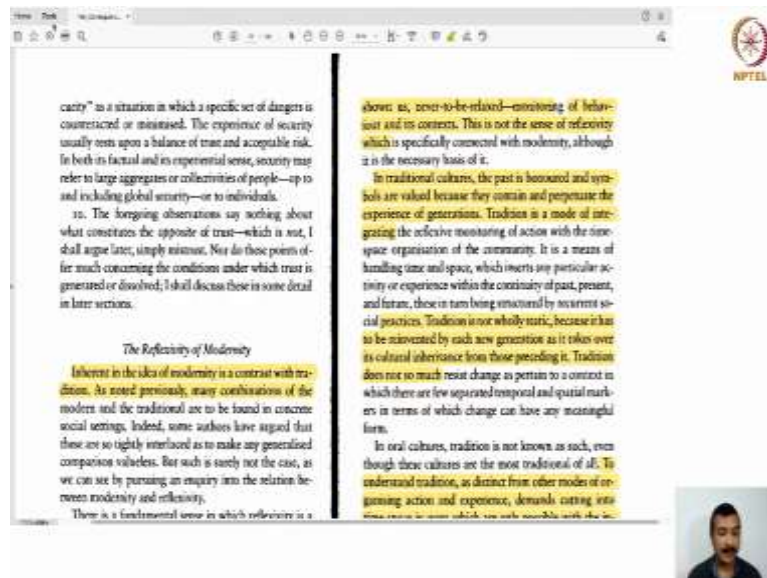


**Globalization: Theoretical Perspectives**  
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**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
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**Lecture 19**

**Globalization and Modernity: Anthony Giddens the Consequences of Modernity  
(Continued)**

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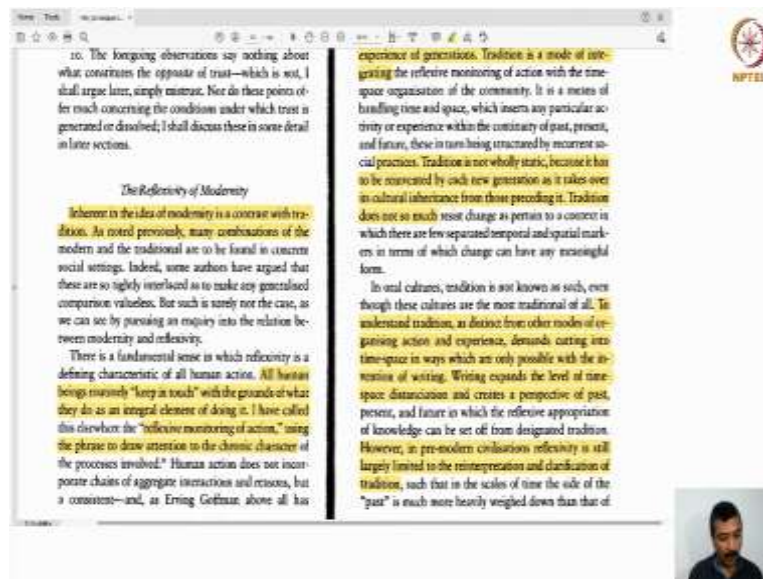


Welcome back to the class, we are continuing the discussion on Anthony Giddens, his book 'Consequences of Modernity'. And we are discussing his first chapter, the introductory chapter, where he summarizes the arguments of his whole book and this is the third class on that specific chapter. So, we will conclude this chapter today, and we will go ahead with another chapter.

But I think I will not take much time on that chapter just to give you a summary, and then we will have one more session on his later books, 'The Runaway World' in another session and then we will wind up the discussion on Anthony Giddens because I am spending so much time on Anthony Giddens because he is one of the very important theorists of modernity and globalization.

And it is extremely important that we understand his basic arguments, in order to make sense of this whole debates about post modernity, modernity and where to locate the process of globalization. So, in the previous section, he discussed about some of the very important features of modernity, he mentioned about the symbolic systems and symbolic tokens and expert systems, he talked about times-space distancing, he mentioned about the disembedding, and here he is talking about the reflectivity of modernity and extremely interesting point.

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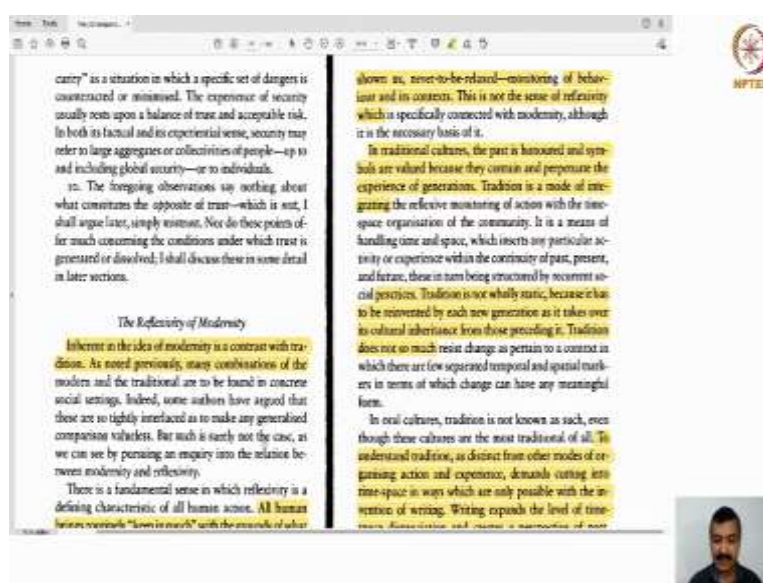


So, an inherent in the idea of modernity is a contrast with the tradition. So, that is how we usually understand modernity as something very different and contrasting with that of modernity. So, here, so, what does reflexivity mean? So, reflexivity is usually understood in the ordinary parlance, in the common sensical parlance as the ability to think through, we think about our action and then we reorient our further action accordingly.

We simply do not behave on the basis of certain stimuli, we know that this stimuli response framework is inadequate to understand human action, human action of any advanced primates do not simply behave and in the case of human beings, it is a much more complicated thing.

So, every action, we think about its consequences, and we constantly evaluate the consequences of every action of ours and then we redefine, we reorient our further actions. So, all human beings routinely keep in touch with the grounds of what they do, as an integral element of doing it. I have called this elsewhere as the reflexive monitoring of action.

