

# Breakthrough Attempts in Latin America's Modernization Dilemma and Their Mirror Significance

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## Abstract

Against the background of the important achievements of Chinese-style modernization, the review and reflection on the modernization process of the Third World countries around the world reflect important academic value and practical significance. In this paper, we have sorted out the theoretical and practical dilemmas faced by Latin America in the process of modernization, explored the specific measures taken by Latin America to break through the dilemmas and their effectiveness, and reflected and summarized the early attempts of modernization in Latin America, so as to extract the significance of Latin American modernization for Chinese modernization from the aspects of political construction, economic construction and social construction. As both China and Latin America are late-modernizing countries, it is of great significance for Chinese modernization to review the difficulties and attempts of Latin America's modernization and pay attention to Latin America's historical experience, so as to strengthen its autonomy and independence in the process of modernization.

## Keywords

Latin American Modernization, Dilemma, Chinese-Style Modernization, Mirror Significance

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## 1. Introduction

“Latin America is the world's ‘laboratory’ of modernization” (Han & Qian, 2010). The so-called modernization can be understood as a process with internal logic that is formed in the transformation from traditional to modern societies, which implies mutual influences and constraints in multiple fields such as economy, cul-

ture and politics. This is obvious in the modernization process of the early developed countries. However, a series of regressions, twists and turns, imbalances and other phenomena in the course of most countries in Latin America make the modernization process of Latin America have its own special characteristics. Latin America, as a gathering place of Third World countries, “studying the course of how Latin American countries are moving towards modernization, finding out the laws therein, inspiring our people’s wisdom, and guiding our own modernization practice” (Lin & Zhou, 2010) can serve as a reference for Chinese-style modernization, and at the same time contribute to the common promotion of the development of human modernization with diversity. It can serve as a reference for Chinese modernization, and at the same time, contribute to the joint promotion of the diversity of human modernization. Nowadays, Chinese modernization has already made remarkable achievements, however, the mainstream of research on Chinese modernization highlights the important achievements of Chinese modernization in breaking through the Western modernization model by comparing the East and the West, and emphasizing the contribution of Chinese modernization to the modernization of developing countries, while the research object seldom touches on Latin America, and there is even less research on the lessons learned from the modernization of Latin America. Research on the lessons learned from the modernization of Latin America is even more scarce, and this “intangible resource” has not been properly studied.

“Striving for consistency in difference and diversity” (Han & Qian, 2010) is the basic principle that should be followed in conducting research on Latin American modernization. There is no other place in the world where diversity and consistency coexist as in Latin America. British scholar Victor Bulmer Thomas, after comparing the modernization process of Latin America with that of China after the reform and opening up, in the preface to the Chinese edition of *Economic Development in Latin America since Independence*, regarded the modernization process of Latin America as “a history of failure, rather than a history of success” (Han & Qian, 2010). In the preface of the Chinese edition of *Economic Development in Latin America since Independence*, the modernization process of Latin America is regarded as “a history of failure, not a history of success” (Thomas et al, 2000). However, we should try to be objective and dialectical in our evaluation of the modernization process in Latin America. As the forerunner of modernization in the Third World, why is Latin America still unable to achieve modernization, and what are the reasons why Latin America is constantly lagging behind the wave of world development? In this regard, an examination of the dilemmas of the modernization process in Latin America and a summary of Latin America’s historical experience can help us to further understand the issue of modernization in Latin America.

## 2. The Double Dilemma of Latin American Modernization

Latin America was the first region in the Third World to achieve independence

and at the same time the first to begin modernization. From the 1870s to the present day, Latin America has experienced three modernization strategies: classical liberalism, developmentalism and neo-liberalism; three economic models: the primary product export model, the import-substituting industrialization model and the export-oriented model; and a variety of political models, including oligarchic rule, popular authoritarianism, bureaucratic authoritarianism and modern representative democracy.

However, the modernization process in Latin America, which has undergone many attempts at modernization, is still in a transitional stage. The main reason for this is that it is theoretically limited by the traditional modernization theories of the West, and in practice it is detached from the reality of its own country, disregarding the needs of sustainable development. Since the 1950s, scholars in various countries have studied the reasons why Latin America's modernization is in trouble from various angles, with different scholars elaborating from the perspectives of cultural character factors, historical development environment, legacy of colonial history, and "center-periphery" and so on. Different scholars have elaborated from the angles of cultural character factors, historical development environment, colonial legacy and "center-periphery". What is certain is that the modernization process of Latin America was forced to be initiated by European and American countries, with Europe and the United States as the main imitation target as the starting point. Due to the turbulent political situation and the populist tendency caused by over-emphasis on ethnicity, Latin America lacks of advanced and rigorous theoretical guidance and correct practical measures, which have become the main manifestations of the modernization dilemma in Latin America nowadays.

