ECONOMIC PROGRESS, CULTURAL VIOLENCE AND MODERNIZATION: ISSUES OF METHODOLOGY

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Abstract

The scientific views of M. Weber and some of his followers on the relations between tradition and modernity, forced modernization and imposition of the capitalist way of life are investigated. The nature of the correlation between Weber’s views and ideas dominating in Marxism and constructivism is determined. The thesis about the conceptual closeness of Weberian, Marxist and constructivist views on the expansion of capitalism and cultural violence is proposed. While Marx formed the theoretical and methodological basis for the ideology of social modernization as a process (and progressive for its time) of the expansion of capitalism into patriarchal communities, Weber substantiated the nature of modernization as a process of institutionalization of the goal-oriented action. Weber’s universalism is a continuation of the Marxist formational approach, from the position of which the stages of the human history correspond to certain methods of production. Marx’s characteristic of the Eurocentrism, expressed in the allocation of criteria of economic and technological progress with a focus on exclusively western (and, for example, not on the middle east) experience of Weber and his followers is transformed into the idea of «specific rationalism» of western economic culture forming the economy and lifestyle of «cultural humanity».

There is a fundamental difference in the views of Marx and Weber on the algorithms of economic development on a global scale. Thus, Marx considers western culture a forward of economic progress. In his opinion, the mission of western economic culture is to guide, albeit forcibly, all other cultures on the path of progressive capitalist development because without the capitalist stage it is impossible to move to other, more progressive stages of social development. As for Weber, he is prone to cautious arguments about the weak capacity of non-western cultures to modern forms of economic life. Against this background the concept of the coventational connubium proposed by M. Weber as a specific form of unity of the polyethnic community, although it seems quite new for its time, is nevertheless far from the model of socio-cultural integration, cultural equality and equality of economic opportunities.

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1. Introduction

In the most striking areas of modern economic theory such as Marxism, Weberianism and industrial constructivism (modernization theory) are often found not the same approaches to the development of society and the economy, but at the same time, they bring together scientific interest and conceptual unity in relation to the problems of the expansion of capitalism in the pre-industrial community. Therefore, in this case, although with some reservations, it is possible to talk about the paradigmatic unity of concepts.

2. Problem Statement

The argument of utility or of the inevitability incorporate the impact of (post)industrial culture on the traditional society is the main characteristic of the different justifications of the benefits that pre-industrial cultures of modernization, initiated by western cultures. In this context, various aspects of social dynamics of modernized societies were researched: economic (Gellner, 2006), (Smith, 2003), (Nairn, 1998), political (Mann, 1993), (Breuilly 2009) and cultural (Deutsch, 1979), (Anderson, 2016), (Brubaker, 1996). These scientific schools can be defined by the general concept of «industrial constructivism» (Savchenko, 2014) which, in turn, can be defined as the quintessence of the west-centric paradigm (evolutionism, Marxism). The creative heritage of Weber, as applied to the analysis of the influence of western economic culture on all other cultures, is discussed much less frequently. The main question raised in the article is the phenomenon of unity of the west-centric paradigm expressed in the fact that its main representatives, regardless of their political views, carried out scientific research in a single methodological direction.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the article is a complex paradigm of the Marxism-Weberianism-industrial constructivism which is based on economic determinism and justification of cultural violence on the way to modernization.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the article is to determine the conceptual nature of the relationship between the ideas of economic sociology of Weber and his followers with Marxism and industrial constructivism.

5. Research Methods

The research was conducted using general scientific methods of cognition of social phenomena (analysis, analogy, comparison, etc.) based on methodological provisions and conclusions in which socio-economic processes are recognized as a holistic but contradictory phenomenon. This understanding led to the use of systematic and dialectical approaches.

6. Findings

Marxist methodology has become the main trend of socio-economic science not only XX, but also, in many ways, the XXI century. It dominates not only in Marxism itself, but also in Weberian trends and industrial constructivism.

At the same time, if Marx, Weber and their followers recognize, albeit with some regret, the inevitability of cultural losses in the process of modernization, the representatives of industrial constructivism, in principle, do not see value in traditional cultures.

