

The Decline of Industrial Civilization of Modern Humankind

(No. 3 of the Series of *Reflections on Economics Law and Ethic Culture Caused by World Financial Crisis*)

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Abstract

Focused on the macro level of economics law and ethic culture, this paper aims at finding out the fundamental obstacles for sound development of world economy and providing scientific theory for the establishment of a healthy global financial, economic, legal and social system as well as ethic cultural basis.

Through macrolevel analysis on the declining process and final result of industrial civilization of modern humankind, this series 3 inspire humankind who have been brainwashed by the modern industrial civilization to return to the cosmic natural law which was neglected in the past, and recover a real pure human from a new perspective.

Keywords: Modern industrial civilization, Decline, Turning, Return to pure cosmic law

1. Human is standing on the crossroad of the destiny

Existing for over 200 years, the history of industrial civilization society from the sixties in 18th century, rising Industrial Revolution three times, the world war two times, and the various economic crisis eight times during the period. (Annotation by this writer)

In the 200 years, the material wealth which was created by human beings exceeded far more than the sum of human civilization in the previous over five thousand years, but this state that industrial civilization in the 200 years has consumed non-renewable resources on the Earth forces human to face another revolution — “new resource revolution.”

Some bodies ranged a simple number “fourth” to “new resource revolution”, it was named as “Fourth Industrial Revolution”, it seems that the revolution is a continuation of the three previous technological revolutions, this title actually ignore the sublayer connotation of new resource revolution which is as different as chalk from cheese. In fact, mankind is standing at the biggest turning point, which is between developed over 200 years, but declined rapidly in the end of stage of industrial civilization now, and creating another completely different new era in the history of human civilization. This is the totally different end of old civilization and the new beginning of another civilization, not the old civilization surviving. Therefore it is improper that titled it as “Fourth Industrial Revolution”. This proposition is correct or not, that needs to analyze the cause of the descent of modern industrial civilization.

2. The root cause of the decline of modern industrial civilization

First of all, facing the appeal of material benefits, human beings have been corrupting and ruining indulgently on conventional culture and moral values, establishing the supreme rule of short-term self-interests on the earth.

The survival of human beings must rely on certain material basis, the pursuit for material interests is inevitable, therefore, the evolution history of humankind civilization is always tight connected with the development history of the way of how to obtain material interests. For the material interests that human beings has somewhere in common with animals, however, human beings is radically distinguished from animals not only human has the ability of creating and utilizing tools, but more important also the consciousness of cultural speculativeness and moral sentiment. It is no other than this reason, human can be the noblest life, and the life is endowed with intelligence to control all of creatures on the earth. Unfortunately the weakness of animality in human nature was aggravated before and after the rising of industrial civilization, and incessantly impact, corrupt and destroyed the quintessence of conventional culture and morality, make a supreme rule of short-term self-interests established firmly on the earth, and proceed without any hindrance.

The following and coming decline so soon, namely this civilization which is established on the supreme rule of short-term self-interests in a vicious cycle goes down to be inevitable.

The birth of Industrial Revolution ended the history of archaic farming and handicraft industrial civilization, created an epoch of the history of mankind's industry civilization. It is the first powerful turn in human history. This transition stimulates global economic into integration, and that brings the short-term benefits as a fired rocket with irreversible power launched to the space, guides the human's model of conduct in every side and layer, which makes people not care of long-term responsibilities, interpersonal importance, and another important relation between humankind and nature. It is so greedy that destroying own living space with predatory and ruining production mode and lifestyle. Supreme rule of short-term self-interest is the root cause that arose the two world wars, and financial crises once again and again. (2009/2010)

The disastrous global events above are only one side, another more important side is that nature retaliate and punish on humankind. Numerous sudden disasters which were not seen in tens even a hundred years in succession recent years, striking on the industrial civilization and society of human beings live on this planet badly, too many catastrophes and disasters happen at any moment to list them, they are obvious to all.

The current human, in fact, already facing a huge living crisis, a variety of potential crises has been formed by catastrophes, and with the unprecedented high frequency occurred in both society and nature, it is very anxious for some men of insight, they are calling on humanity in all kinds of method, but caused response is very little, all of these is making an irreversible decline of industrial civilization until the final end. (Jeremy Rifkin. et al, 2010. etc)

3. A fundamental favourable change of human society

Human society does not occur a fundamental favourable change until thoroughly overset and eradicate the cultural and moral foundation in a vicious cycle of industrial civilization. All the other efforts will be fruitless. Taking "new resource revolution" in a simple order as the "Fourth Industrial Revolution", this concept ignores the significant power of the culture and moral values of human. The essential of "new resource revolution" is a complete denial to the supreme rule of short-term self-interests of human beings. The implementing of any strategy must have been held a corresponding notion which is accepted by most members of society, and formed a common universal value concept, then, some strategy can be carried out at large. Lack of the latter, the former is nothing but a plan on paper or strategy design, not to become true at last.

