**Modernization: Civilization Crisis of Capitalist Modernization and Its Criticism**

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**Journal of World Social Sciences, Issue 1 , 2024**

　　There is no end to modernization. Capitalist modernization is dominated by the industrial revolution and the democratic revolution, with the establishment of capitalist private ownership, free markets and decentralized or centralized political systems as its basic characteristics, covering all aspects of the economy, politics and culture. The modernization process is a process of civilization transformation. Fukuzawa Yukichi believed that "everything in society is aimed at civilization." The capitalist civilization created by capitalist modernization encompasses all the civilizational achievements produced by human beings' transformation of nature, society and human beings themselves in a capitalist way. However, the civilization paradox and crisis of capitalist modernization are becoming more and more serious in instrumental rationality and exploitative accumulation.

Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb pointed out in their works: **"Our current capitalist civilization (which, like the civilization of the past, will die) is collapsing before our eyes."**

The collapse of capitalist civilization is taking place in the unstoppable changes of the times. The path to modernization is pluralistic rather than monistic. Xi Jinping emphasized: "There is no fixed model for the road to modernization. The best model is the one that suits you, and you cannot force your feet to fit the shoes." We must base ourselves on China's specific reality, unswervingly follow the Chinese path of modernization, and create a new form of human civilization.

**Chapter 1. The civilizational core and essence of capitalist modernization**

Instrumental rationality is the civilizational core of capitalist modernization, and to a certain extent determines the essential characteristics of capitalist modernization, namely, exploitative accumulation. The deeper the degree of instrumental rationality and the more universal the exploitative accumulation, the more prominent becomes the civilizational paradox and crisis of capitalist modernization.

**1. Instrumental rationality is the civilizational core of capitalist modernization**

Since modern times, instrumental rationality, as the civilization core of capitalist modernization, has gradually become the internal driving force of capitalist modernization. Max Weber pointed out that **"it seems to be best understood to regard the development of the 'capitalist spirit' as a partial phenomenon of the overall development of rationalism."**

**Werner Sombart** **even proposed that "capitalist spirit and rationality are the same thing."**

In their view, rationality is equivalent to the capitalist spirit to a certain extent, which determines the fundamental direction of capitalist modernization. Modern countries, modern cities, and capitalism are even more generated in this rational movement. Rationality includes instrumental rationality, value rationality, and scientific rationality. Weber argued that instrumental rationality is "the purpose is rational", which requires people to consider all possible means and the consequences of possible means in order to achieve the selected purpose, and then choose the most effective means to achieve the purpose. In the process of capitalist modernization, instrumental rationality shows the spiritual characteristics and behavior of instrumental rationality through people. People with instrumental rationality often regard others or things as tools or obstacles to their own realization. People's market rationality under the conditions of capitalist market economy is a typical representative of instrumental rationality. Since modern times, instrumental rationality has gradually swallowed up value rationality, absorbed scientific rationality, and become the civilizational core of capitalist modernization.

　　The greedy desire of capitalists must not be regarded as the remnant or interference of traditional culture. It is precisely the spiritual characteristics of capitalism with a strong rational color brought about by the dominant position of instrumental rationality in capitalist modernization.

The instrumental rationality and greedy desire displayed by capitalists have a dialectical unity: the rationality of capitalists is the rationality of greed, and the greed of capitalists is also rational greed. The greed of capitalist rationality does not depend on the personal will of capitalists, but is generated by the free competition of the market and the inherent laws of capitalist production, or it can be said that the greed of capitalist rationality depends on the capital production mode.

Marx pointed out in "Capital": "Capital far exceeds all previous production systems based on direct forced labor in terms of energy, greed and efficiency."

Capital is the key to capitalist modernization, the process of capital accumulation is the process of capitalist greed, and the rational greed of capitalists is also an important factor in the continuous advancement of capitalist modernization. Engels pointed out that the development speed of old developed capitalist countries has slowed down after the early barbaric development, while in young industrial countries, "capital is dominated by its unstoppable greedy nature" and "it is this unstoppable momentum that drives the unlimited resources of these young countries to be developed."

The rational greed of capitalists has promoted capitalist modernization. It is precisely because various natural and social resources are constantly being developed and plundered that capitalist modernization can be further promoted through exploitative accumulation.

**2. Exploitative accumulation is the essential feature of capitalist modernization**

The essence of capitalist modernization is endless exploitation. In the early days of capitalist modernization, the primitive accumulation of capital was full of blood and conquest. Marx pointed out in Capital: **"Capital came into the world, from head to toe, every pore dripping with blood and filth."**

From the "Enclosure Movement" in Britain to the global "colonial movement" in Western developed capitalist countries, from the African black slave trade to the miserable situation of Chinese workers in the United States, the process of primitive accumulation of capital is full of exploitation and plunder.

In order to avoid the sudden cessation of the power of capital accumulation, the bourgeoisie has long reached a consensus on the following issue, that is, the exploitative behavior that caused the primitive accumulation of capital and opened up all deeper accumulations must be repeated. The exploitative accumulation of capital by capitalists no longer stays at the primitive stage of capital accumulation. The "primitive stage" based on naked plunder, deception and violence has been considered irrelevant to the present.

Therefore, David Harvey argued that after the adjustment of the primitive accumulation mechanism, "the whole new mechanism of deprivation accumulation has been opened." This new deprivation mechanism shows that the deprivation of people by capital in the process of capitalist modernization has penetrated into the "capillaries" of society. Looking at the development of capitalism, whether it is the primitive accumulation of capital criticized by Marx, or the "accumulation by dispossession" proposed by David Harvey, it is ultimately "exploitative accumulation" based on the cruel exploitation of people.