### **2.1. Theoretical Dilemma: The Constraints of the Western Theoretical Framework of Modernization**

Latin America has an advantage in the world, both in terms of population and resources. From the perspective of history, the independence of Latin America preceded that of many Asian and African countries by about a century, and from the perspective of the modernization process, Latin America came into contact with the fruits of advanced industries in Europe and the United States earlier, and began to take Europe and the United States as examples. However, Latin America has never been able to solve the problem of modernization, and many scholars at home and abroad have explored the issue and formed various results.

First of all, the theoretical dilemma of Latin American modernization is explored from the perspective of "Eurocentrism", that is to say, the Western modernization theory is compared with the current situation of Latin America, and modernization is equated with capitalism. In *Comparative Modernization*, Blair summarized the modernization mode of developed countries in the West as economic industrialization, political democratization, social urbanization, cultural rationalization, etc., and believed that the reason why Latin American countries

lagged behind was that they failed to complete the transitional stage of modernization. In the early 1990s, developed countries in the West attributed the reason for the backwardness of Latin America to the import-substitution industrialization strategy, and the Western modernization theory appeared in a new form of neo-liberalism and pushed forward the Western modernization theory. Western-style modernization theories appeared in a new face of neo-liberalism and promoted the theory of globalization. In essence, this is still measuring the reality of Latin America by the Western yardstick, weaving a net centered on the developed countries, and admonishing Latin American countries that only by following the Western model can they break through the predicament and solve the problem of modernization. Latin America has never been able to break the spell of “Eurocentrism”.

Secondly, from the analysis of the development history of strategic theory, the development of modernization theory in Latin America shows a “pendulum” trajectory, that is, the development path of “outward - inward - outward”. The period from the 1870s to the 1930s was the stage of outward development, and classical liberalism was regarded as the guiding principle of the modernization process in Latin America, under whose guidance, the market occupied a dominant position in regulation, and the continuous increase in the intensity of opening up to the outside world was extremely detrimental to the development of national enterprises and the stability of the manufacturing industry in the Latin American region. The period from the 1930s to the 1980s was a period of inward development, when Latin American modernization entered the phase of import-substitution industrialization strategy, during which developmentalism was the guiding theory, advocating government-led economic development, lowering the degree of openness, and developing domestic industries. After the 1970s, Latin America, which suffered from financial and technological crises, chose to borrow heavily, and then, after the 1980s, the world oil crisis broke out and the world oil crisis began. After the 1970s, Latin America suffered from a financial and technological crisis and chose to borrow large amounts of debt, which was followed by the outbreak of the world oil crisis in the 1980s and the constraints imposed by major developed countries such as the United States. As a result, Latin America entered the “lost decade”. At this time, the United States, with the help of high debt, together with the World Bank and other organizations, pressured Latin America, instilling in it the Washington Consensus and neo-liberal strategy, and the Western-style modernization theory once again took advantage of the situation, and Latin America returned to the track of outward-oriented development again. The neo-liberal theories advocating the liberalization of market restrictions and the weakening of the role of government did not apply to the development needs of Latin America, but instead led to more serious problems such as the gap between the rich and the poor. However, when Latin American governments once again embraced neoliberalism as a strategy, it also signaled that Latin American modernization and development had once again fallen into the theoretical di-

lemma of Western modernity.

## **2.2. Practical Dilemmas: Detached from the Actual Choice of Paths**

The process of modernization in Latin America has often been characterized by strategic choices that run counter to reality. Since the beginning of modernization studies, the modernization of the less developed regions has been an important object of study. The method of using the modernization of the developed regions as a template to correspond to the basic situation of the less developed regions in order to force reality to conform to the theoretical presuppositions is a mechanical method. Under this methodology, the development of Latin America has been concocted into a set of dependent development, which not only ignores the actual development of different regions and countries, but also has the limitation of being detached from reality. According to Wu Zhongmin and other scholars' research on the problems arising from the modernization process in Latin America, it can be analyzed and analyzed from three aspects, such as the debt crisis, excessive urbanization, and too large a gap between the rich and the poor.