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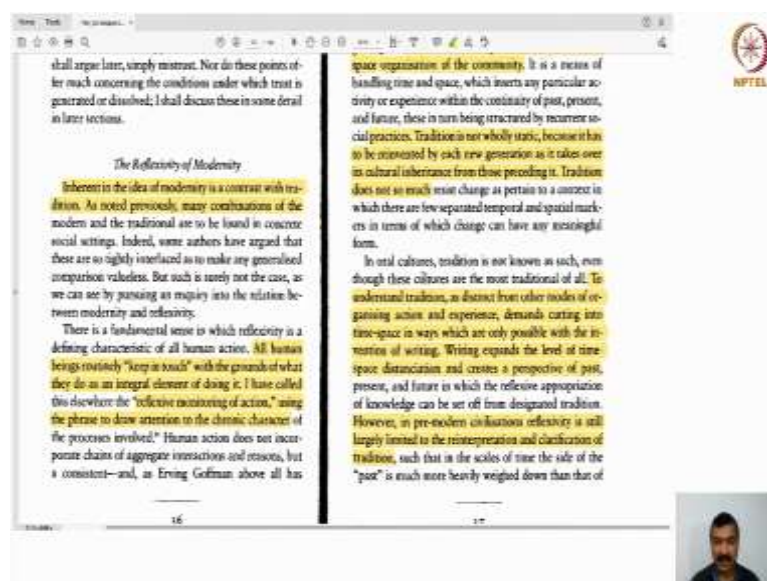


But this is something very different from what we understand as the term reflexivity in sociology, it is not that we think about it, but something more than that. In traditional cultures, the past is honored and symbols are valued because they contain and perpetuate the experience of generations. Tradition is a mode of integrating the reflexive monitoring of actions with the time space organization of the community. It is a very important point.

In non-modern traditional society, that tradition really does this role of orienting the action towards action in the future, as well as in the present. For example, if a marriage is to be conducted, if just to see how a newly married couple have to behave, or a newly married wife has to behave in her husband's family, this is shaped by very concrete ideas, which are crafted in tradition, there is no ambiguity about it.

So, they invoke the tradition in order to do all these important daily rituals, daily aspects in order to cement it, in order to reassure it, in order to reinstate it. So, tradition not only is about an understanding about the past, but it is also understanding about the present as well as that of the future. Now, tradition is not wholly static, because it has to be reinvented by each generation, as it takes over its cultural inheritance from those preceding it. We know that it is how traditions undergo substantive changes.

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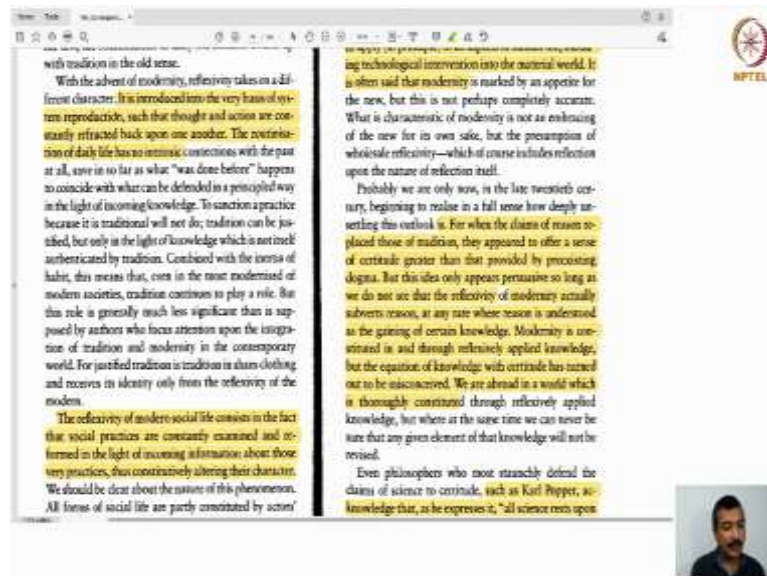
Now, in oral traditions, oral cultures, pre modern oral cultures, tradition is not known as such, even though these cultures are the most tradition of all. To understand tradition, as distinct from other modes of co-organizing actions and experience, demand cutting into time-space in ways which are only possible with the invention of writing.

So, when you invent this practice of writing, the moment you write certain thing then it becomes fixed, it becomes fixed, it becomes the response of a particular time point in history. So, it becomes a very important element in this time space distancing, whereas in an oral culture where there is no practice of writing, your information gets carried away to the present through the futures, there is no distant past.

Of course, there is a vague understanding of a distant past, but you do not really pinpoint, but when you get a letter or a magazine, which is written or printed some 100 years ago you know

this gap of 100 years. So, the letter that was written 100 years ago, that represents a time and place of that time, and that is something important in this whole process. However, in pre modern civilizations, reflexivity is still largely limited to a reinterpretation and clarification of tradition.

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Now, let us see what happens in modernity. With the advent of modernity, reflexivity takes on different character. It is introduced into the very basis of system reproduction, such that thought and action are constantly refracted back upon each other. The routinization of daily life has no intrinsic connection with the past at all, save in so far as what was done before happens to coincide with what can be defended in the principled way in the light of incoming knowledge.

So, when you talk about the era of modernity, when you talk about the rise of rationality, now we assume that when you invoke the language of rationality, you of course, you accept certain traditions, but not all, tradition in itself is not a sufficient justificatory ground for anything, a tradition will be accepted and accommodated, if it appears to be rational. That is why we reinvented traditions in the era of modernity.