　　The essence of modernization should be the modernization of people. "Exploitative accumulation" is carried out throughout the process of capitalist modernization. Relying on the advantage of possessing the means of production in economic relations, it gratuitously appropriates the surplus labor and labor products of workers, thereby expanding the scope of capitalist control to all aspects of society. Undoubtedly, "exploitative accumulation" is the most essential feature of capitalist modernization, and this essential feature runs counter to the realization of human modernization.

**3. The civilizational paradox and crisis of capitalist modernization**

　　When a new thing first appears, it often brings with it a gratifying progressiveness. Marx and Engels pointed out in The Communist Manifesto: **"The bourgeoisie has played a very revolutionary role in history."**

Instrumental rationality was a progressive spiritual quality in the early days of capitalist modernization. As one of the internal driving forces of capitalist modernization, it helped capitalism create more material wealth than the sum of all wealth produced by previous societies, and produced more advanced science and technology and culture than previous societies. However, the once vigorous and progressive instrumental rationality spirit gradually turned to closure and reaction with the in-depth development of the capitalist mode of production.

The one-sided pursuit of instrumental rationality makes people seriously objectified and aleniated, and people become means rather than ends, losing their subjectivity.

Under the blessing of instrumental rationality, "rational greed" simplifies the relationship between people into interests and transaction relationships, **"the bourgeoisie has wiped out the sacred halo of all professions that have always been respected and awe-inspiring**", and the whole society has fallen into a barbaric state of moral degradation and egoism, and the civilization paradox of capitalist modernization has thus emerged.

"The overall failure of the capitalist civilization paradigm and value paradigm is ultimately the result of the intensification of economic and social contradictions," which has led to the gradual nihilism and irrationality of the spiritual world of individuals living in the capitalist system, and the outbreak of a partial or comprehensive crisis of social belief, and even caused the loss and imbalance of national spiritual identity. The civilization crisis of capitalist modernization is not just a crisis in the spiritual realm, but has in fact spread to many fields such as politics and ecology.

**The "exploitative accumulation" of capital has triggered a comprehensive civilization crisis in capitalist modernization.**

Capitalist political civilization is manifested in the political and legal systems in the superstructure of capitalist society, as well as the systems, mechanisms and concepts derived from them.

It is the political achievement of capitalist modernization practice. Capitalist democracy is the core of capitalist political civilization, but this democracy is hypocritical and unequal.

It is only the democracy of a minority of the bourgeoisie. For the working people and the proletariat, it is a false formal democracy with only "formal rationality" rather than "substantial rationality".

At the same time, the so-called political rights of the people contained in capitalist political civilization are essentially bourgeois privileges and the rights of a minority of the bourgeoisie. Capitalist political civilization has not changed the fundamental nature of capital exploitation. On the contrary, through the arrangement of the political system, the imprint of "exploitative accumulation" has been deeply embedded in capitalist modernization. From this point of view, capitalist political civilization has gradually lost its original progressiveness in the process of capitalist modernization. Today, when "exploitative accumulation" is becoming more and more universal, the crisis of capitalist political civilization is becoming more and more prominent.

Capitalist modernization not only exploits people’s surplus value through the arrangement of the capitalist political system, but also “exploits” people’s external environment—nature—through the capitalist mode of production. This “exploitation” of natural resources can be understood as plunder, and the ecological civilization crisis has quietly descended in the endless and brutal plundering process. Marx pointed out: “The bourgeoisie has created more and greater productivity in its less than a hundred years of class rule than all previous generations combined.” Capitalist modernization has promoted the rapid development of science and technology, and then promoted the great development of productivity. The material wealth produced by all previous generations cannot be compared with it. However, capitalist modernization pursues a production and consumption model of “mass production—mass consumption—mass waste”. This irrational production and consumption model, which is self-centered and sacrifices the environment, has caused a global ecological civilization crisis.

**Chapter II. Capitalist Modernization and the Global Expansion of Capitalist Civilization**

Capitalist modernization is accompanied by the global expansion of capitalist civilization, and colonial rule is an important means of the global expansion of capitalist civilization. The global expansion of capitalist civilization aims to promote great power hegemony around the world.

　　1. **Capitalist modernization is accompanied by the global expansion of capitalist civilization**

The Industrial Revolution directly promoted capitalist countries to open up the world market, and capitalist civilization represented by industrial civilization expanded wildly around the world. Marx pointed out that the Industrial Revolution led to a great explosion of productivity, destroyed the old workshop handicrafts or industrial systems based on manual labor, and the semi-barbaric countries established under these old systems were forced to break away from their closed-door state. "Large-scale industry connects the people of all countries in the world with each other, unites all local small markets into a world market, prepares for civilization and progress everywhere, and makes everything that happens in civilized countries inevitably affect other countries."

Expanding the world market has become an important driving force for the spread of capitalist civilization. With the gradual formation of the capitalist world market dominated by the bourgeoisie, the production and consumption of all countries have become global. In short, the great industrial development and the formation of the world market in the process of capitalist modernization have promoted the global expansion of capitalist civilization, and the tentacles of capitalist civilization have even extended to the most wild corners of the world.

　　The process of capitalist modernization is, to a certain extent, the process of global expansion of capitalist civilization. This extremely aggressive expansion is also reflected in the "Western civilization-centered theory", "two-pole theory" and "social evolution theory" that have been formed in the process of capitalist modernization. "Western civilization-centered theory" argued that the capitalist civilization created by Western developed capitalist countries is the end point of human civilization progress.