Structural functionalism can be considered as the only scientific methodology that has made a serious alternative to Marxism and, in general, the paradigm of Marxism-Weberianism-industrial constructivism.
7. Conclusion

The classical scientific paradigm of Marxism, Weberianism and industrial constructivism forms the conceptual basis for substantiating the industrial-assimilating impact of technologically developed societies on traditional cultures. Scientists working in the context of this paradigm see the result of industrialization and modernization and economic progress and, often, the formation of civil culture in the previously patriarchal communities. At the same time, significant scientific efforts are made not to see or attach due importance to the dangers that are produced by cultural losses in the modernized communities.

Max Weber and Karl Marx about the modernization and the cultural losses. In classical and modern scientific and sociological discourse Marxist views are usually opposed to all others including weberian. Moreover, Max Weber, at a certain stage took a privileged position in the Russian social science which previously belonged to Karl Marx.

Weberianism is often considered one of the directions of Marxism in the western direction of sociological thought. Nevertheless, Raymon Aron, analyzing the effects of economic and cultural violence of the industrialized community in relation to the traditional, said M. Weber was «too Marxist» in his perception of the problems of modern society, that is, «too pessimistic» because he could not «accurately grasp» the prospect of well-being that brings the masses of production growth, and «did not see the likelihood» of easing class and possibly inter-ethnic and international clashes in an era when «wealth depends on productivity, not on the size of the territory» (Aron, 2013).

Did Max Weber really «not see» the «good» that capitalism, in the face of Western societies brings to traditional communities? If we share the point of view of Raymon Aron we will have no other way but to recognize that Karl Marx himself was not a Marxist in the full sense of the word, like Max Weber, because he considered the capitalist expansion of economically and technologically developed communities into societies that preserved the patriarchal way of life, inevitable, firstly, because he welcomed and encouraged technological progress, and secondly, he was sure that social revolution is possible only in capitalist society, but not in traditional one. Thus, Karl Marx speaking about British domination in India noted that England, despite all its arbitrary and lawless actions, the result of which was the brutal destruction of the entire «social organism» of Hindustan, became «an unconscious instrument of history», preparing the ground for a social revolution in India (Marx, 2005). «The English intervention, – wrote Karl Marx, – in which both Indian spinners and Indian weavers were swept off the face of the earth, destroyed these small «semi-barbaric, semi-civilized» communities, destroying their economic basis and thus produced «the greatest and, it must be said, the only social revolution ever experienced by Asia» (Marx, 2005).

It should be noted that Max Weber, as well as Karl Marx, was aware of the irreversibility of cultural losses which are previously exposed to pre-industrial communities as a result of modernization. Moreover, Max Weber, according to the observations of Jurgen Habermas, «was not free from the pessimistic assessment organized on the model of the science of civilization» and was under considerable influence of the «critique of bourgeois culture in the late nineteenth century had its most influential representatives in the face of Nietzsche and philosophers of the time» (Habermas, 2010).

Modernization as the institutionalization celebrationing action. Despite the noted «pessimism» Max Weber connects the process of transformation from traditional to modern society with the «institutionalization of cerational action» (Habermas, 2010), authenticating, thus, the processes of rationalization and modernization: «cognitive potential arising together with consistently rationalized pictures of the world, cannot yet become effective in traditional societies, within which there is a process of fragmentation. It is released only in modern societies. This process of realization means the modernization of society» (Habermas, 2010).

Max Weber believes modernization inevitable and, at least, does not believe its consequences negative. It is with the development of rationalism during the formation of modernism that Max Weber connects the grand achievements of civilization, which is thoroughly described in the first part of the «Protestant ethics» (Weber, 2008). Max Weber analyzes in great detail the «concatenation of circumstances» that «led to the emergence of cultural phenomena in the west, and only here, which developed ... in a direction of universal significance and significance» (Weber, 2008). For max Weber, capitalism as «the most fatal force of our time», accompanied by the processes of
rationalization and modernization ..., «there is an inevitable reality, the norm and can not be replaced». Max Weber admits the ambivalence of his assessment of the achievements of capitalism but the existence of «alternatives to capitalism» is deliberately excluded (Shpakova, 2005).