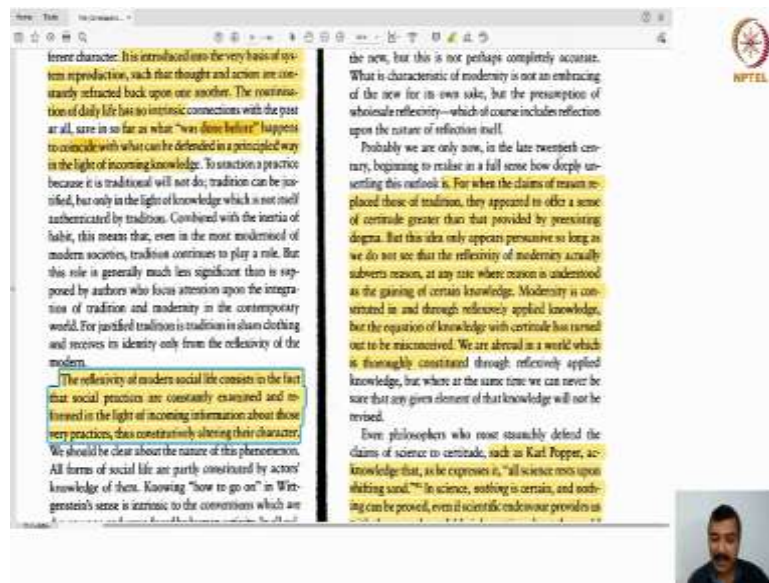
So, this is a very important aspect that happens at the time of modernity. The reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined, and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character.

And this is an extremely important point when you understand as a concept of reflexivity. So, we study social practices and this study creates sort of new ideas, information about the practices, and these information goes back to the society thereby making further changes in the society and these changes are further studied by social sciences and this knowledge again goes back to society, which further changes.

So, there is a kind of a spiralling, there is a kind of a dialectical kind of relation, which is something spirals upward in the character of reflexivity. So, this is an extremely important phenomenon of late of modernity, which is getting more and more increasing, which are becoming more and more intense in the era of late modernity.



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So, it is not merely looking at the implications of your action rather it is much more than that. Probably, we only know in the late 20th century beginning to realize a full sense of how deeply unsettling this outlook is. For when the claims of reason replaced those traditions, they appear to offer a sense of certitude greater than that provided by pre-existing dogma.

But this idea only appeared persuasive so long as we do not see that reflectivity of modernity actually subvert reason, at any rate, where reason is understood as the gaining of certain knowledge. Modernity is constituted in and to reflexively applied knowledge, but equation of knowledge with certitude has turned out to be misconceived, a very important point that I want all of you to really understand that.

See when religion sorry, when science critiqued religion, for example, when science argued that it is not the earth that is not the sun that is revolving around the earth, rather it is the earth that is revolving around the sun. Now, this argument was put forward with so much of certitude and then started asking all these questions, where is the evidence for your theoretical explanation, where is evidence for the theory of creation, whereas science was able to speak in the language of certitude, in with the language of concrete knowledge with on the basis of evidence.

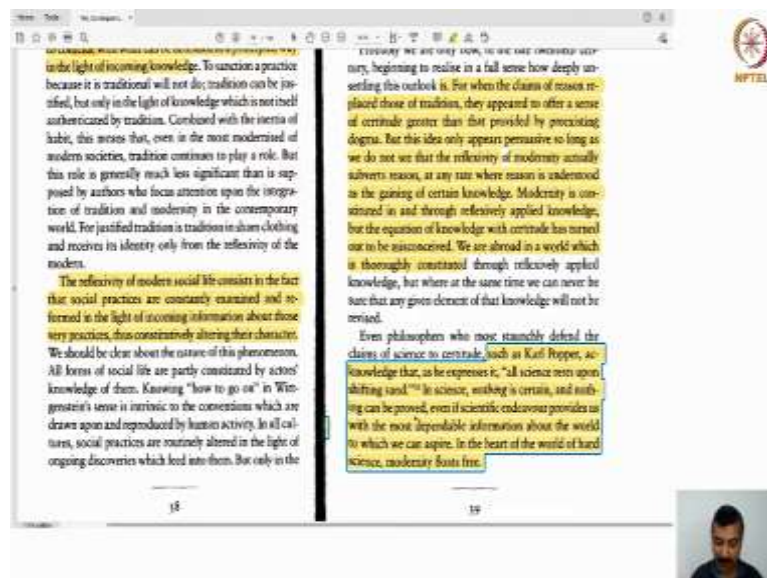
So, we believed that scientific knowledge is in every way superior to that of any other alternative forms of knowledge, because science is able to give you a certain answer, unambiguous answer to everything. But this is a, this is a misconception okay, science does not give you unambiguous answers, science does not give you answers with complete certainty and as you know Karl Popper mentioned all science rest upon shifting sand.

And the best example, the best example could be what was what is now currently unfolding in the era of COVID-19, you know the kind of competing scientific claims about the nature of virus, the nature of its infection, the medicines, different kinds of medicines, the need for quarantine, the way in which it is spreading, there was so much that there was a bombardment of scientific knowledge within the last four or five or five or six months about this whole pandemic situation, but then we increasingly we realized that there is least amount of certitude in each of that.

One particular finding or argument is disproved by some others as some new thesis is given. So, we are in the midst of competing claims, which all come from science, and also, we realized that religion was capable of giving you certain answers, vary answers with utmost certitude to all your questions, whether it is about the physical world, about the social world, about the paranormal world, about the world beyond this life, religion was able to give you unambiguous answers with utmost certitude.

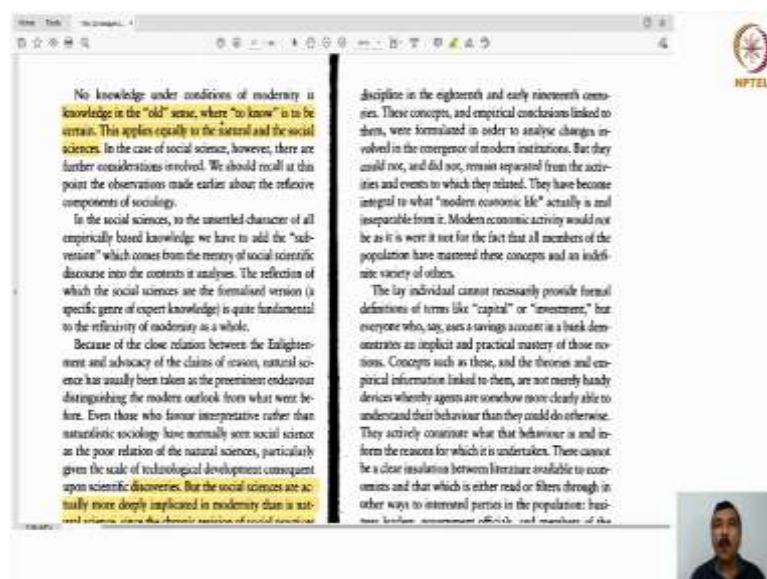
Now, in that sense, the reach of science is very limited and also the finite character of scientific answers also is very limited.

