

## Recenzie

### **Bohumil Búzik: Modernization and its Resurrection – the Slovak Way**

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In Slovak sociology, *Bohumil Búzik* is a well-known author of course books and summaries. For decades, he has been bringing his readers systematized findings on core and up to now influential approaches hand in hand with new theoretical approaches to various social issues. The reviewed book is not an exception. It focuses on modernization theories, which largely influenced the thinking of 20th century and of the beginning of the new millennium within social sciences, but also in society itself. The penetration of modernization thinking into social theories and practice makes the book very topical even despite the fact that, so the author, modernization theories went through a second comeback after the decline of the first wave, which did not prove to be more convincing either. What gives the book its topicality and relevance is author's interest in comparing approaches of Slovak sociologists reflecting social development within this frame, which can be regarded as an addition to an overview of the most influential modernization theories in science worldwide. We can't but agree with the author that in Slovak sociology, this is a unique piece of work

In the introduction, author framed his work into theories of social change and outlined basic issues that emerge in connection with modernization theories. It needs to be stressed that these do repeatedly emerge in various contexts in the book. Above all, they result from conceptual ambiguities and from the fact that it is an exaggeration to call theories the incomplete, loose and very disparate ideas of many authors about modernization. Besides, Búzik referred to the extensiveness of the issue. Classification of the works of many authors to modernization theoreticians lacks unity. Often, they did not rank themselves among them and frequently, they did not even use the word modernization. On the other hand, author noted that to choose but a few representatives of these theories would necessarily be a reduction of a basis rich in knowledge and ideas offered by the movement.

The book is divided into four structured chapters. The first chapter is the shortest, in comparison to other three chapters. In the first chapter, called *Modern society, modernization, modernity and modernism*, author introduced the reader to mutual and diverse points between mentioned concepts in terms of content and introduced the readers to the historical setting, in which modernization theories had been applied and that had taken place in two waves, which the following two chapters discussed. The first chapter focused on basic features of approaches to modernization, while openly abandoning the task (very risky, we admit) to appoint the basic attributes and dimensions of process and of modernization theories from

analytical point of view, which could serve to analyse these theories more deeply and to compare them directly with Slovak approaches in the last chapter. Instead, author stuck to the summarizing character, which is based dominantly on three significant systematizing works of foreign authors such as *Sociology of Modernity: Itinerary of 20th century* (Brno 2008) by Danilo Martuccelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity* (Londýn 2005) by Albert Martinelli and *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore 2003) by Nils Gilman. Author often added ideas by Jan Keller published in his *Modernization Theory* (Prague, 2007). These works define the dominating structure of the reviewed book. This is a very fitting decision. On top of that, the book is interwoven with significant works by other authors, so the offered overview of modernization theories is compact and informative. This is supplemented by author's own reflections and arguments thus pointing to the differences and discrepancies, which he uncovered as typical of modernization theories and which complicated their cohesive presentation.

Here, we need to highlight that author drew on a rather wide-ranging list of very carefully selected publications covering a long time span of more or less hundred years. This makes the summarizing book an important monograph in Slovak sociology. It may definitely be used as a fast and first-rate look into the issue of modernization by students as well as by professionals from sociology, other social sciences or even social practice (mainly politics).

Second chapter entitled *Classic modernization theories of the first wave* focused on describing the first wave of modernization theories, which had emerged in world sociology in 1950s and 1960s. Its focus lay in describing ideological area of USA from social, political and economic points of view, in which these theories developed. B. Búzik reminded us of the main attributes of social context such as increasing faith of people in their own power to form social order after the war, postcolonial cultural and economic ambitions, and ideological war in Cold War setting. Afterwards, he presented in detail the intellectual roots of these approaches, which in this wave of modernization theory had been inspired mainly by works by Talcott Parsons and his interpretation of Max Weber and other classical sociological writers. He drew our attention to paradoxically strong influence of structural functionalism on modernization theories, which, with their orientation on social statics, necessarily weakened, too.

He gave a detailed presentation of approaches of the representatives of the first wave of modernization theories such as *Marion Levy, Daniel Lerner, Lucian Pye, Alex Inkeles, David McClelland, Walt Rostow, Seymour M. Lipset and Clark Kerr*. He remembered criticism, too, even very structured self-criticism of these theories presented by *Mancur Olson, Joseph R. Gusfield, Reinhard Bendix, Barrington Moore, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, and Dean C. Tipps* and criticism by conservatives as well as the political left.

Second chapter ended with a summary of circumstances that led to the decline of modernization theories of the first wave based on ideal and typical

differentiation of traditional and modern societies, which had increasingly shown as artificial and questionable, just as contents of concepts such as modern society or even modernization itself. Discrepancies in concepts showed strong political ideology in the background. Naturally, B. Búzik immersed in his book far deeper into historical and theoretical connections that had accompanied the first wave of these theories and has completed his interpretation by various remarks and categorizations by other authors such as *Jeffrey C. Alexander* and *Wolfgang Knöbl*.