We should be clear what the result of neglecting ideology through the following simple discussion is. Human changed social economy from the state of agriculture and handicraft workshop which can keep balance with nature into the other state of modern industrial which damage environment and break the balance with nature seriously. First of all, it experienced the great baptism of Renaissance movement ideology and ethic.

In other words, that Industrial Revolution rose and got triumph in 18th century must be established on the firm basic that Renaissance movement got final victory in Europe. This is a indispensable premise, without it no Industrial Revolution, even nothing of its triumph. Then experienced over 200 years in practice, developed human beings have to give up the way that making against environment by force of surviving today, need corresponding with nature, but the ideology, value orientation and conduct mode still stay in the supreme rule of short-term self-interests of industrial civilization, can new resource revolution win? The answer is self-evident.

"New resource revolution" was presented by force of surviving. It has experienced more than 200 years in the practice of modern industrial civilization, since environment suffered serious damage, survival has been imperiled. The purpose is to make human society develop in strength with healthy and stable state by corresponding with nature, but we need to pay special attention to, that humankind do not willingly want to get corresponding with nature, only that "by force of survival" have to do. This attitude is a natural result, it comes from the ideology, value orientation and conduct mode still stuck in the supreme rule of short-term self-interests of industrial civilization. It is the strongest fact that all the previous World Environmental Conferences is hard to see effective results. (2010)

4. Concern about the earth's resources must concern about "people" the primary resource first

If people take "new resource revolution" as the most primary way to save human's modern civilization, it will be misleading humankind. Because it only pay the biggest attention to the resource that based on the section of carbon burning in modern industrial, regardless of "people" the foremost resource on the earth. Because some complicity and pressure too heavy to face this resource for us, so disregard for and flinch from this very factor is an easy choice.

If human could cross the sea under camouflage, why we would not do happily. Unfortunately, however, we, human beings not only can't "under camouflage", but can't "cross the sea" also to reach the other ideal shore. We have to face the truth. (Annotation by this writer)

First of all, “people” is the primary resource on the earth, that consist in its dominant status on the earth. Human are supposed to be “the noblest”, and “the most honourable” life who is endowed with intelligence to control all of other creatures on the earth. But this supremacies have been relegated since Industrial Revolution. At best, we can only say it is an “obscure dominant status”. Therefore, we have to clear know the significance that getting back human’s dominant status, in order to be no longer attained by any factors, consist in that none but return to a veritable and original status of ourselves, human being can just avoid any intimidating factor which impels us as its servants, and helpless looking at self-destruction, can not save ourselves. (2009)

Secondly, disembarassing from current “obscure dominant status” and “human” as the primary resource on the earth must challenge the supreme rule of short-term self-interest which is left by industrial civilization, and cast it away completely. This cast means return to pure cosmic law and return to human’s natural aptitude. Then human can get along favorably with environment of the earth, and complement each other.

Lastly, human beings as the primary resource on the earth return to human own natural aptitude, means that we must understand and know what is the meaning of “natural aptitude”, and how to return to, because we have been dipped in industrial civilization, and enculturated it over 200 years, not understood what is human’s “natural aptitude”, and how to return to.

The subject, as the primary resource on earth, human beings how to return to pure cosmic law, return to nature aptitude, we will follow continuations to discuss in step by step.

5. Conclusion

It needn’t to know much, just have a small notice on the world history and current situation of environmental protection, we can be clear that human is setting in a dilemma that we have known the ponderance of environmental problem faced, but have to still march on the way to accelerate the destruction of environment. At present, the attitude of United States and China is a very representative of mind and conduct in a mutual contradiction. This contradiction is just about indication that human has plunged so deep mire of modern industrial civilization, that can not help and have no other better way. We assume that the two superpower countries of environmental protection took on their own obligation in duty-bound initiative to make a binding agreement at the UN's Copenhagen climate change summit conference, then, what about the consequences, what will it happen?

The principal key is not the two governments neglect environmental issue, but living on the foundation of “supreme rule of short-term self-interests” of culture and ethic, the survival mode compels human to dispute the benefits of relatively distant future interests, be keen on immediate “survival” problem and vested interests.

