

Modernizer'ness as Madness: A Comparative Historical Study of Emperor Tewodros II of Ethiopia and Sultan Selim III of Ottoman Turkey's Modernization Reforms

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Abstract : Many historians hardly gave due attention for historical comparison as their methods of study. They were still stunt supporter of the use of their own historical research method in their studies. But this method lacks the way to analyze some worldwide dynamics of events in comparative perspectives. Some dynamics like revolution, modernization, societal change and transformation needs broader analysis for broadening our historical knowledge's by comparing and contrasting of the causes, courses and consequences of such dynamics historical developments in the world at large. In this paper, our study focuses up on 'the dynamics of modernization' and the challenge of modernity of the old regimes. For instance, countries like Turkey, Ethiopia, China, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan and Thailand have almost the same dynamics in facing the challenge of modernity. In such countries, the old regimes tried to introduce modernization and 'reform from the above' in order to tackle the gradual decline of the empire that faced strong challenge from the outside world. The other similarity of them was that as the rulers attempted to introduce the modernization reforms the old traditional and the religious institutions strongly opposed the reforms as the reforms alienated the power and prestige of the traditional classes. Similarly, the rules introduced modernization for maintaining their own unique socio-cultural and religious dynamics not as borrowing and acculturation of the west by complete destruction of their own. Therefore, this paper attempted to give a comparative analysis of two modernizers Tewodros II (1855-1868) of Ethiopia and Sultan Selim III (1739-1808) of Ottoman Turkey who tried to modernize their empire unfortunately they paid their precious life as a result of modernization.

Keywords : comparative history, Ethiopia, modernization, Ottoman Turkey

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