Although there are many arguments such as "civilization regression theory", "civilization end theory" and "civilization cycle theory" within Western developed capitalist countries that have experienced two world wars, most of them are still trying to maintain the dominant position of capitalist civilization in the world.

After the upheaval in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Francis Fukuyama pointed out: **"The realization of liberal democracy in Western Europe is a long and difficult process, but this fact will not affect every country in the region to complete this journey."**

"Western civilization-centered theory" is an important guiding ideology for the global expansion of capitalist civilization. "Two-pole theory" argued that the stage of social development can be abstractly simplified into the traditional social stage and the modern social stage.

This theory attempts to divide the analyzed society into two opposite poles and develop its entire theory in the two stages of "traditional" and "modern".

The emergence of the "bipolar theory" has caused the opposition and conflict between capitalist civilization and non-capitalist civilization. The opposition and conflict between civilizations is actually an extension of the "Western civilization-centrism". The "social evolution theory" makes the social system biological and organic.

This social history view based on Darwin's biological evolution theory argued that society is an organic organism that is constantly progressing. Only after going through the corresponding evolutionary stages can it enter the next evolutionary stage on the basis of the previous evolutionary stage, and each evolutionary stage is more advanced than the previous stage. However, Thomas Henry Huxley put forward the opposite view in his masterpiece: "The progressive changes of civilization, usually called "social evolution", are actually a process fundamentally different in nature, that is, different from the process that causes species evolution in a natural state, and different from the process that produces variant evolution in an artificial state."

In Huxley's view, social evolution cannot simply apply Darwin's biological evolution theory. It can be seen that the "social evolution theory" has artificially defined the direction and route of social modernization development. It simply argued that social modernization development is a single line, and this development model can only be the model of Western social development.

　　The global expansion of capitalist civilization is based on the theories of "Western civilization-centrism", "bipolarism" and "social evolutionism". These theories arbitrarily classify underdeveloped societies without capitalist civilization as "traditional societies" and attributes the relative backwardness of underdeveloped countries without capitalist civilization to the "traditionality" within society, thus proving that other countries must "completely Westernize" and follow the old development path of Western developed capitalist countries in order to achieve their own modernization. However, the global expansion of capitalist civilization promoted by relying on foreign colonial rule is aimed at promoting the hegemony of great powers, not achieving world peace and development.

**2. Colonial rule is a means of global expansion of capitalist civilization**

Colonial rule is a means for capitalist civilization to expand globally. While capitalist civilization is expanding globally, it has almost destroyed the local civilizations of the colonized countries, nations or regions. In the early days of foreign colonial rule by Western developed capitalist countries, the local civilizations of the colonies were mostly destroyed rather than constructed. European colonial pioneers such as Portugal and Spain were still in the transition period from feudal society to capitalist society.

Marx once pointed out that the premise of plundering is production, that is, there must be something to plunder, and the mode of production determines the mode of plunder. These early colonial countries in the transition stage were limited by the mode of production and mainly sought luxury goods such as gold and spices overseas. With the development of capitalism, the "pirate-style" primary colonial behavior was gradually abandoned, followed by the overseas expansion of countries such as the Netherlands, Britain and France, in order to obtain raw materials and commodity markets, and gradually establish a capitalist world system.

These Western capitalist developed countries, where capitalist productive forces has reached a relatively high level, attempted to transplant capitalist production relations to the colonies under their jurisdiction. However, the attempt to transplant and rebuild colonial capitalist production relations failed, and in fact did not achieve the rapid development of colonial capitalist production methods.

　　Since the Second World War, the old colonial system has gradually disintegrated with the climax of the national liberation movement, and neo-colonialism has emerged from the old colonialism and entered the historical stage. Neo-colonialism promotes the expansion of capitalist civilization in all fields and all directions, covering all aspects such as politics, economy, and culture. It is not only the expansion of material civilization, but also the expansion of spiritual civilization.

Politically, Western developed capitalist countries adopted the means of divide and rule to cause conflicts within and between countries, used military treaties and alliances to control the armies of colonized countries, and gave colonized countries false sovereignty politically; economically, through various official aids and loans, multinational corporations export capital and conduct unequal trade, so that colonized countries are still economically dependent on developed capitalist countries. Culturally, Western developed capitalist countries have started the national propaganda machine, and through various methods and means, they have vigorously promoted their values, theories, and lifestyles, and carried out deep ideological infiltration.

　　Capitalist civilization is expanding globally under the impetus of neo-colonialism. New concepts related to neo-colonialism, such as cultural colonization and digital colonization, have also emerged. Neo-colonialism has become one of the most important means to achieve the hegemony of Western developed capitalist countries. However, no matter what posture and form colonialism appears in, its essence is still a means of global expansion of capitalist civilization.

**3. The global expansion of capitalist civilization is aimed at promoting great power hegemony**

Capitalist civilization has always regarded the promotion of great power hegemony in the world as the purpose of global expansion. Samuel P. Huntington argued that "every civilization regards itself as the center of the world", and capitalist civilization has already regarded itself as the center of world civilization. Western developed capitalist countries even believe that capitalist civilization has become a "universal civilization".

The so-called "universal civilization" of Western developed capitalist countries implies that human beings are gradually converging in culture, and people of all ethnic groups in the world are moving towards common values, beliefs, and systems. This arrogant view of civilization argued that countries in the world can only achieve modernization by unconditionally and completely accepting "Westernization".