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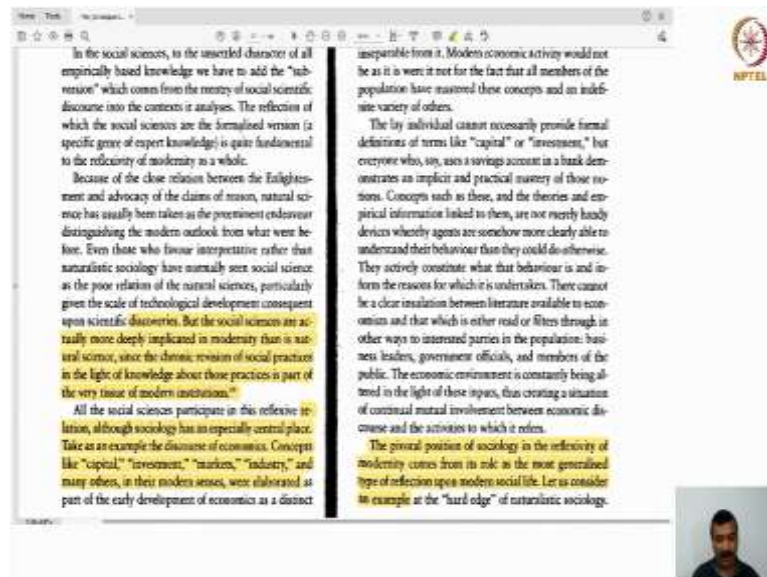
So, in science, nothing is certain and nothing can be proved, even if scientific endeavour provides us with the most dependable information about the world at which we can aspire, in the heart of the world of hard science, modernity floats free.

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A very interesting statement - So, no knowledge under conditions of modernity is knowledge in the old sense, where to know is to be certain. So, to know, we know about it and that is the end of the story, no, that is not the case. Now, we know that we know certain thing and this what we know as to might turn out to be untrue tomorrow, it could be something else day after tomorrow, it could be something else after some time. And this sense of this shifting sand, this sense of always being in the state of floating is very, very unsettling, it is absolutely unsettling.

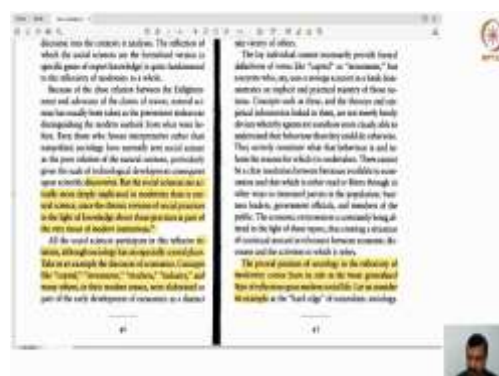
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So, there is a there is more elaborate discussion about how these ideas came into existence during enlightenment and then I would urge you to read these sections. But the social sciences are actually more deeply implicated in modernity than is natural science, since the chronic revision of social practices in the light of knowledge about these practices is part of the very tissue of modern institutions.

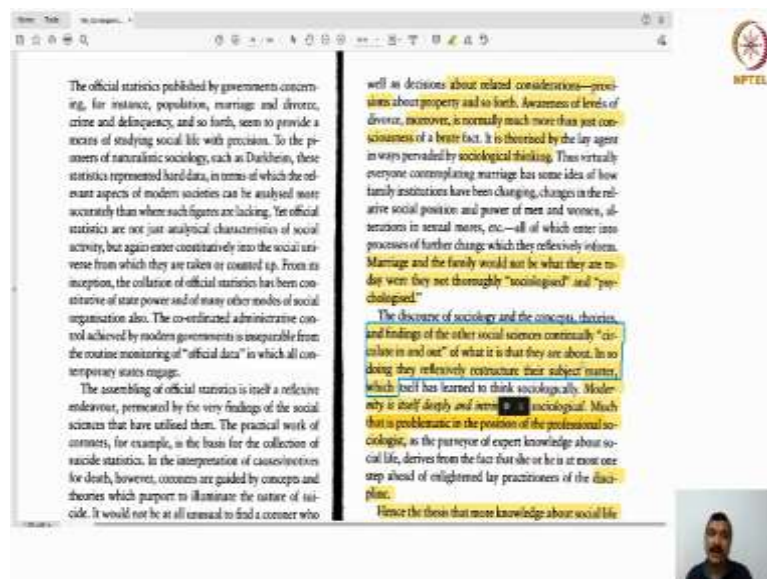
So, it is not only the modern science, which are part of the modernity or this reflective process, but social sciences are more deeply ingrained into that. All the social science participates in this reflective relation, although sociology has an especially central place, and he gives the example of capital investment, market industry and how these terms have become a part of our ordinary language and how that knowledge gets back to the realm of sociology and other things.

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And the pivotal position of sociology in the reflectivity of modernity comes from its role as the most generalized type of reflection upon modern social life. Let us consider an example.

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He gives a lot of examples, and one of the examples that I particularly liked is this example that we that he gives about marriage and divorce. He says, anyone in the Western country who embarks upon marriage today, for instance, knows that divorce rates are high. And may also however, imperfectly or partially know a great deal more about the demography of marriage and family, knowledge about high rate of divorce might affect the very decision to marry.

As well as decisions about considerations, provisions about property and so forth, awareness levels of divorce, moreover, is normally much more than just consciousness brute fact. It is theorized by lay agent in ways perverted by sociological thinking. What he argues is that in modern advanced societies, everybody a couple who decides to get into marriage, they know well that the divorce rates are very high and this divorce rates being very high is a social fact, if you go by the Durkheim argument, it is a social statistic, it is a fact, it is a reality out there.

So, this family who gets into a marital alliance well very well know that there is a possibility of them getting divorce or it is much higher. For example, if a society has set on 40 percentage of divorce rates, then any newly wedded couple always know this possibility hitting their family as well, hitting their relationship as well. And this understanding definitely begins to impact their actions.

So, this possibility of getting divorced is always open for them, because they know that it is a reality it happens around them, it is no longer unthinkable unlike in many other traditions societies. So, this fact we have these potential seeds of situation that can lead to them taking a decision that let us not live together like that let us part ways.