According to Weber, only the West passed and overcame all the pre-capitalist stages of management: feudalism, «class state» and patrimonialism (Max Weber..., 2005), which was expressed, among other things, in a special, inherent exclusively to the west, the dynamics of the relations between the city and the village (Weber, 2003). Weber analyzes the western model of capitalism as perfect and established and, therefore, of universal importance for world civilization.

In this context, Jurgen Habermas defends the view that of Weber’s conceptual productions follows the position of universalism, that is, the belief in a universal world-wide value of western culture (Habermas, 2010).

M. Weber demonstrates solidarity with universalist postulates with his usual prudence with remarks and reservations. On the other hand, the concept of rationalization M. Weber proposes to invest «a very different meaning», noting that «in all cultures there were a variety of rationalization in a variety of areas of life». According to Max Weber, it is important for their cultural and historical differentiation which areas of social culture are rationalized and in which direction the processes of rationalization are moving. On the other hand, Weber points to the exceptional «specific rationalism» of western societies. From Weber’s point of view, the scientific search in any case is reduced to the definition of western originality. Understanding the uniqueness of all western, in turn, allows, according to M. Weber, to understand the originality of western rationalism and explain the underlying causes of its occurrence and dynamics (Weber, 2008).

Assessing the depth of Weber’s universalism, J. Habermas raises the question: «are the structures of scientific thinking of posttraditional ideas about law and morality and autonomous art, as they were formed within the framework of western culture, the property of today’s «community of people of culture» as a regulatory idea, or not?» (Habermas, 2010). J. Habermas tries to answer this question and notes that the universalist concept «does not deny the pluralism and incompatibility of the historical manifestations of «cultural humanity». At the same time, it treats this diversity of ways of life as limited by socio-cultural contents and postulates that any culture, as soon as it is able to reach a certain level of «awareness» and/or «sublimation» must understand the «formal properties of the modern worldview». Habermas believes that cultural relativism cannot be combined with the concepts in the context of which Weber describes the phenomenon of rationalization. Jurgen Habermas, therefore, is convinced that M. Weber’s «relativistic reservations» would have a real relation to the cultural relativism only if Max Weber interpreted the uniqueness of western rationalism not in terms of cultural originality, but on the basis of a selective sample, which embodies the specific forms of rationalization inherent in modern western capitalism (Habermas, 2010).

Reflecting on the importance of Max Weber’s ideas for modern social science, it is useful to know that Weber was one of the first to describe the multiplicity of factors that determine social transformation. He did not replace the concepts of society, civil society and the nation state and captured the specifics of the long-term development of international economic and political relations, thereby showing the trends leading to globalization (Maslovsky, 2008).

V. Schlochrer, revealing the nature of western rationalism, is convinced that modern western culture is the culture of type which interested in all cultures. V. Schlochrer said western culture at some point introduced to the world historically was not previously known, a new understanding of «cultural humanity». He believes it makes the western culture unique and also gives it a special status. That is why the culture of the western world is a universal historical phenomenon and has universal significance and significance. «Even a man of culture, – writes V. Schlochrer, – who does not choose this alternative for himself, discovers in it a possible interpretation of cultural humanity, an interpretation in which he, although he should not relativize his own choice but is forced to relate to it to the extent that he wants to live consciously» (quoted by J. Habermas (Habermas, 2010)).

The comprehension of western originality allows Weber to come to pragmatic considerations about the low ability of non-western cultures to conduct modern forms of management. The content of this approach is in «internal colonization». Weber recommends that the government, through various preferences and privileges, attract as many German peasants as possible from various regions of Germany to the Eastern lands. According to Weber, the task of «internal colonization» was to prevent «Polonization» (Shpakova, 2005). The Slavs isolated from western
rationalism were for Weber a real threat to the development of capitalism in Germany (quoted by Shpakova, 2005). Such an understanding of «internal colonialism» as a special resettlement concept for the German population is exclusively a German tradition and its traces are found even in the plans of the Nazi Germany, focused on the settlement-germanization of the conquered territories. Currently, the concept of «internal colonialism» has a predominantly negative connotation and is applied in the theory of dependent development. Representatives of this research area (Frank A. G. (The Underdevelopment of Development, 1996), Antonio Gramsci (Gramsci, 1991), Mouzelis (Mouzelis, 1978), M. Hechter (Hechter 1998), too, by the way, the Marxists showed how progressive industrial society, deforming the natural direction of development of non-western communities, condemn this community to «the development of underdevelopment» (the development of underdevelopment), turning them into Ipokrena of the cheap raw materials and the cheap labor (Savchenko, 2008).