However, such actions that claim to save the people of the world from danger and force other countries or nations to accept the capitalist modernization path and capitalist civilization are essentially serving the promotion of great power hegemony.

　　The main reason why Western developed capitalist countries promote great power hegemony is that they rely on the advantages of capitalist civilization and their powerful military, economic, cultural, political, and technological strengths to forcibly interfere with and control the modernization process of developing countries while expanding their civilization, and then attempt to dominate the region and even the world.

The global expansion of capitalist civilization seeks all-round and multi-field great power hegemony. Today, the core of great power hegemony is gradually leaning towards scientific and technological hegemony.

Because today, with the growing development of science and technology, Western developed capitalist countries occupy a relatively leading position in science and technology. Deng Xiaoping pointed out: **"Science and technology are the primary productive forces."**

The leading position of Western developed capitalist countries in the field of science and technology has enabled them to basically maintain a leading level in the economy, culture, and military. They lead the development of various fields with the development of science and technology, maintain their leading position in various fields with the leading technology, and promote neo-colonialism to the vast developing countries while maintaining an all-round sense of superiority, using both soft and hard tactics to force other countries to accept capitalist civilization, and then promote great power hegemony around the world. As Marx pointed out: "It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what they call civilization into their midst, that is, to become bourgeois themselves." However, the global expansion of capitalist civilization, which is coercive and aggressive, has caused contradictions and conflicts between the vast developing countries and the developed Western capitalist countries, bringing adverse effects to world peace and development.

**3. Realistic manifestations of the crisis of capitalist modernization and criticism of its root causes**

Capitalist modernization is increasingly moving toward the opposite of civilization, and the crisis of capitalist modernization civilization has erupted in an all-round way, from the polarized social crisis to the spiritual crisis of the people, to the war crisis that destroys peace and the global ecological crisis. At its root, the root cause of these capitalist modernization civilization crises lies in capitalist private ownership.

**1. The Reality of the Crisis of Capitalist Modernization Civilization**

　　As capitalist modernization advances, the civilization crisis of capitalist modernization becomes more and more prominent. The polarized social crisis, the spiritual crisis of the people, the war crisis that destroys peace, and the ecological crisis that concerns the future of mankind are all realistic manifestations of the civilization crisis of capitalist modernization.

　　First, the social crisis of polarization has intensified. "The widening gap between the rich and the poor is a common phenomenon in European and American countries." Although Western developed capitalist countries have been constantly seeking reforms to ease the social contradictions of polarization in the process of capitalist modernization, the nature of capitalism determines that it is difficult to solve the problem of the widening gap between the rich and the poor in society, and social injustice is becoming more and more obvious.

　　Capitalist countries attempt to ease the polarized social crisis through the high efficiency of modernization, but push the people who pursue social fairness and justice into the arms of populism, neoliberalism and utilitarianism.

Populists claim to represent public opinion, pursue equality and justice, and oppose elites, establishment and oppression. They mistakenly believe that they can do whatever they want under public opinion support, which is a typical example of the absolutism of the majority, and they are by no means pursuing fairness and justice in the true sense.

At the same time, influenced by capitalist values, populists have formed a narrow "egocentrism" of capitalism. They mistakenly regard absolute fairness as the goal of pursuit and oppose pluralistic values. This denial of pluralism will inevitably lead to ignoring the interests of some people. This narrow individualism is essentially a realistic manifestation of individuals being coerced by capital in capitalist modernization.

**Neoliberalism**

Neoliberalism is an important driving force for capitalist modernization. It requires completely free market competition, advocates individualism, opposes excessive state intervention in the economy, and requires large-scale privatization reform of public resources.

The civilizational core and essential characteristics of capitalist modernization require neoliberalism to put efficiency first and pursue profit as its fundamental goal. In particular, the vigorous promotion of private ownership reform has led to excessive concentration of social wealth in the hands of a few people, and neoliberalism has become an important driving force for exacerbating social polarization.

**Utilitarianism**

Utilitarianism thought trend is eager to promote the happiness of the majority of people, but it does not really pay attention to and solve the problem of interest distribution, and still cannot solve the social crisis of polarization between the rich and the poor. In short, **populism, neoliberalism or utilitarianism** cannot eliminate the polarization between the rich and the poor. On the contrary, in the process of capitalist modernization, under the guidance of the profit-seeking nature of capital, capitalists are getting richer and richer, and the proletariat is impoverished, which further exacerbates the social crisis of polarization.

　　Secondly, the spiritual crisis of the people is rampant. The emphasis on utilitarianism and material is a prominent feature of capitalist modernization. Zbigniew Brzezinski pointed out: **"Today's world is more like an airplane controlled by autopilot, accelerating continuously, but without a clear destination."**

Since the industrial revolution, capitalist modernization has created a highly developed material civilization using advanced science and technology, but capitalist modernization has neglected the construction of spiritual civilization to a certain extent, which has hidden a huge spiritual crisis.

　　While conquering nature to obtain huge material wealth, capitalist modernization has gradually reduced people to slaves of material commodities, and the people are facing a huge spiritual crisis. The United States is one of the countries with the most developed material civilization in the world and is also the so-called "beacon" of capitalist civilization.

However, the Western developed capitalist countries, led by the United States, have not only fallen into the civilization crisis of capitalist modernization, but also brought a series of disasters to the world. People gradually lose their subjectivity and life presents a materialized state. In a world full of material desires, people's spirit is submerged by the material world. Therefore, the society is increasingly filled with a sense of spiritual emptiness. People feel the emptiness and meaninglessness of life.