So, you see, this kind of knowledge getting into actual practices and these practices further produced new forms of knowledge and this kind of reciprocal influence or kind of dialectical reciprocal spiralling kind of effect is taking place in the modern society. So, this happens everywhere.

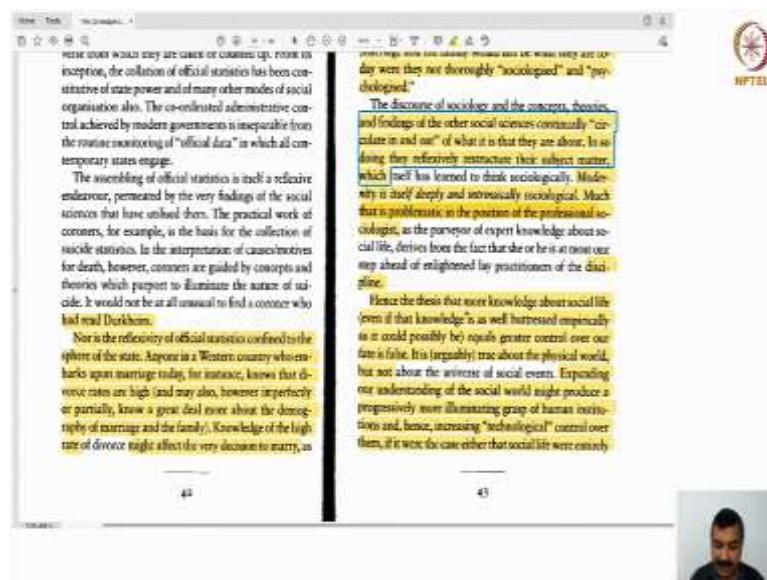


So, marriage and family would not be what they are today, were they not thoroughly sociologists and psychologists. The discourse of sociology and concepts, theories and findings of the other social sciences continually circulate in and out of what is that they are about. In so doing, they reflexively restructure the subject matter.

So, this knowledge for students of sociology, sociological knowledge really changes your subjectivity, discussions on caste identity, discussions about globalization, it changes your subjectivity, yourself definition of who you are, it changes your self-identity, and when a substantial section of people get changed, and that gets reflected in the society.

And that is further picked up by the discipline and saying that okay, this is a major change that happens in the subjective orientation, orientation of subjectivity, which further influences your decision. So, this kind of in and out of this kind of movement of knowledge into practice is something what Gibbons argues as the most important feature of modernity, and which we see as a more intense level in this era of late modernity.

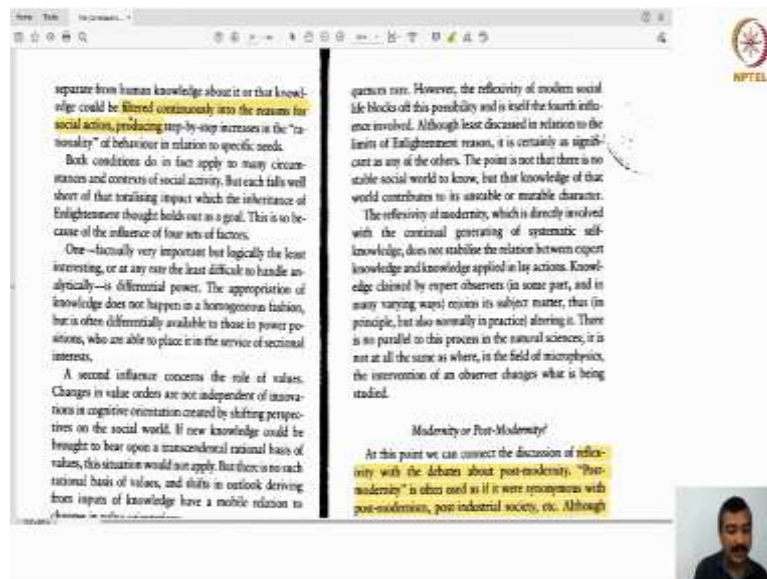
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Hence, the thesis that more knowledge about social life equals greater control over fate is false, a very, very insightful argument. So, if you know more about society, we will be able to control it better that argument is absolutely false. And it could be true in the case of natural sciences, but in the case of social sciences is absolutely false because we would have evolved by then, society would have evolved by then society would have posed a new set of challenges to the people.

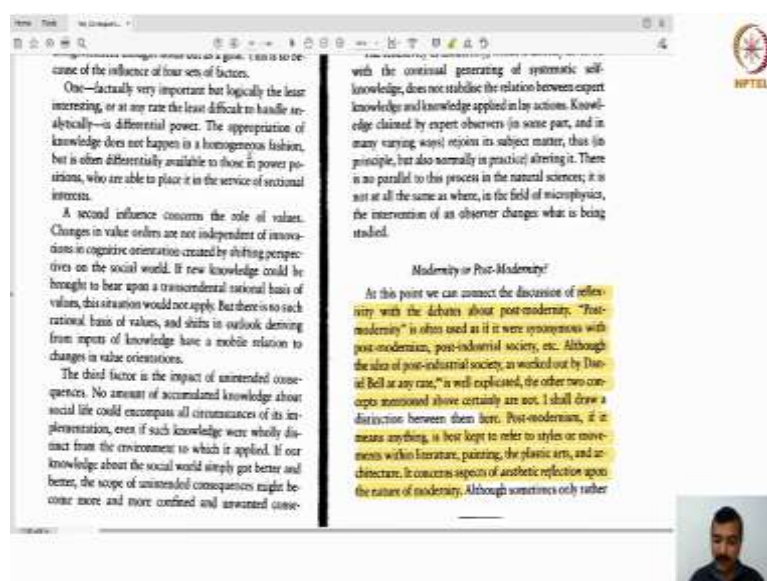
Expanding our understanding of the social world might produce a progressively more illuminating grasp of human institutions and hence, increasing technological control over them, if it were the case either that social life were entirely...

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Separate from human knowledge about it or that knowledge could be filtered continuously into reasons for social action producing step by step increase in the rationality of behaviour in relation to specific needs. So, read that. So, this is the central argument that Giddens put forward about the reflexivity of modernity. And we will come back to this argument later again, when we discuss Ulrich Beck.