Conventional connubium. Assessing the features of ethno-cultural development, M. Weber applies a reasonable approach, pointing out that «ethnic unity is not the community itself but only a factor that simplifies the emergence of community». According to Weber, such unity determines the emergence of primarily «political communities». But Weber is convinced that it is the political community that awakens «faith in ethnic unity» which «persists after its collapse», unless this «is prevented by sharp differences in customs and habitus, and especially in language» (Theories of Ethnicity, 1996). And we see that in this case Weber’s views take a constructivist character.

Max Weber offers a new concept of conventional connubium which in its most general form can be understood as a kind of social unity, formed in the absence of endogamous restrictions. In other words, the conventional connubium is a community arising from interethnic mixing (Savchenko, 2010), which is «a situation where the offspring of a permanent sexual community is allowed by the political, class or economic community of the father to participate in a similar common action and to its advantages» (Theories of Ethnicity, 1996). Clarifying the concept connubium, M. Weber rejects «archaic» views on «racial incompatibility of ethnic wholes» (except for «extreme cases of aesthetic rejection» (Theories of Ethnicity, 1996): «Class differences, i.e. differences inculcated by upbringing and, in particular, differences in «education» (in the broadest sense of the word) represent a much stronger obstacle to conventional connubium than anthropological differences. Purely anthropological difference always have little influence» (Theories of Ethnicity, 1996).

The idea of conventional connubium can be called new and progressive for the beginning of the XX century when the ethnosocial science was still dominated by biological tendencies of racist persuasion (Savchenko, Khudyakova, 2010). On the other hand, against the background of the already gaining the strength of cultural functionalism which was alien to universalism and the idea of the cultural violence, the theory of «connubium» looks initially outdated even for its time. Nevertheless, the concept of conventional connubium was fixed in the scientific and sociological discourse. We add that the concept of connubium differs significantly from the modern concept of socio-cultural integration as a dichotomous unity of differentiation and convergence of ethnic communities (Savchenko, 2018).

Functionalists (Malinovsky, 1990), like M. Weber, divided cultures into primitive and modern, globally and locally significant. But they, unlike Weber, Marx and industrial constructivists, insisted that even the most primitive culture has the right to exist. It is no coincidence that in 1929 Bronislav Malinovsky spoke out against the forced modernization of traditional communities and wrote about the «truth» that it is impossible «to destroy or destroy with impunity the old system of traditions, morality or laws and replace them with a new morality and a new sense of justice; the result will always be what may be called «black bolshevism» (Malinovsky, 2005).

It cannot be ruled out that, perhaps, M. Weber’s west-centrism was more «understanding» in socio-cultural relation than west-centrism of K. Marx or E. Gellner. Weber’s «understanding pessimism» is reflected in a certain part in the so-called concepts of dependent development, Marxist in its essence, in which the interaction of modern and traditional society does not look so problem-free.

This «understanding» that occurs in Weber’s analysis of the nature of the interactions between tradition and modernity is a bright marker that allows us to separate the concept of M. Weber from other concepts of modernization. In general, Weberianism like other classical scientific concepts: Marxism and industrial constructivism supports the industrial-assimilating impact of western societies on traditional cultures. Economic growth (Gusev, Ustinkin, 2010) and, as a consequence, the development of civil society in previously traditional societies was seen by the authors of these concepts as a natural result of cultural modernization and industrialization.

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In the paradigm of Marxism-Weberianism-industrial constructivism intellectual efforts of researchers are made to deliberately ignore or underestimate the dangers that arise as a result of the destruction of the traditional way of life of traditional communities in the process of modernization.

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