The disgust for the greed of capital is intertwined with the powerlessness and despair of their own inability to change reality. Material civilization is developing rapidly with the advancement of science and technology, but people's moral level has not kept up with the pace of material civilization. People have simply become tools for material production and consumption and are determined by the material commodities they produce. For the masses at the bottom of society, racial and poverty issues are becoming increasingly serious, various types of drugs are widely prevalent in society, and the popularization of the Internet has made the spread of violent and pornographic information more common...

These moral declines manifested in the masses at the bottom of society are largely due to the fact that **"they have been breathing the air of alcoholism and pornography, theft and fraud since infancy."**

In capitalist countries that vigorously promote modernization, a large part of the social population has been immersed in a spiritual wasteland of lack of faith and confusion in life from birth to death. The manifestation of the spiritual crisis is mainly because the spiritual wealth of capitalism does not belong to the entire social population, but to the bourgeoisie, and only a few people can own and enjoy these spiritual wealth.

**Thirdly, the crisis of war that destroys peace is approaching**.

Capitalist modernization has constructed the capitalist world system, which is both a world economic system and a world political system. Immanuel Wallerstein argued that the capitalist world system is undoubtedly built on the capitalist economy, and Wallerstein is more inclined to explain the capitalist world system from an economic dimension. However, from the mid- 19th century to the present, **"the world system covering all nations and countries constructed by European and American industrialized imperialist countries is highly political."**

The highly complex economic and political factors contained in the capitalist world system imply unequal relations between countries, and the accumulation of these unequal relations accelerates the crisis of war that destroys peace.

**The capitalist world system is an unequal system, which negatively affects the peaceful development of the world.**

First, from the economic dimension, the capitalist world economic system is unequal. Capitalism has emerged as a global system since the beginning. If we start from Wallerstein's world system theory, the capitalist world system consists of three parts: the core area, the semi-periphery area and the periphery area. The capitalist world system is an unequal system. These three regions play completely different roles and perform different functions, and the trade between the three is also unequal.

Wallerstein argued that the division of labor worldwide is the basis for the construction of the capitalist world economic system. It is based on this division of labor that the core area, the semi-periphery area and the periphery area play different economic roles, develop different class structures and use different labor control methods, so the benefits from the operation of the world economic system are also unequal.

Playing different economic roles in different regions of the capitalist world system directly leads to the emergence of oppression, exploitation and inequality in the world system. However, the continuous operation of the capitalist global exploitation mechanism has triggered a series of conflicts and contradictions. On the one hand, countries that are exploited in the capitalist world exploitation mechanism will resist the oppression and exploitation of developed capitalist countries; on the other hand, developed capitalist countries that are in an exploitative position will have conflicts due to differences in the division of economic interests. Once this kind of economic confrontation between countries is formed, it is very likely to evolve into a full-scale conflict in politics, military, culture, etc., which will accelerate the outbreak of war crises and seriously affect the peaceful development of the world.

**Second, from the political dimension, the capitalist world political system is also unequal.**

Lenin once pointed out in the preface of "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism": "Capitalism has become a world system in which a very small number of 'advanced' countries practice colonial oppression and financial strangulation on the vast majority of the world's residents."

Obviously, in Lenin's view, the capitalist world system is a world political system that includes oppression and plunder. In this system, there are industrialized imperialism, dependent countries, semi-colonial countries and colonial regions.

These four types of countries or regions constitute the capitalist world political system. The relationship between the various countries and regions in the system is unequal.

The industrialized empire is the dominant one, and the dependent countries, semi-colonial countries and colonized regions are all dominated. It is precisely this unequal relationship of domination that has led to the resistance of colonies and semi-colonies to colonial rule and imperialism in the capitalist world system, and fierce conflicts between industrialized empires due to competition.

This struggle and conflict have promoted the dynamic evolution of the world system. "Today, it has presented a systematic struggle between the Third World seeking independent development and the monopoly of developed capitalist countries in Europe and the United States."

Therefore, both the capitalist world economic system and the capitalist world political system can hardly escape the increasingly intensified contradictions and conflicts on a global or regional scale, which accelerates the arrival of the war crisis.

**Thirdly, the global ecological crisis is spreading.** The deeper capitalist modernization advances, the more people and nature move toward opposition. Xi Jinping pointed out: **"Industrial civilization has created huge material wealth, but it has also brought about ecological crises such as loss of biodiversity and environmental damage."**

In the process of capitalist modernization, capitalist civilization represented by industrial civilization has created unprecedented material wealth, but it has also caused disorderly development and destroyed the environment due to excessive pursuit of material wealth, bringing about an ecological crisis that concerns the future of mankind.

　　Capitalist modernization advocates consumerism and forms a consumer society, which further deteriorates the relationship between man and nature and threatens human survival and development.

Consumerism and consumer society are important means to promote capitalist modernization. Consumerism first originated in the United States. Its focus is not on people's natural needs for goods, but on artificially creating consumer demand and stimulating overconsumption.

The fundamental starting point for stimulating consumption is to alleviate or eliminate the economic crisis of overproduction and to open up markets while allowing capital to enter a fast-flowing channel.