First, facing the crisis of excessive debt, in the 1970s, the Federal Reserve implemented an easy monetary policy, and under the lure of low interest rates, many Latin American countries vigorously borrowed to expand their trade volume. However, the international oil crisis made the Fed's monetary policy tighter, externally affected by Western trade protectionism and changes in the international situation, and internally affected by the extremely high leverage ratio of external debt and the failure of the import-substitution industrialization strategy, many countries in Latin America are deeply in the debt crisis, and inflation has become a major problem, even though Venezuela, which had once reached the level of a high-income country, also suffered a decline.

Secondly, there is excessive urbanization. Throughout the course of Latin American modernization, many countries have created an urban economic sphere in order to build momentum for industrial development, in accordance with the "industrialization-urbanization" model. However, due to the large-scale concentration of population in cities, the phenomenon of uneven geographical distribution of population has emerged, which in turn has led to the uneven distribution of resources, the urban-rural gap is obvious and other problems, "the speed of urbanization has exceeded the level of industrialization, and economic development is not enough to support the huge urban population" (Han & Qian, 2010), which leads to over-urbanization. This has led to excessive urbanization.

Finally, there is an excessive gap between the rich and the poor. In the course of Latin America's modernization, the Government's self-revolutionary efforts have been insufficient, resulting in the growth of corruption, the emergence of a privileged class, and the exacerbation of social inequality. At the same time, social reform measures have not been effectively implemented, resulting in unequal distribution of social income, disparities in educational resources and other inequalities have not been eradicated, but rather exacerbated social unrest. Carina Batjani

argues that “the history of Latin America’s ‘modernization programs’ is also the history of how and why we became the most unequal region in the world”, and that “there have been constant changes of government, with different regions either adopting simultaneously Changing governments, simultaneous progressivist measures in different regions, or political shifts toward liberalism have not helped, and inequality has remained pervasive and unshakeable” (Karina & Wen, 2022).

The separation of theory and practice is an important manifestation of the double dilemma of Latin American modernization. The practice of modernization in Latin America is characterized by an early start, diversified paths and a lack of sustainability. As early as the emergence of the world’s first wave of modernization, Latin America was included in the modernization trend. The special colonial history and complex demographic conditions further contributed to the special characteristics of Latin American modernization. The colonial rule of Spain and Portugal and the export pattern of primary products formed in dependence on the needs of the sovereign countries made Latin America form a single economic system. The social structure formed on this basis did not see any major changes until after the Latin American countries gained their independence in the mid-nineteenth century, but instead embarked on a path of dependence.

### **3. Breaking out of the Rut: Self-Help for Latin American Modernization**

The failure of modernization and development in Latin America over the past two centuries of independence does not mean that Latin America has stagnated, but rather that Latin America has never been able to break through its own development dilemma. According to Uruguayan scholar Karina Batjani, “Latin American modernization has been exogenously driven, highly dependent, and Eurocentric, so far removed from the real problems and practical needs of Latin American populations that whenever there is a crisis, the momentum it unleashes has instead exacerbated the region’s underdevelopment” (Karina & Wen, 2022). Further, it is argued that rather than achieving independent development, Latin America’s modernization practices have deepened the region’s peripheral status, and that “the results of these practices are more akin to the hundred years of humiliation experienced by China” (Karina & Wen, 2022). Undeniably, the progressive forces in Latin America have not been content to accept the imposed destiny; they have struggled to promote distributive justice, to break away from dependence and periphery, to achieve long-term stability and effectiveness of the political system, and to realize modernization, and this series of social change activities has constituted the main theme of change and development in the process of modernization in Latin America in the twentieth century.

#### **3.1. External Independence and Opening up**

In the first half of the twentieth century, Latin American countries were in a more successful position in the course of world development. In addition to their en-

