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Modernity and autogenous modernity

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Concept and definition of modernity

Modernity is a mode of life that uses science and technology as the basis for understanding the world, and combines capital and the state to objectify and efficiently manage nature and humans.

Weber's Theory of rationalization

Weber defined modernity as the 'rationalization of the entire society'

- and subdivided it into: rational capitalism;
- Rational legal-
- administrative system (rule of law) Rational social differentiation

Main features of modernity

- A worldview dominated by reason and science
- based on the principles of rationality and scientific evidence

Achievements and Limitations of Modernity

modern achievem ents

- Material abundance: Realize material wealth like the emperors of the past.
 - Extended Lifespan: Increases life expectancy from 30 to 80 years
 - Overcoming Nature: Liberation from the material fears of nature and starvation.
 - Rational system: Establishment of rational systems such as rule of law and democracy
- “In the History of human evolution that spans over a million years, the modern era was an unprecedented period in which, for the first time, humanity was freed from the material fears of nature and starvation... and ordinary citizens enjoyed material abundance like emperors of the past.”

Limitations and crises of modern times

- Excessive desire: Problems caused by “unbridled desire”
- Globalized crisis: threats to human existence such as climate change and nuclear threats
- Paradox of rationality: rationality actually leads to irrational situations
- Human Alienation: Alienation of humans dependent on science, technology and capital

“Modernism has once again brought humanity to the unprecedented risk of extinction, and the Theory of postmodernism, a critical Theory of modernity, has become very popular.”

Medieval-Modern-postmodern Comparison

Category	middle ages	modern (modern)	postmodern (postmodern)
superstructure	God center	human centered	ecological paradigm
divinity/Authority	Rule of God	Principles of reason and rationality	Deconstruction of heterocentrism
view of truth	God is the truth	Absoluteness and universality of truth	Relativity of truth, unknowability
science	Superstitions and witchcraft	science	Uncertainty of science (enemy truth)
art museum	Goodness, or God, is beauty	Secularization and self-purposiveness of art	The heterogeneity, cleanliness, and deconstruction of art
Subject view	self subordinated to God	subject	intersubjectivity
world view	space of life	reality	simulation
center	Rome and Sinocentrism	Eurocentrism	Globalization and localization
communication medium	central character	national character	image
social system	Feudal system pre-industria	capital ist industr ial	Late-capital post-industria

Document <Table 1> based on the overview of medieval, modern, and postmodern modernity.

multiple modernities and alternative modernities

multiple modernities

- Modernity is not a product of the West alone, but manifests itself in various forms in each region and civilization.
- Systematized in the 'early modernities' special issue of the academic journal 『Daedalus』 in 1998
- Contributions of comparative historical sociologists such as Eisenstadt, Wittrock, and Arnason.

Multilayered Modernities

Stages of development of modernity:

- Proto modernity - before Western modernity
- Western modernity
- colonizing-colonized modernity
- Global modernity - present

Characteristics of alternative modernity

- Raised in various fields such as cultural theory, literary-political criticism, and anthropology
- An attempt to overcome the rationalistic Limitations of Western modernity
- Consilience model - Shifting the boundary between sacred and profane
- 'Consilience 1': Consilience of the sacred with the profane
- 'Consilience 2': Consilience of the secular with the sacred

"Fetishism of European modernity is a major obstacle to building an alternative modernity today."

Examples of

alternative modernity

- Modern development based on Neo-Confucianism in the Song Dynasty of China
- Modernity Theory of the Japanese Kyoto School

Oriental origins of Western modernity

Recent research has shown that many concepts of Western modernity were influenced by or borrowed from Eastern thought.

Key figures in East-West exchanges and their influence on modern Western thought

Matteo Ricci (1552-1610)

He was the person who moved the Oriental gods of civilization and Daoism to the West. He translated Confucian scriptures into Latin and spread them to Europe.

Voltaire (1694-1778)

Fascinated by Chinese ideology, he presented the Confucian political system as a model for Europe and praised Confucian moral philosophy.

Rousseau (1712-1778)

Natural Right was influenced by concepts being studied in China at the time.

Adam Smith (1723-1790)

The Concept of 'invisible hand' was also studied to have been developed with inspiration from Eastern thought.

The influence of the East on Western modernity

- "China craze" in Europe during the Enlightenment - Confucianism presented an alternative to Europe divided by religious wars
- A meritocratic system such as the civil service examination system - a social order model centered on ability, not status.
- Secularized rational tradition - a topic posed to Europe by a moral Chinese society without religion
- The West's pre-modern evaluation of the East began with the process of justifying colonial rule.

The Concept of autogenous modernity

autogenous modernity is the concept that there was modernity in our tradition, and that there was a modernity that saved our tradition in relation to Western modernity.

Characteristics of

autogenous modernity

- Developing within tradition rather than imitating the West
- At the same time, it contains the characteristics of modernity and post-modernity.
- Concisely constructing modernity and post-modernity
- Emphasis on correlational reasons and liminality
- Utilizing "outside thinking" outside the West

A case of

autogenous modernity

[Donghak Thought](#)

The idea of inherent transcendence is that "the Principle of the universe is in the body, so the will of the people is the will of heaven."

[Daesoon Thought](#)

The modernity Concept of Haewon-Sangsaeng, a synthesis of Eastern and Western ideas, predicts the crisis of human extinction

[Kyoto School and Wang Hui](#)

Japan and China's attempts at self-reliant modernity

"The autochthonous modernity found in regions other than the West may be more suitable as an alternative modernity than the post-modernity found in the West."

Donghak Thought and autogenous modernity

Donghak is an ideology founded by Choi Je-woo in the late Joseon Dynasty, and represents the East's autogenous modernity based on the idea that "the principles of the universe are contained in the body, so the will of the people is the will of heaven."

Philosophical Meaning of Donghak

- First appearance of the Concept of nation-state
- Realization of Oriental Immanence Thought
- Emergence of Korea's own modernity
- Not just a resistance movement, but a philosophical and civilizational innovation

Characteristics of Correlative Reason

- Emphasis on holistic and generative logic
- Contrast with Western analytical thinking
- Ethical basis of collectivism and empathy
- Transformation through liminality (overcoming boundaries)

Characteristics of Donghak's modernity

Unlike Western modernity, Donghak is a modernity that arose spontaneously within tradition, and has the Characteristics of both Western modernity and post-modernity. It presents a unique model of modernity formed within Korea's historical and cultural context.

Conclusion and Implications

The modern Significance of autogenous modernity

In a situation of civilizational crisis caused by Western-centered modernity, the autogenous modernity presented by Donghak and Daesoon Thought can be an original contribution of Korean thought and an alternative to solving global problems.

Key Takeaways

- 1** **Redefinition of the Concept of modernity**
Going beyond the Western-centered Concept of rationality, reinterpreting modernity from an integrated Eastern and Western perspective
- 2** **The value of correlational reasons**
Moving away from analytical thinking and reinstating a holistic and relational way of thinking
- 3** **Consilience between the sacred and the profane**
Presenting social and cultural solutions through a new balance between secularization and religion
- 4** **Fusion of Eastern and Western Civilizations**
Possibility of creative fusion of Eastern and Western ideas presented by Donghak and Daesoon Thought
- 5** **Practical value of Haewon Coexistence**
Providing a civilizational vision of reconciliation and harmony beyond conflict and confrontation
- 6** **Future research tasks**
Modern application of autogenous modernity and establishment of world historical position

“The autogenous modernity presented by Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought must be reevaluated as an alternative civilization model that goes beyond the Limitations of Western-centered modernity and integrates the strengths of Eastern and Western ideas.”