The further development of capitalist modernization requires expanded reproduction. Therefore, consumerism not only finds a solution to overproduction, but also provides a new opportunity for capitalists to expand reproduction. As early as the end of the 20th century, Alan Durning profoundly pointed out: **"The American-made lifestyle is emulated by wealthy people around the world"** and **"In the land of industrialization, consumption has now penetrated into social values."**

The American-made lifestyle essentially represents the capitalist lifestyle, that is, the consumerist lifestyle of the consumer society. The consumerist lifestyle makes people turn the purchase and use of goods into a religious ritual, and makes people seek spiritual satisfaction and self-satisfaction in consumption. But consumption means consumption, and consumption requires the production and replenishment of products, which means the development of resources. In order to meet the consumption of consumer society, the resource development carried out by developed capitalist countries in the West adopts a predatory and grabbing plan, which directly aggravates the deterioration of the relationship between man and nature - forest resources have been almost irreparably destroyed, the area of ​​arable land has continued to decrease, global warming and environmental pollution have followed one after another, and the global ecological crisis has spread wantonly.

**2. The crisis of capitalist modernization and civilization stems from capitalist private ownership**

The crises of capitalist modernization civilization, such as social crisis, spiritual crisis, war crisis and ecological crisis, cannot be resolved within the capitalist system. The root cause lies in capitalist private ownership.

　　In capitalist society, there is an irreconcilable contradiction between productive forces and production relations, that is, the contradiction between socialized production and private ownership of the means of production. At present, the contradiction between socialized production and private ownership of the means of production is still prominent, and even more acute.

Xi Jinping pointed out**: "From the perspective of the international financial crisis, the continued economic downturn, intensified polarization, and deepening social contradictions in many Western countries show that the contradiction between the socialized production and private ownership of the means of production inherent in capitalism still exists, but the manifestation and characteristics of existence are different**."

With the deepening of capitalist modernization and the intensification of the inherent contradictions of capitalist private ownership, the social crisis of polarization will be further intensified.

　　Under the conditions of capitalist private ownership, people engaged in labor production, like private means of production, are regarded by capitalists as capital that can produce commodities and generate value. However, workers who are engaged in labor production are abstracted as variable capital, and the surplus value they create is occupied by capitalists without compensation.

They are completely reduced to vassals of capitalists. Human labor is transformed into alienated labor, forming an alienated relationship with the workers themselves, the products of labor, and labor activities. After the formation of alienated labor, workers gradually lose their subjectivity and creativity, and are completely trapped in mechanical and rigid alienated labor.

The harder they work, the poorer they become. "Private ownership of land and capital, plus the legal system of inheritance," "will inevitably divide society into two permanent, roughly hereditary classes - a country of rich people and a country of poor people."

Poverty, like an incurable terminal illness, spreads among the labourers class. They try their best but have no hope of reaching the other side of success, and can only return to the road to slavery. In particular, the basic survival of the bottom-level workers is not guaranteed, let alone the richness of their spiritual life. They are increasingly lost in the garbage happiness fed by the capitalists.

**Capitalist private ownership is the root cause of regional conflicts and world unrest.**

The capitalist world system established and maintained by Western developed capitalist countries is ultimately for the purpose of promoting great power hegemony and capital accumulation worldwide. However, the proceeds of capital accumulation belong to private ownership, which promotes private wealth rather than public wealth. This private capital accumulation has led to serious inequality in relations between countries, resulting in the prevalence of terrorism and constant local conflicts around the world.

　　Capitalist private ownership is also the root cause of the tension between man and nature in capitalist society and the global ecological crisis.

Capitalist private ownership is essentially an economic privatization under the capitalist value system. Its biggest feature is **"large-scale and unlimited inclusion of land and labor into its value-added system, and one-sided emphasis on its exchange value".**

Therefore, the organic connection between man and nature is destroyed by capitalist private ownership. The inherent profit-seeking nature of capitalist private ownership is particularly prominent in a consumer society where consumerism prevails, making the global ecological crisis concerning the future of mankind lurking in the endless pursuit of surplus value and natural resources by capital. "Because of its 'utility principle', capital must view and understand nature in the sense of usefulness, making it a tool; because of its 'proliferation principle', capital determines that its use and destruction of nature is endless." According to the logic of capital proliferation under capitalist private ownership, nature is regarded as a tool for capital proliferation, and the unlimited pursuit of capital proliferation by capitalist private ownership makes its destruction of nature endless.

**Chapter IV. Reshaping and transcending civilization: Creating a new form of human civilization through Chinese-style modernization**

At present, capitalist modernization still occupies a dominant position in the world's modernization trend, but the capitalist modernization model has fallen into multiple contradictions and crises due to its inherent defects. While criticizing capitalist modernization, China actively explores a modernization path that suits its own country, creates a new form of human civilization with Chinese-style modernization, and surpasses capitalist civilization with the modern civilization of the Chinese nation.

**1. Promote common prosperity for all people and prevent polarization**

　　At present, the problem of global income inequality is prominent, the middle class is collapsing in Western developed capitalist countries, and the gap between the rich and the poor is widening at an unprecedented rate.

At the same time, social divisions, political polarization, and the spread of populism are emerging in the societies of Western developed capitalist countries. Solidly promoting common prosperity for all people is an important feature of Chinese-style modernization.

First, Chinese-style modernization with common prosperity for all people is a modernization that promotes the free and all-round development of the people. Modernization with common prosperity adheres to the people-centered development concept, insists on development for the people, development relying on the people, and sharing the fruits of development for the people, and takes satisfying the people's needs for a better life as the starting point and foothold of Chinese-style modernization. Chinese-style modernization emphasizes that the all-round development of people is not only about material enjoyment, but also about the satisfaction of spiritual and cultural needs. It is necessary to actively promote the equalization of basic public services, focus on helping low-income people, and improve the education level of children of low-income people.

