

Globalization: Theoretical Perspectives
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Lecture 23
Reflexive Modernity: Ulrich Beck 1

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Reflexive Modernity: Ulrich
Beck-1



Welcome back to the class, we are beginning the discussion of yet another very, very important and theoretically very rigorous argument about Reflexive Modernity propounded by a host of scholars, but most prominent among them is Ulrich Beck and Ulrich Beck is a very prominent scholar of sociology and especially scholar of globalization and we will have detailed discussion on Beck's arguments about a wide variety of issues in the coming weeks.

We will have a discussion on his Beck's arguments about the changing nature of nation state, we will have his very famous arguments about the risk society, we will have a look at his arguments about methodological cosmopolitanism and I remember we already discussed his argument about cosmopolitanism, rooted cosmopolitanism in one of the introductory the lectures in the chapter on cultural globalization.

Ulrich Beck, the German sociologist is a very important figure in the discussion on globalization and why that we are discussing him here, is that as I mentioned, in several of the previous classes, that he is a very important advocate among the group of scholars who argue against the postmodernist argument, who argues very vehemently, very forcibly that what we are seeing around us is an extension or it is a radicalized form of modernity.

And this particular essay, so here, I am going to discuss it elaborately, I think we might take three sessions, to discuss a single essay, it is a lengthy essay around 30 pages. So, we will go a bit slow, but we will go in detail, analysing this particular essay, so I am not using PowerPoint. Rather, I am going to discuss his original essay, which is very important essay.

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The Theory of Reflexive Modernization

Problematic, Hypotheses and Research Programme

Ulrich Beck, Wolfgang Bonss and Christoph Lau



It is 33 pages, maybe including references, but and it is a very dense essay, not very easy to follow, especially towards the second part of the essay. So, we will go slow, we will examine this essay in detail and it is written not only by Ulrich Beck, but Wolfgang Bonss and Christoph Lau and it is titled, 'The Theory of Reflexive Modernization', problematic, hypotheses and the research program.

It is a very broad ranging, ambitious essay in that sense, it is too ambitious in terms of its theoretical range, what it indents and other things.

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The Modernization of Modern Society

THE 'REFLEXIVITY' in 'reflexive modernization' is often misunderstood. It is not simply a redundant way of emphasizing the self-referential quality that is a constitutive part of modernity. Instead, what 'reflexive modernization' refers to is a distinct second phase: the modernization of modern society. When modernization reaches a certain stage it radicalizes itself. It begins to transform, for a second time, not only the key institutions but also the very principles of society. But this time the principles and institutions being transformed are those of modern society.

So the social structures of the post-war order should not be absolutized as if they were the end of social history. On the contrary, much of what they once presumed as necessary now looks contingent. The dominant 'container' model of society, which (often tacitly, and the more tenaciously for that) identifies society with the nation-state, presumes a large number of interlocking social institutions. Among them are: a reliable welfare state; mass parties anchored in class culture; and a stable nuclear family consisting of a single breadwinner, his housewife and their children. These institutions are supported by, and in turn support, a web of economic security woven out of industrial regulation, full employment and life-long careers. And the entire arrangement is rendered intelligible to its members by a



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■ *Theory, Culture & Society* 2003 (SAGE, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi),
12, 1-30/70, 1-77



So, let us get started. Now, at the very beginning, he makes it clear that what does he mean by the term reflexivity and by the way, this essay was published in 2003 and is published in one of the most prestigious journals, *Theory, Culture and Society*. *Theory, Culture and Society* is one of the most prestigious journals on social theory. So, in the very beginning, he makes it very clear what does he mean by reflexivity, we came across in Giddens as well.

So, in Giddens what we understood by reflexivity was that there is a kind of a spiralling relationship between the knowledge about society especially produced by disciplines like sociology and the society. So, the sociological knowledge that we create about society gets translated into society there by making changes there, which is further being studied by sociologists or other social sciences or there is a dialectical relationship between the discipline and the society, so that they are mutually shaping each other.

So, our understanding about society is also shaping the practices of society itself. But here Beck is using this term in a slightly different way, something very different than what Giddens thinks about it. So, the reflexivity in reflexive modernization is often misunderstood. It is not simply a redundant way of emphasizing the self-referential quality that is a constitutive part of modernity.

So, earlier you know that the argument of modernity is that modernity enables you or modernity inspires you to look at your own actions in a critical manner. So, that used to be the idea of reflexivity earlier, because you are kind of disenchanted, you are no longer enchanted by the supernatural or religious belief so you constantly evaluate your own actions on the basis of rationality.