dowment of rich resources, the main reason for this was the massive introduction of advanced technology and foreign capital from the developed countries; at this time, the second industrial revolution in the West was in full swing, and modern transportation and processing technologies made the agricultural and livestock industry, the mainstay of the Latin American region, reap enormous benefits, while deepening its dependence on imports and foreign capital.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, the problem of Latin America's dependence deepened. On the one hand, taking advantage of the belligerent countries' demand for raw material imports and food, a large number of agricultural and livestock products were exported; on the other hand, as a result of the war, the industrial exports of the Western countries were reduced, and Latin America, which was dependent on imported machinery, equipment and technology, faced the situation of insufficient supply of domestic industrial products. In response to the problem of dependence, some Latin American scholars put forward the theory of structuralism. The structuralist school, represented by Raúl Prebisch, proposes that in the "center - periphery" of the capitalist system, the production structure of the center is advanced and diversified, while the production structure of the periphery is primary and single. The periphery, in which Latin America is located, will eventually face problems such as high unemployment and low equilibrium, and the best solution is to reform the production structure, i.e., to implement a strategy of import-substitution industrialization, whereby industrial development replaces the products that used to be dependent on imports. Carlos Pellegrini, in his speech to the Argentine Congress, suggested that "commercial and industrial interests are not antagonistic, but complementary" (*Argentine Congress, 1895*). To escape the problem of dependence, Latin American countries responded with a variety of measures.

First, the development of State capitalism and the realization of economic independence. On the one hand, many Latin American countries have made attempts at State capitalism in the course of their modernization, giving play to the role of the State in regulating and intervening in economic development and investing in the construction of infrastructure, so that the railroads, petroleum and other sectors are in the hands of the State; on the other hand, they have achieved economic independence, aiming to free themselves from the control of foreign capital. In Perón's 1947 Declaration of Argentine Economic Independence, he stated that Argentina's goal was to achieve independence, especially economic independence, which was the possibility of realizing all social justice, and that only by possessing the possibility of economic independence would it be possible to break the yoke of foreign capitalism. While using the foreign exchange accumulated during the war to acquire foreign companies, the Perón government formulated the First Five-Year Plan to develop national industry, to develop industries that used national resources and were able to satisfy the country's needs, replacing the imports on which it had relied in the past. A series of measures by the Peronist government led to a GDP growth rate of 12.6% in 1947. However, after the 1950s,

the Peronist government was forced to cut back on expenditures and raise the prices of agricultural products in the face of the internal and external downturn caused by the global economic crisis, which led to the emergence of a struggle between the forces that defended Peronism and those that opposed it, and in the midst of the ups and downs of the two ideologies, the country's glory was not to be repeated.

Secondly, opening up to the outside world has been expanded and restrictions on imports and exports have been liberalized. After the world economic crisis, Latin America stopped building high trade barriers and reduced tariffs, with Brazil's average tariff rate dropping from 32 per cent in the 1980s to about 20 per cent; at the same time, market access was liberalized and preferential policies were formulated to stimulate imports and exports, thus once again strengthening ties with the world market. The strengthening of regional cooperation has also been one of the most important measures for the economic development of many Latin American countries. In 1995, Brazil took the lead in the establishment of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) of Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, which has promoted the interconnection of the South American economic markets and consolidated the position of the South American economic markets in the world market. The decline in tariffs and the inflow of foreign products and capital have been accompanied by a rise in dependence on the technology and capital of other countries, and Brazil's own "persistent problems" have yet to be overcome, the most important of which is its overdependence on foreign technology and capital, which has resulted in unbalanced and unequal development in the country.

### 3.2. Internal Reforms for Justice

In Latin America, the development strategy of import-substitution industrialization revealed a number of drawbacks by the 1960s. President Kubitschek of Brazil proposed in 1961 that Brazil should pursue a "post-import-substitution industrialization policy", and even Prebisch, a representative of structuralism, argued that "protectionist policies in the form of very severe import restrictions (or bans on imports) have been counterproductive" (Prebisch, 1993).

First, deepening internal reforms and emphasizing the role of the market. In the early 1950s, the Brazilian Government pursued nationalization, despite pressure from the United States to limit the control of foreign capital over the country's economy. This initiative led to the basic nationalization of Brazil's rich resources, providing the necessary preconditions for the modernization of the economy and the realization of autonomous control over the lifeblood of the national economy. The Brazilian government raised large amounts of capital through this strategy, which effectively mitigated the impact of the international financial crisis and, to some extent, contributed to higher labor productivity. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, the modernization process in Latin America was marked by the privatization of state-owned enterprises, a shift aimed at reducing state intervention in the market. As a result of privatization, the efficiency of some enter-

prises improved, inflation was brought under control, economic imbalances improved, industrial goods accounted for more than half of the total value of exports, and a more developed industrial system basically emerged in many Latin American countries.