**Second, Chinese-style modernization with common prosperity is a modernization that is scientifically planned and promoted in an orderly manner.**

Modernization with common prosperity insists on doing our best and acting within our means. On the one hand, we should adopt a reasonable distribution method, adhere to distribution according to work as the main body, and coexist with multiple distribution methods, divide the "cake" of economic benefits well, and let the people enjoy the dividends brought by development. On the other hand, on the premise of seeing the gap with Western developed capitalist countries, we should take steady steps and be down-to-earth, neither set too high development goals nor make promises that cannot be fulfilled, and resolutely prevent falling into the trap of "welfareism". At the same time, the modernization of common prosperity insists on gradual progress. China clearly understands that the Chinese-style modernization of common prosperity is a long process and cannot be achieved overnight. We must fully estimate its long-term, arduous and complex nature, and be good at "accumulating small steps" and "accumulating small streams" to gradually realize Chinese-style modernization.

**Third, the Chinese-style modernization of common prosperity is a modernization that ensures that the upward flow channel is fully unblocked**.

The modernization of common prosperity is committed to improving the balance, coordination and inclusiveness of development, narrowing the urban-rural gap, regional gap and income gap, focusing on expanding the size of the middle-income population, promoting more people to enter the middle-income ranks, strengthening the regulation and adjustment of high incomes, improving the personal income tax system, increasing the intensity of tax regulation in the consumption link, increasing the supervision and rectification of monopoly enterprises, comprehensively promoting rural revitalization, increasing farmers' income, and promoting agricultural and rural modernization. It can be seen that the Chinese-style modernization of common prosperity is different from the capitalist modernization of polarization in the West. China has taken the path of Chinese-style modernization of common prosperity by establishing a sound system and taking scientific and effective measures, avoiding the formation of ineffective "involution" and "lying flat", preventing the solidification of social classes, allowing full social mobility, and effectively avoiding polarization between the rich and the poor.

**2. Promote the coordinated development of material and spiritual aspects and resolve the spiritual crisis**

Capitalist modernization is rich in material but poor in spirituality, while material abundance and spiritual abundance are the fundamental requirements of socialist modernization and the important difference between Chinese modernization and capitalist modernization.

As Fukuzawa Yukichi said in his book Outline of Civilization Theory: **"External civilization is easy to obtain, but internal civilization is difficult to obtain", and we must "first seek its spirit, remove obstacles, and pave the way for absorbing external civilization".**

In the process of promoting socialist modernization, China emphasizes the importance of spiritual civilization construction and promoting the coordination of material and spiritual civilization. On the one hand, with the core socialist values ​​as the core, we should play a leading role in uniting people's hearts and gathering people's strength. We should carry forward the great spirit of the founding of the Party and other advanced spirits of the Communist Party of China, and integrate the core socialist values ​​into all aspects of production and life; carry forward the traditional Chinese virtues, pay attention to the ideological and moral construction of minors, generally improve the moral level and civilized quality of the people, strengthen the cultivation, practice and creation of civilization, improve the long-term mechanism of integrity construction, and comprehensively improve the level of civilization in the whole society.

On the other hand, we should prosper cultural undertakings and cultural industries and enhance the communication and influence of Chinese civilization. The development of spiritual civilization requires the support of the development of cultural undertakings and cultural industries. China has always adhered to the people-centered development philosophy, put social benefits first, promoted cultural construction with the people as the center, and established a sound modern public cultural service system. The development of cultural undertakings and cultural industries not only meets the spiritual needs of the Chinese people themselves, but also shows a good image of China in foreign cultural exchanges that tell Chinese stories well and spread China’s voice, and promotes Chinese civilization to the world.

**3. Take the path of peaceful development and modernization and safeguard world peace and development**

　　Western developed capitalist countries promote modernization through war, colonization and plunder. This old path of capitalist modernization that relies on exploiting other countries to develop their own countries has brought profound disasters to third world countries.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, China has always stood on the right side of history and on the side of civilization and progress. It seeks its own development in maintaining world peace and development, and better maintains world peace and development through its own development. China is a socialist country, and seeking development and happiness for the people is a natural part of socialist modernization. The people are the creators of history. The Communist Party of China leads the people on the path of peaceful development in order to allow the Chinese people to better create their own history in a harmonious and safe environment. Without peace, it is difficult to talk about development; without development, it is difficult to pursue happiness.

Only by firmly following the path of peaceful development and modernization can we create conditions for the people to achieve development and seek happiness. Only by following the path of peaceful development and modernization can we win the trust of countries around the world, build a socialist modern power with high standards, and truly realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. At the same time, China's path of peaceful development and modernization is to seek harmony for the world and better maintain world peace and development through its own development.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, China has always adhered to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and gradually established an international image of China as a force for peace. We advocate the peaceful settlement of international disputes, establish friendly partnerships extensively around the world, actively participate in international governance issues, and emphasize that China will never seek hegemony. In recent years, China has actively promoted the joint construction of the "Belt and Road Initiative", bringing new opportunities to the vast number of developing countries. China is actively building a new type of international relations and is committed to creating a new model of international relations based on mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation. Whether it is the joint construction of the "Belt and Road Initiative" or the construction of a new type of international relations, the ultimate goal is to promote world peace and development.

