Healthcare" and "Unified Medical Information Center" in the health protection system, and attracting foreign investors for the rapid development of private medicine. These actions contribute to the modernization of the social sector, ultimately serving the establishment and strengthening of a "prosperous life."

In cultural and educational life, modernization is characterized by the growing demand for knowledge among the population, the increased status of the education system, the growth of religious and confessional tolerance, the spread of liberal values and pluralism in the humanitarian sciences, and the emergence of independent free individuals in art and creativity.

The emergence of a highly differentiated culture is manifested in the natural expression of individual opportunities, the development of progress, perfection, efficiency, and the growth of individualism—key methods of cultural modernization. The differentiation of the key elements of the cultural system, the increase in literacy and secular education, the growing trust in science and technology, the formation of personal interests and traits that serve the adaptation to new social processes, and the widening scope

of interests are signs of modernization in this field. All these changes were realized in Western European social reality. The reforms carried out in the West led to significant stages of cultural modernization, including the Renaissance, Humanism, and the Enlightenment era. Cultural modernization is linked to the development of modern natural sciences (from the 17th century) and the humanities (19th-20th centuries), with changes in cultural life during the 18th-20th centuries that diminished the role of traditional values (family, morality, religion), led to the emergence of mass culture, and contributed to the differentiation of cultures.

However, these results of cultural modernization in the West are not in line with the mentality of Eastern peoples. Nevertheless, the threats posed by mass culture continue to exert pressure on the minds and worldviews of young people through various sources, promoting ideas of moral decay, violence, individualism, and egocentrism, under the influence of the current ideological state of the world, intensifying processes, and the specific characteristics of the transitional period.

The renewal of Uzbekistan's society in the spiritual sphere is manifested in the awareness of one's identity and deeper understanding of the heritage of our great ancestors. This process is based on the revival of the spiritual and educational values that have been preserved by our people for centuries. In our heritage, the high value placed on knowledge in human spiritual, political, and religious activities is evident. In the 9th to 11th centuries, in Central Asia, the intellectual-educational, religious-ethical, social-political, and cultural environment was characterized by the high appreciation of secular knowledge, the development of natural-scientific fields, and the strong emphasis on piety, activity, and social values. None of these were regarded as highly as "knowledge," which was a key feature of the social environment at that time. Therefore, the unity of knowledge and activity, as well as intellectual and spiritual values, is historically a key factor in ensuring the development of society. Achieving harmony between intellectual and spiritual values is a guarantee that the modernization processes underway in our country will be meaningful and successful. In the era of globalization, knowledge is the main productive force. Educating the younger generation based on Eastern values promotes conscious engagement with the processes of globalization, independent thinking, a sense of involvement in the changes occurring in our country, and the development of a spirit of devotion to one's homeland.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the liberalization and modernization of all sectors of society are essential for the formation of a democratic and just civil society. These processes are gradual and should be implemented in accordance with the unique characteristics of each country. However, it is important to note that the results and consequences of changes made to achieve a higher stage of development in social life may not always align with the essence of progress. The rational activities of the state and citizens, based on the historical experience of the world and national history, and the collective work of the people as one body and soul, are the primary factors for renewing our country and reaching new heights of development.

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