Secondly, we must fight for social justice and alleviate social conflicts. The wide gap between the rich and the poor and the unequal distribution of social income have been problems throughout the course of Latin America's modernization, and different countries have implemented a series of measures to address them. The governments of many Latin American countries have clearly fought for social justice, focusing on the fair distribution of social wealth, and have begun to raise the level of low income and redistribute social income. As a result of this policy, two trends have emerged in society. The working class, which benefited from the government's social redistribution policy, became the supporters of the policy, while the foreign-funded elites and the traditional high-level and other classes with damaged interests became the representatives of the reaction, and in the tumble of the two ideological forces, the relevant initiatives to promote social justice in Latin American countries gradually disappeared into thin air. At the same time, in Mexico, for example, the struggle between violence and counter-violence is one of the main causes of the wide gap between rich and poor in society, "the violent repression of the government forces in exchange for the terror of the mountain guerrillas counter-violence oppression, the desire to share the benefits of the community, seeking change, the performance of the violence, and those who enjoy the rights to benefit from the status quo, and desire to maintain their rule for a long time, then impose violence" (Burns & Wang, 1989).

Latin America was the first to embark on the process of modernization, but today the vast majority of countries in the region are lagging behind other developing countries represented by the Four Little Dragons of Asia, and even farther behind China. According to Prof. Mendoza, the history of Latin America's tortuous modernization over the past two hundred years has taught the world that the reason for Latin America's backwardness lies entirely in itself. To this day, Latin America is still in the process of trying to break out of its backwardness.

#### **4. Mirroring the Lessons of Latin American Modernization**

"Latin America is the largest and richest development laboratory among developing countries in the history of mankind, where almost all the development models of developing countries were first tested. Therefore, exploring the laws of modernization strategy selection of developing countries through case studies in Latin America is the best way for our research work" (Zeng, 2000). Chinese-style modernization is a modernization with a huge population, a modernization of common prosperity for all people, a modernization that harmonizes material and spiritual civilization, a modernization of harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature, and a modernization that follows the path of peaceful development. The historical background and cultural characteristics of China and Latin

America are very different, but a summary of the lessons learned from the history of Latin America, which is also a late-modernizing country, can still serve as a mirror for China's modernization path.

Based on the above retrospection of the history and dilemma of Latin American modernization, the distillation of the lessons learned from the Latin American modernization process can be summarized in the following three points of mirror significance:

#### **4.1. Political Construction to Establish a Stable Leadership Core**

As can be seen from the history of modernization in Latin America, the establishment of a stable leadership core and political stability are important conditions for ensuring that modernization is carried out in an efficient and orderly manner. In the early years of Latin America's independence, the feudal land system left over from colonialism made military dictatorship a political feature of this stage, and this kind of dictatorship, which relied on large landowners economically and warlords politically to maintain its rule, was called the caudillo system. Developing to the 1980s, the political construction of Latin America gradually returned to the democratic track, and the democratic consciousness of the Latin American people increased. Civilian governments were gradually established in various countries, and military regimes began to withdraw from the political arena. The changes in the political situation in Latin America during this period were formed under the influence of economic globalization and neoliberalism. Since the 21st century, neo-liberalism has receded in the political field, and the left-wing forces in Latin America have risen, with left-wing parties taking power in Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay and other countries one after another. In recent years, the political ecology of the "left-right game" has gradually become the main melody of the Latin American political situation.

During the nearly two hundred years after independence, Latin America has been searching for a political path suitable for its own development and the establishment of a stable government. However, "a country moving towards modernization should not only follow the general law of modernization, but also conform to its own reality and have its own characteristics" (Xi, 2023a). Whether it is copying the political paths of developed countries in Europe and America, or the factional struggles between the left and the right, the Latin American experience constantly reminds us that only the development path that suits its own basic national conditions can be embraced by its people, and that only a strong and stable government and leadership core are the stabilizers of social development.

#### **4.2. Balancing Government and Market Relations in Economic Construction**

The problem of imbalances in the modernization process is common to the development process of all countries, as can be seen by looking at the imbalance between industrial and agricultural development, and the imbalance between im-

ported and exported trade, among other things. The imbalances in Latin America's development process are closely linked to the economic dissonance between government and market.