**4. Promote harmonious coexistence between man and nature and build a community of life between man and nature**

　　Human beings and nature are not in opposition but a unified organic whole. Human beings have been endlessly demanding from nature and destroying the organic connection between themselves and nature, and have been retaliated by nature - ecological crises such as species extinction, air pollution, marine waste pollution and climate warming are becoming more and more severe, and have spread from local crises to global crises. Ecological civilization is the historical trend of the development of human civilization. Respecting nature, adapting to nature and protecting nature are the inherent requirements for building a modern socialist country in an all-round way. In order to achieve the sustainable development of the Chinese nation, Chinese-style modernization emphasizes taking the path of civilized development of harmonious coexistence between man and nature and building a community of life between man and nature.

**First, we should accelerate the green transformation of development mode.**

To promote harmonious coexistence between man and nature, we must find a balance between development and environmental sustainability, which means promoting green and low-carbon economic and social development, accelerating the upgrading of industrial structure, and accelerating the optimization of energy structure; we must implement a comprehensive conservation strategy, adhere to conservation first, accelerate the construction of waste recycling system, and build a conservation-oriented society; we must vigorously support the development of green industries, improve the market-oriented allocation system of resources and environmental factors, promote the progress of green technology research and development, advocate green production and green consumption, and gradually form a green production and lifestyle.

**Second, we should increase the intensity of environmental pollution control and build a beautiful ecological China.**

Environmental pollution is a major problem that has emerged since China's reform and opening up. Controlling environmental pollution is to repair the relationship between man and nature. China insists on precise, scientific and legal governance of environmental pollution, coordinates the prevention and control of air pollution, water pollution and soil pollution, and allows blue sky, clear water and clean land to reappear in people's daily lives. Actively eliminate heavy pollution weather and enhance the control of air pollutants; strengthen targeted pollution control of water resources, water environment and water ecology, focus on the ecological governance of rivers, lakes and reservoirs, establish and improve various environmental governance and supervision mechanisms, and accelerate the construction of environmental infrastructure.

**The third is to enhance the diversity, stability and sustainability of ecosystems.**

On the one hand, we will accelerate the implementation of major ecosystem protection and restoration projects, build a number of national ecological protection areas, promote the construction of a natural protection area system with national parks as the main body, and promote national afforestation actions and biodiversity protection projects; on the other hand, we will take institutional construction as the starting point, establish and improve the collective forest rights system, the fallow and rotation system of cultivated land, the ecological protection compensation system, etc., to institutionally guarantee the stability and diversity of the ecosystem and promote sustainable development.

**5. Comprehensively promote distinctive major-country diplomacy and build a community with a shared future for mankind**

　　Western developed capitalist countries have created capitalist civilization through capitalist modernization and promoted its global expansion, and then promoted great power hegemony; China has created a new form of human civilization through Chinese-style modernization, and accelerated the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind in promoting distinctive great power diplomacy.

**First, firmly uphold fairness and justice in international exchanges.**

Interactions between countries should not present a picture of great power hegemony in which one country dominates and ignores other countries. Western developed capitalist countries have stubbornly promoted great power hegemony with the advantage of capitalist civilization, and this behavior has naturally been criticized by countries around the world. China clearly opposes all hegemony and power politics, truly advocates and practices multilateralism, and builds the modern civilization of the Chinese nation through equal exchanges with all countries and exchanges and mutual learning with all civilizations. China's practical actions to safeguard international fairness and justice have not only safeguarded its legitimate rights and interests in exchanges with other countries, but also set an example of fair and just exchanges for other countries around the world, and promoted the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind.

**Second, actively build a new type of international relations**.

Building a partnership network covering the whole world is the key to China's improvement of its overall diplomatic layout and an important way to promote the construction of a new type of international relations. China is different from Western developed capitalist countries. Western developed capitalist countries are accustomed to forming "small circles" and joining "allies" to impose sanctions. Their actions are to seek great power hegemony. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized: **"China will never seek hegemony, never seek expansion, and never seek spheres of influence.**" Not seeking hegemony, not expanding, and not seeking spheres of influence are the basic principles and bottom line of China's modernization development.

This also means that China will make friends on the premise of adhering to non-alignment, that is, "making friends without alliances."

Third, always show the responsible attitude of a great power.

In the process of China's modernization, China actively participates in the reform of the global governance system and works with countries around the world to build a fair and effective global governance system. In the face of international issues and challenges, China has carried out international cooperation in an all-round way. The image of a responsible great power has been fully demonstrated, winning wide international praise and contributing to the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind.

**V. Conclusion**

The process of capitalist modernization is still continuing. The civilization crisis of capitalist modernization has been fully demonstrated to the world through the difficulties faced by Western developed capitalist countries and other capitalist countries.

Capitalist modernization is gradually moving towards the opposite of progress. Instrumental rationality is the civilization core of capitalist modernization, and the conspiracy of instrumental rationality and greedy characteristics determines that exploitative accumulation is the most essential feature of capitalist modernization. The civilization paradox and crisis of capitalist modernization have thus been initially formed within Western developed capitalist countries.

Capitalist civilization regards foreign colonial rule as an important means to achieve global expansion, and the global expansion of capitalist civilization is aimed at promoting great power hegemony. To a certain extent, the expansion of civilization is also the transmission of civilization crisis.

The civilization crisis of capitalist modernization naturally spreads from Western developed capitalist countries to the world. The polarized social crisis, the spiritual crisis of the people, the war crisis that destroys peace, and the ecological crisis that concerns the future of mankind are the most significant real manifestations of the civilization crisis of capitalist modernization.

At its root, this series of capitalist modernization civilization crises originate from capitalist private ownership. Socialist China has promoted Chinese-style modernization based on reality, created a new form of human civilization, and achieved transcendence of capitalist civilization with the modern civilization of the Chinese nation.