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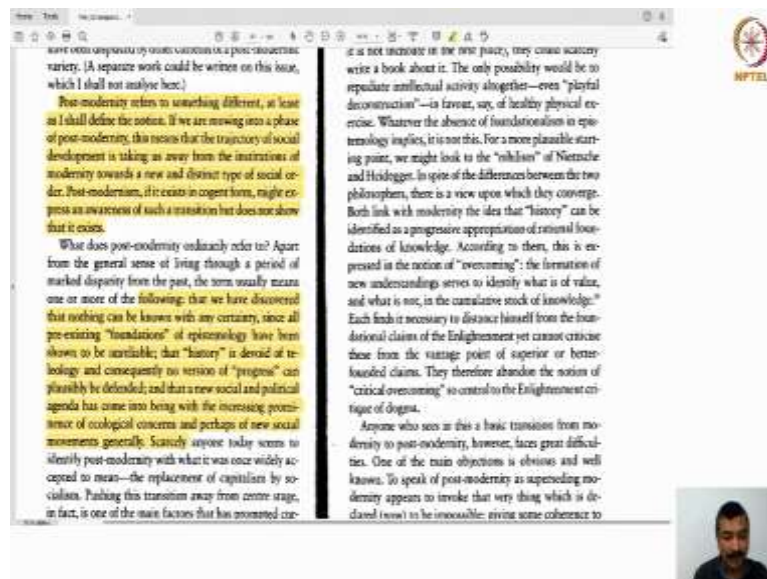
Let us come to the final section of this chapter, where he discusses this whole question, modernity or post modernity. How do you describe the contemporary society, the society characterized by forces of globalization, would you say modernity or would you call it as post modernity? At this point, we can connect the discussion of reflexivity with the debates about post modernity; post modernity is often used as if it was synonymous with post modernism, post -industrial society, etcetera.

Although the idea of post- industrial society as worked out by Daniel Bell, at any rate is well explicated. The other two concepts mentioned above are clearly or not, I shall draw a distinction

between them here. Post modernism, if it means anything is best kept to refer to styles of movements within literature, paintings, the plastic arts and architects. It concerns aspects of aesthetic reflection upon the nature of modernity.

So, modernism is understood as an aesthetic reflection on the conditions of modernity, it is a kind of a sweeping change that happened in the realm of architecture, in the realm of creativity, and it appeared as an aesthetic reflection on the conditions of modernity. And modernity is something very different.

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Post modernity refers to something different, at least as I shall define the notion. If we are moving into phase of post modernity, this means that the trajectory of social development is taking us away from the institutions of modernity towards new and distinct types of social order. Post modernism, if it exists in cogent form, might express an awareness of such transition that does not show that it exists.

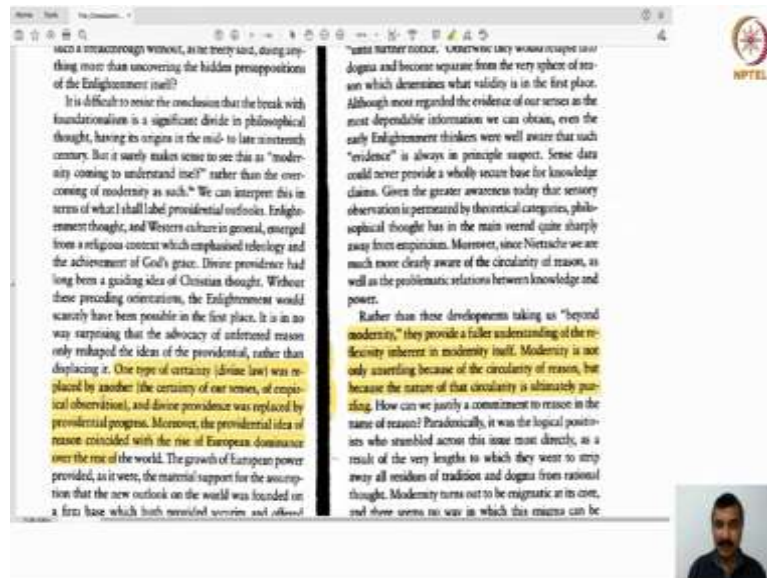
So, post modernity in general is understood as a movement away from the basic contours or basic institutions, basic social organizations of modernity. And post modernism is an awareness about that. What does post modernity orderly refers to? Apart from the general sense of living through a period of marked disparity from the past, the term usually means one or more of the following.

That we have discovered that nothing can be known with any certitude, since all pre-existing foundations of epistemology have been shown to be unreliable, that history is devoid of teleology, and consequently no version of progress can plausibly be defended. And that new social and political agenda has come into being with the increasing prominence of ecological concerns and perhaps of new social movements generally.

Okay, so these are some of the very important crises we mentioned about Lyotard, Lyotard when he talks about the impossibility of any grand narratives, this is one of these very important things. Post modernity assumes that you cannot have any foundational knowledge, it completely rubbishes sciences, it completely discounts the possibility of science offering any anything worthwhile.

And it celebrates the kind of multiplicity, it celebrates the kind of multiple perspectives, but very, very difficult kind of propositions when you look into that, and then follows kind of discussions about the, about the philosophical roots of this modernity and post modernity which I am not really going into.

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So, what Giddens talk about is to contextualize the context in which modernity emerged because when modernity emerged, it had to really fight another providential understanding of religion. He says that one type of certainty, divine law was replaced by another, certainty of our senses, or empirical observation and divine providence was replaced with providential progress.

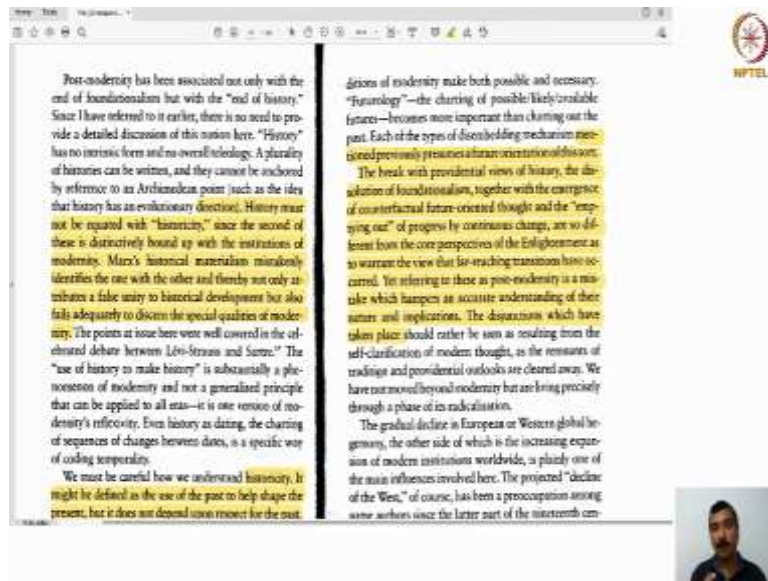
Moreover, the providential ideas of reason coincided with the rise of European dominance over the rest of the world. So, he discusses this kind of context in which rationality emerged as the pre-eminent mode of thinking in the era of modernity. And but at the same time, because the argument even many of the post modernists are depending on Nietzsche to elaborate their arguments about post modernism, but Giddens is finding issues with that I am not going into the details.