Completely abandoning the “supreme rule of short-term self-interests”, which without little real civilized rule is easy to say, but difficult to do. Because human society is already slaved in this rule’s routine, such as culture and ideology, life and thinking style, moral values, political system, economic structure, production mode, and so on all aspects. It seems to imply that human beings must experience another great baptism of moral and cultural concepts, which will be very painful and reluctant for humankind, even strong resistant. This resistance comes from human’s some feeling that can not help resisting, no better way to choose, in a sense. However, no experiencing of the baptism, no demolishing and eradicating of the cultural and moral foundation of vicious cycle of industrial civilization, human society will not have a favorable change radically. The favorable change of human beings must come from an ideological revolution which will make human go in the renewing of culture, idea and ethic of “integration of man and nature”. Humankind have no alternative, but “return to pure cosmic law”, “return to truthful nature”, will be able to retrieve original pure selfe to get rid of any dilemmas and disasters currently faced, and always stand on top of the earth proudly.

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Notes

Note 1. First, 1720 South Sea Bubble. In 1720 South Sea Company obtained the privilege to operate stock, then started stock issuing by the way of accepting investors' installment plan, which caused stock price soar rapidly and supply falls short of demand seriously. Deviating from the the company's performance what was expected so badly that On 9 June 1720 Parliament passed a bill for the so-called Bubble Act, which caused the stock price plummeted, then the company close-down, South Sea Bubble bursted. The British financial industry got into a huge shadow. Second, the economic panic of 1837. In 1837, the U.S. economy panic caused contraction of banking, which lack of adequate gold to exchange the issued currency. This recession lasted until 1843. Third, the banking crisis of 1907. In 1907, Banking of America erupted crisis, in New York, about half of bank loans were taken as mortgage invested in high-risk stocks and bonds market by Trust and Investment Companies which offered high interests returns, the financial market went into a extreme speculation state. Fourth, the collapse of 1929. 1922-1929 in U.S. the unprecedented prosperity and huge interests returns spurred the Americans to involved in the feverish speculation of Wall Street, that caused a huge stock market disaster and global financial crisis. Fifth, Black Monday in 1987. Wall Street collapsed due to the worsening economic expectation and the continuing Middle East tension. This is well-known "Black Monday". Standard & Poor's index fell by 20%, people fell in agony. Sixth, Mexican financial crisis in 1994. 1994-1995, the exchange rate of Mexican Peso tumbled so wild that spreaded to American, Europe, Far East and the world stock market index dropped in different degrees. Seventh, Asian financial crisis in 1997. Thai economy fell in trouble in 1997, the government gave up a fixed exchange rate system and executed a floating exchange rate system, which triggered a financial storm in Asia. Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index tumbled, South Korea also faced financial crisis, Japanese banks and securities firms went in a series of bankruptcy. Eighth, the U.S. sub-prime mortgage crisis in 2008. U.S. sub-prime crisis burst out in Sep. 2008, with 158-year history the international investment bank Lehman declared bankruptcy, a huge financial crisis spread rapidly around the world, which has not been concluded yet until now.

Note 2. Relevant details be obtained in this writer's articles, (2009) What Brings Diversified Global Economy into Integration, No. 1 of the series of Reflections on Economics Law and Ethic Culture Caused by World Financial Crisis, published in this magazine (No. 12.); (2010) A Rocket Left Launcher — Modern Industrial Civilization, No. 2 of the series of Reflections on Economics Law and Ethic Culture Caused by World Financial Crisis, published in this magazine (No. 1.)

Note 3. Relevant details can be obtained in the following articles:

Jeremy Rifkin. (2010). TOWARDS THE EMPATHIC CIVILIZATION Financial Times. [Online] Available: <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001031917/en> (March 26).

Clive Cookson in London. (2010). Strong evidence on global warming, says study. Financial Times. [Online] Available: <http://www.ftchinese.com/story/001031590/en> (March 5).

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Note 4. Relevant details be obtained in this writer's articles, (2010) A Rocket Left Launcher — Modern Industrial Civilization, No. 2 of the series of Reflections on Economics Law and Ethic Culture Caused by World Financial Crisis, published in this magazine (No. 1.)

Note 5. Crossing the sea under camouflage that is a Chinese idiom, means trying to get away with trick.

Note 6. Relevant details be obtained in this writer's articles, (2009) What Brings Diversified Global Economy into Integration, No. 1 of the series of Reflections on Economics Law and Ethic Culture Caused by World Financial Crisis, published in this magazine (No. 12.)