Third chapter called *The second wave or new modernization theories* focused on a rediscovery of modernization theories in 1980s. Author drew reader's attention to even greater variety of these theories and carefully presented both their mutual and dissimilar features compared to modernization theories of the first wave. He summarized the causes of the rediscovery of these theories on the basis of categorizations by J. Keller, J.C. Alexander, W. Knöbl and N. Gilman as well as historical and social conditions that had led both to the revival of the interest in these modernization theories and several similar features (ongoing politicization of these theories, albeit changed by the shift of political and economic interest from postcolonial countries, in which the application of theoretical understanding of dichotomy into traditional versus modern failed, to former Soviet Bloc countries, which seemed to confirm the victory of liberal capitalism and thus the „western“ way as the only legitimate development) and to the differentiation of these theories and, as a rule, to oppose the theories of the first wave (the end of Cold War, increasing exigency of technological, ecological, social and political problems as products of the first wave of idealized modern society).

B. Búzik used categorization of modernization theories into two movements by J. Keller, namely one-dimensional modernization theories that shared the same view on modernity as the theories of the first wave and the so-called emancipation modernization theories, which are, according to A. Martinelli, more theories of modernity than modernization. Author has focused mainly on the second type of theories about reflexive or global modernization. He described in great detail views of *Zygmunt Bauman*, *Ulrich Beck* and *Anthony Giddens* on modernization. He also added look into one-dimensional modernization theory by *Wolfgang Zapf* and modernization theories hidden in analyses of civilisation by Samuel Huntington and a theory of multiple modernities by *Shmuel N. Eisenstadt*. Author remembered to include thorough criticism and interpretation of these theories by A. Martinelli, Ronald Inglehart and J. Keller.

The integration of a subchapter into the last chapter plays an important role in the reviewed book. It focused on theories of the second wave and their view on modernization in communist societies. It tried to find answers to questions if social development in socialist societies can be defined as modernization and if yes, then what type of modernization it is and whether it is identical to the development of modernization in western and postcolonial countries. Similarly to the rest of the book, author highlighted primarily the variety and ambiguity of views by the mentioned theoreticians that do not allow us to reach unambiguous results.

A separate subchapter is devoted to the work of a Russian sociologist Natalia Korovicyna, who as an example of a modernization theory of a scientist from Socialist Bloc helped to indicate the frames that structured the views on modernization in this period and that may have influenced the views of scientists in post-socialist countries, namely in Slovakia, which is the topic of the last chapter.

Problems to unambiguously specify and define the concept of modernization, which author often highlighted across the whole book using a wide variety of arguments, became fully evident in book's last chapter called *Modernization in Slovak Sociology*. This chapter aimed to introduce views on modernization within Slovak sociology and their comparison with foreign modernization theories. Such a comparison is problematic in two aspects. Firstly, author himself proved in great detail that the views on modernization in Slovakia, which had emerged after 1989, were located in different contexts than theories by foreign authors without – surprisingly – referring to foreign theories.

Secondly, reader is faced with a problem as if the author himself would like to impose features of foreign theories on Slovak works as a legitimate comparative criterion. However, there is no definite criterion up to this chapter, because preceding overview did not lead to a clear summary of modernization concept, which could be used as a comparison, or at least its core features (or more precisely, author introduced several summaries by various authors, but did not support any of them for comparative purposes). In addition, at the beginning of the fourth chapter, B. Búzik confused the reader by noting that there were actually no theories in Slovak sociology and the subjects of comparison were only reflections on modernization by presented authors (*Peter Gurán, Soňa Szomolányi, Vladimír Krivý, Róbert Roško, Ján Stena, Peter Ondrejko, Ján Pašiak, Ján Bunčák, Peter Gajdoš*) published in their various texts.

According to author, the main common attribute of compared theories was primarily their hidden or open politicization at least regarding the fact that authors refer to western countries as a kind of destination (if not directly an example as was the case with theories of the first wave, which had focused on modernization of postcolonial countries) towards which modernization in Slovakia should be heading. At the end, he concluded: “The fact that the concept of modernization emerged in Slovak sociology was more due to neoliberalism that had emerged in Slovakia and to efforts to solve the problems of post-communist countries using its principles than to the reappearance of modernization theories in world sociology.” (p. 269) Author revealed another common feature of foreign theories and Slovak reflections about modernization, namely the presence of structural and functionalistic way of thinking.

Other mutual attributes of the compared theories relate to deficiencies of these theories such as lack of definition and clear specification of the concept of modernization itself, even absence of any analytical work related to its use. (Author highlighted higher level of work with this concept in texts by historians such as *Lubomír Lipták, František Novosád, and Roman Holec*.) It is a pity that in

case of Slovak authors he focused primarily on their comparison with foreign way of thinking and did not analyse more thoroughly the contexts and aims of their reflections, which he performed in preceding chapter in relation to foreign authors. Certainly, in this respect his work was more difficult, because in case of foreign theories he could rely on several commenting and summarizing works (such as Gilman, Keller, Martinelli, Martuccelli) whereas in case of Slovak ones, he could only rely on the comments by *Dilbar Alieva*. The last chapter of B. Búzik's book is a very valuable look into the ways of Slovak sociological theorizing, which is typical at least for the researched period from 1989 (at least in case of chosen scope of core sociological places of work in Bratislava).

We present our critical reflections about the reviewed book only as a form of always a bit larger demands of a reader enlightened by the detailed work of an author under criticism. It does not diminish the importance of B. Búzik's *Modernization and its Resurrection – the Slovak Way* in Slovak sociological production and book's usefulness mainly as a thorough overview work from the area of modernization theories with highly-valued effort to include Slovak theories into the overview.

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