Rather other than these developments are taking us beyond modernity, they provide a fuller understanding of the reflexivity inherent in modernity itself. So, this is the position of Giddens, as I mentioned several times, Giddens is not somebody who would uncritically accept the argument of post modernity, he refuses to buy the argument, and he vouches by the still continuing relevance and significance of modernity. So, he says that all these arguments.

It only tells us about the, they provide fuller understanding of the reflexivity inherent in modernity itself. Modernity is not only unsettling because of the circulation of reason, but because the nature of that circularity is ultimately puzzling. How can we justify a commitment to reason in the name of reason? Paradoxically, it was the logical positivists who stumbled across this issue most directly, as a result of the very length to which they wanted to strip away all the residues of tradition and dogma from rational thought.

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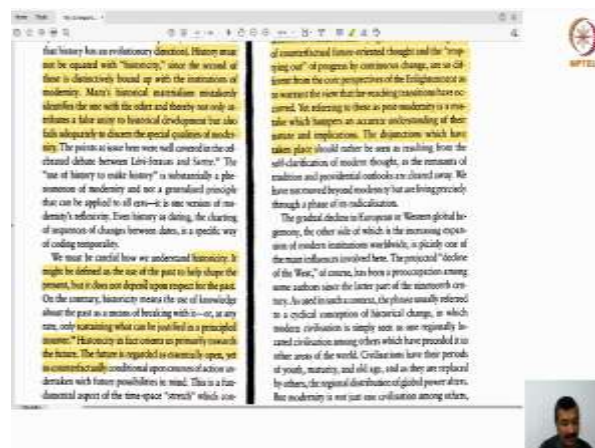


The second point he talks is about the whole idea of historicity, that we cannot have a singular idea of history, we can have multiple ideas, we cannot have a singular understanding about progress. So, these are all ideas which are very strongly put forward by people who vouch for postmodernity.

Post modernity has been associated not only with the end of foundationalism, but with the end of history, since I have referred to it earlier, there is no need to provide a detailed description in this notion here, history has no intrinsic form and no overall teleology. So, he makes very interesting argument. History must not be equated with historicity, since the second of this is distinctly bound up with the institutions of modernity.

Marx historical materialism mistakenly identifies the one with the other and thereby not only attributes a false unity to historical development but also fails adequately to discern specific qualities of modernity. So, he argues that one of the important failures of Karl Marx is to mistake history with historicity, because Marx not only provided an account of all the history, but he presented an argument about historicity by making his arguments about the historical materialism.

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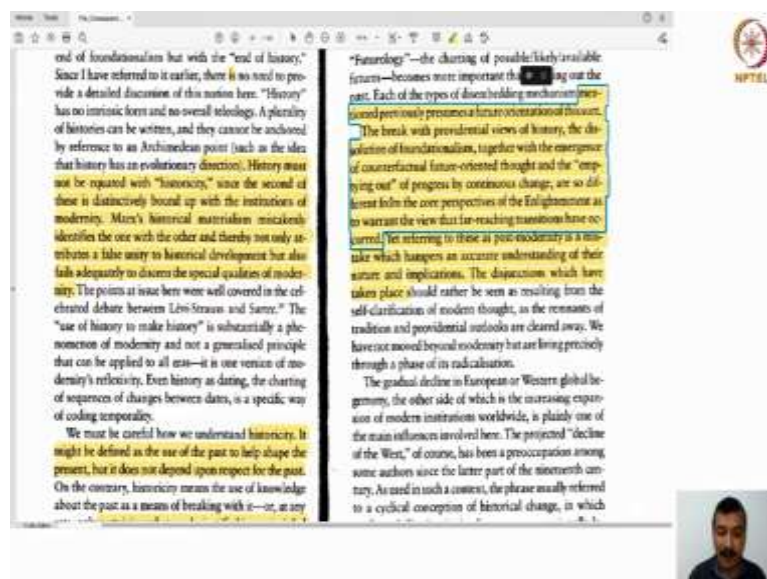


We must be careful how we understand historicity, it might be defined as the use of the past to help shape the present, but it does not depend upon the respect for the past. Beautiful argument and we will, I think we will come back to scholars like Koselleck when we discuss it later when in Beck's argument.

So, in the traditional societies, tradition was used to inform the present as well as the past, as well as the future, if you knew how your ancestors dealt with certain things, that knowledge could be used for you to deal with the future uncertainties, but that story is over. In the era of late modernity, the past knowledge, past experiences are no longer something relevant for you to make you capable of meeting these new unexpected changes.

It becomes relevant, past helps to shape the present, but does not depend on respect for the past. On the contrary, historicity means, the use of knowledge about the past as a means of breaking with it or at rate only sustaining what can be justified in principled manner. Historicity in fact is oriented primarily towards the future, the future is regarded as an essentially open yet as counterfactually conditional upon a course of action undertaken with the futures possibility in mind.

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So, this is an extremely important point. The break with providential views of history, the dissolution of foundationalism, together with the emergence of counterfactual future-oriented thought, and the emptying out of progress by continuous changes are so different from the core perspectives of the Enlightenment as to warrant the view that far reaching transitions have occurred.

So, he agrees that all these changes have happened, but his argument is that they do not warrant that the framework of modernity to be completely abandoned. Yet altering to this post modernity is a mistake. Yet referring to these as post modernity is a mistake, which hampers an accurate understanding of the nature and implications.