For a long time after independence, Latin America continued its economic strategy of exporting primary products to Europe and the United States, and, under classical liberalism, the role of the Government was weakened, government intervention was excluded from the economic sphere, and the market was allowed to play an autonomous role. Subsequently, in the period of developmentism as the guiding theory of import substitution industrialization strategy, the domestic market to take protective measures, the establishment of state-owned enterprises, the government's "visible hand" in the market played a certain role in the regulation of the economy in Latin America in this period of time to achieve greater development. However, after the invasion of Western neo-liberalism, the role of government was once again weakened, emphasizing the role of the market and joining the wave of globalization. Such an economically unbalanced relationship between the government and the market has led to the consequences of unbalanced development, which is not only reflected in the development process of Latin American countries, but also in the degree of development of each country's region. With regard to the subsequent development of Latin America, Oswaldo Martínez pointed out that "any alternative idea is not only unlikely to make any progress in the ideological and cultural field, but also unsustainable if it is not accompanied by another kind of economic policy" (Martínez & Gao, 2009). Taking the path of another country as a blueprint will only lead to "incompatibility", and it is only by creating a sustainable development model that is not blindly copied that Latin America will be able to bring about the development that it deserves.

### **4.3. The Concept of People's Supremacy Should Be Upheld in Social Construction**

"The ultimate goal of modernization is to realize the free and comprehensive development of people. Whether the road of modernization can ultimately go through and be stable depends on whether it adheres to the people-centered approach" (Xi, 2023b). In the development process of Latin America, on the one hand, there is a lack of real democracy in politics and economy, and there is the phenomenon of "cliff-type" democracy, for example, the former president of Brazil, Mr. Lula, who advocated against neo-liberalism in his campaign speeches, but implemented neo-liberal policies in the economic field after he was elected. Unlike China's full-process people's democracy, the scope of democracy in Latin America only covers the election process, and after the election, the people lose the right to have a say in policy. On the other hand, Latin American societies are deeply polarized between the rich and the poor, and social inequality has increased. Problems such as insufficient monetary incomes, lack of educational resources, and insufficient social security are the main reasons for the increase in social inequality in the process of modernization in Latin America. Today, overcoming the polari-

zation of society between rich and poor and solving the problem of inequality are the top priorities of Latin America, and the promotion of economic and social development should be based on the interests of the people of the country, emphasizing endogenous dynamics rather than external reinforcement. Chinese-style modernization is a modernization of common prosperity for all the people, a modernization that harmonizes material and spiritual civilization. After the eradication of absolute poverty, it is necessary to further build a social security system with broad coverage and deep impact, to regulate the proportion of the initial social distribution, to give full play to the role of social redistribution and the third distribution in terms of taxation, social welfare and transfer payments, to expand the middle-income group, to narrow the gap between urban and rural areas, and to curb the growth of polarization in society.

## 5. Conclusion

Change and development coexist, and challenges and opportunities exist. These aspects enrich the re-examination of the dilemma of Latin America's modernization over the past two centuries. While the achievements of Latin American modernization are undeniable, the huge breaks hidden behind the development are also not to be ignored. In the face of the constraints led by the developed countries in the West, Latin America has adopted the methods of promoting the radical dependence theory and borrowing a lot of money, which are effective in Latin America in a short period of time, but in the long run, they have caused the dilemma to deepen. The breakthrough practice of Latin America's modernization predicament suggests that the late-developing countries should conform to their own centuries in the choice of modernization mode, and should not copy other countries' experiences completely. On the other hand, modernization is ultimately for the benefit of the people, and it is necessary to strengthen the top-level design and promote the positive interaction between institutional innovation and theoretical innovation. In the face of the warning of Latin America's modernization dilemma, China emphasizes its autonomy in methodology, and at the same time, it also draws on the Latin American path to further prevent the polarization of the rich and the poor, strengthen the third distribution, set up a stable leadership core, and formulate a sustainable economic development strategy...constantly achieve a deep combination of theory and practice.

The in-depth development of contemporary Sino-Latin American relations reflects China's role as a great power, but the research on Latin American modernization is not deep enough, and the popularity of the research results needs to be improved. At the High-Level Dialogue between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the World Political Parties, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "Chinese-style modernization, as a new form of human civilization, will greatly enrich the garden of world civilization as it learns from other civilizations around the globe" (Xi, 2023b). History's experience has already given the answer, and as long as we adhere to the correct methodology of historical materialism,

firmly uphold the principle of autonomy in the process of modernization, concern ourselves with the achievements of modernization in all countries, and realize the mutual learning of the outstanding civilizational achievements of all countries, we will surely be able to push forward the realization of the beautiful vision of the modernization of humankind, which is to blossom in a hundred flowers and fill the gardens in spring.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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