The disjunctions which have taken place should rather be seen as resulting from the self-clarification of modern thought, as the remnants of tradition and providential outlook are

cleared away. We have not moved beyond the modernity but are living precisely through the phases of this radicalization. So, this is the important point that he summarizes.

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shortly discuss, no longer so distinctly differentiates the Western countries from others elsewhere. We can interpret this process as one of globalisation, a term which must have a key position in the lexicon of the social sciences.

What of the other sets of changes often linked, in some sense or another, to post-modernity: the rise of new social movements and the creation of novel political agendas? These are indeed important, as I shall try to show later. However, we have to sort our way circumspectly through the various theories or interpretations that have been advanced on the basis of them. I shall analyse post-modernity as a series of innumerable transitions away from—or “beyond”—the various institutional clusters of modernity that will be distinguished subsequently. We do not yet live in a post-modern social universe, but we can still see more than a few glimpses of the emergence of ways of life and forms of social organization which diverge from those fostered by modern institutions.

In terms of this analysis, it can easily be seen why the radicalizing of modernity is so unsettling, and so significant. Its most conspicuous features—the dissolution of evolutionism, the disappearance of historical teleology, the recognition of thoroughgoing, constitutive reflexivity, together with the evaporating of the privileged position...

far. Three dominant sources of the dynamism of modernity have been distinguished, each connected with the other:

- The separation of time and space. This is the condition of time-space distanciation of indefinite scope; it provides means of precise temporal and spatial naming.
- The development of disembedding mechanisms. These “lift out” social activity from localized contexts, reorganising social relations across large time-space distances.
- The reflexive appropriation of knowledge. The production of systematic knowledge about social life becomes integral to system reproduction, rolling social life away from the fixities of tradition.

Taken together, these three features of modern institutions help to explain why living in the modern world is more like being aboard a careering juggernaut (an image I shall develop in more detail later) rather than being in a carefully controlled and well-driven motor car. The reflexive appropriation of knowledge, which is intrinsically emerging but also necessarily unstable, extends to incorporate massive spans of time-space. The disembedding mechanisms provide the means of this extension by lifting social relations out of their “situatedness” in specific locales.

Let us come to the last section. In terms of this analysis, it can easily be seen why the radicalizing of modernity is so unsettling and so, significant. Its most conspicuous features the dissolution of evolutionism, disappearance of historical teleology, historical teleology is in the sense that the argument that history is supposed to follow in certain manner.

So, there is an end result or end stage is already decided and we are supposed to reach there, that is the idea of teleology. The disappearance of historical teleology, the recognition of thoroughgoing, constitutive reflexivity together with the evaporating of the privileged position...

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according to the discontinuous interpretation I have suggested above. The declining grip of the West over the rest of the world is not a result of the diminishing impact of the institutions which first arose there but, on the contrary, a result of their global spread. The economic, political, and military power which gave the West its primacy, and which was founded upon the conjunction of the four institutional dimensions of modernity I shall shortly discuss, no longer so distinctly differentiates the Western countries from others elsewhere. We can interpret this process as one of globalisation, a term which must have a key position in the lexicon of the social sciences.

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Summery

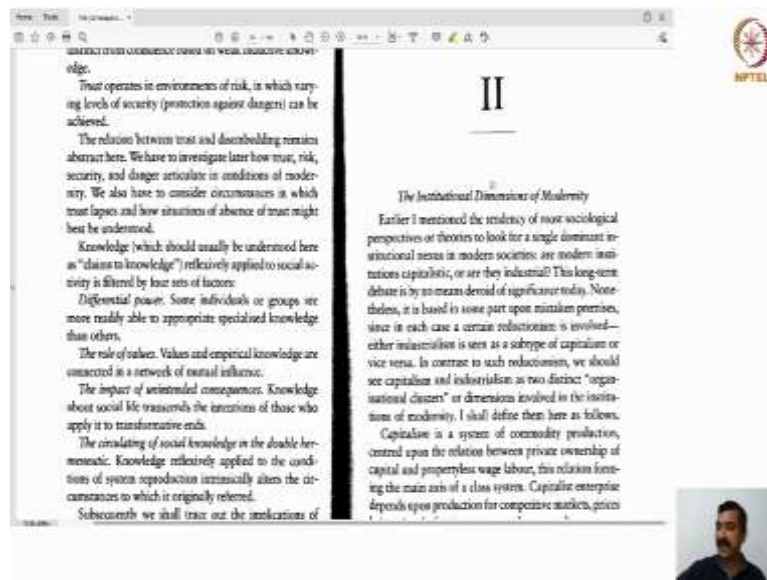
We are now in a position to sum up the discussion thus far. Three dominant sources of the dynamism of modernity have been distinguished, each connected with the other:

- The separation of time and space. This is the condition of time-space distanciation of indefinite scope; it provides means of precise temporal and spatial naming.
- The development of disembedding mechanisms. These “lift out” social activity from localized contexts, reorganising social relations across large time-space distances.
- The reflexive appropriation of knowledge. The production of systematic knowledge about social life becomes integral to system reproduction, rolling social life away from the fixities of tradition.

Taken together, these three features of modern institutions help to explain why living in the modern world is more like being aboard a careering juggernaut (an image I shall develop in more detail later) rather than being in a carefully controlled and well-driven motor car. The reflexive appropriation of knowledge, which is intrinsically emerging but also necessarily unstable, extends to incorporate massive spans of time-space. The disembedding mechanisms provide the means of this extension by lifting social relations out of their “situatedness” in specific locales.

of the West moves us into a disturbing universe of experience. If we still refers primarily to those living in the West itself, the instrumentalized sector of the world, it is something which implications are felt everywhere. So, this is how he closes this chapter by bringing in this whole debate about modernity and post modernity and as I told, as I mentioned several times, Giddens is a defender of the framework of modernity, he is not ready to accept that you require a framework of post modernity to understand the globalization debate. And then he provides a summary which I am not going to discuss.

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Okay, so let us close here, and then we will have a summary of the second chapter, the institutional dimension of modernity in the next class, and then we will have maybe one more class on his later book, that is 'The Runaway World' and then we will conclude that or maybe we can have one more session, which specifically looks at the implication of globalization on subjectivity, maybe we can discuss that, that is something that you will be able to directly relate to with your own life.

So, see you later, let us close it now. Thank you.