But here that is not the idea of reflexivity at all, that Beck wants to discuss, instead what reflexive modernization refers to is a distinct second phase, the modernization of modern society and this is an extremely important point that you need to keep in mind, he is talking about the modernization of modern society or that is why where this distinction of first modernity and second modernity also comes.

Refers to a distinct second phase, the modernization of modern society, where motivation reaches a certain stage it radicalizes itself. So, instead of calling it as a postmodern society, which indicates that the era of modernity is over, these scholars are repeatedly asserting that

what we are seeing today is a radicalized form of modernity. It begins to transform for a second time not only the key institution, but also the very principles of society.

But this time, the principle and institutions being transformed are those of modern society. So, if modern society, so if modernity really represented a break from the traditional society by transforming its core institutions, like say political and cultural and economic institutions, now this second modernity or reflexive modernity is also representing such kind of a break because it is transforming the conditions of modernity.

So, the dominant container of model society, which often tacitly at the more tenaciously for that identify society with the nation-state. But assumes a larger number of interlocking social institutions, among them are reliable state. So, these are the kind of features or the acute essential features of a modern society, initial state reliable welfare state, mass practices anchored in class culture and a stable nuclear family consisting of a single breadwinner, his housewife and their children.

So, this has been the character of modernity or how the most dominant picture of modernity was understood. Now, these institutions are supported by and in turn support a wave of economic security woven out of industrial regulation, full employment and lifelong careers and that is how we experienced modernity.

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nature; between established knowledge and mere belief; and between the members of society and outsiders.

Reflexive modernization throws all of these basic social principles into flux. In first modern, or simple modern society, social life is conceived of as occurring within a stable system of coordinates. But the challenge of theorizing reflexive modernization is that the system of coordinates is changing. If the fundamental distinctions and criteria that we have always identified with modern society no longer apply, where can one begin? What can 'modern society' mean if *not* the nation-state? What can modernization mean under such conditions? How can we make reasonable decisions about the future under conditions of such uncertainty? And how can reflexive social institutions develop and grow in a world that is, in some respects, literally boundless? Framed thus, the theory of reflexive modernization has to be worked out theoretically and tested empirically.²

There are similarities between our approach and that of postcolonial writers, some of whom have criticized modernity as a kind of Western patent medicine that (falsely) promises to cure all ills. We have also learned from those who have critiqued modernity from a human rights perspective, from an ecological perspective and from the perspective of the 'pluralization of modernities' that has been observed in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.³ But a detailed contrasting of those positions with our own must also await later publications.

At stake in this – and the defining thematic – is a decidedly non-linear



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Now, he argues that reflexive modernization throws all of these basic social principles into flux. In first modern or simple modern societies, social change is conceived as occurring within a stable system of coordinates, but the challenge of theorizing reflexive modernity, modernization is that the system of coordinates is changing. If the fundamental distinction and criteria that we have always identified with modern society no longer apply, where can one begin?

What can modern society mean if not nation state, so how can one make reasonable decisions about the future under conditions or such uncertainty and how can one reflexive social institution develop and grow into a world that is, in some respects, literally boundless, framed this the theory of reflexive modernization has to be worked out theoretically and tested empirically. So, as I mentioned, it is a theoretical project, a project, which is very ambitious, which comes with a very interesting theoretical implication.

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must also await later publications.

At stake in this – and the defining thematic – is a decidedly non-linear notion of change and modernity. The hypothesis of a 'reflexive' modernization of modern societies examines a fundamental societal transformation within modernity. Modernity has not vanished, but it is becoming increasingly problematic. While crises, transformation and radical social change have always been part of modernity, the transition to a reflexive second modernity not only changes social structures but revolutionizes the very coordinates, categories and conceptions of change itself.

This 'meta-change' of modern society results from a critical mass of unintended side-effects. By unintended side-effects – or more precisely, effects that were originally intended to be more narrow in their scope than they turned out to be – we mean the host of consequences resulting from the boundary-shattering force of market expansion, legal universalism and technical revolution – in short, the process that Marx once celebrated as that by which 'everything solid melts into air'. The continued technical, economic, political and cultural development of global capitalism has gradually revolutionized its own social foundations. In the transformation from a first modernity that was largely synonymous with the nation-state to a second modernity, the shape of which is still being negotiated, modernization ends up stripping away the nation- and welfare state, which at one time supported it but later restrained it. In so doing, modernization is calling into question its own basic premises.

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Reflexive modernization seems to be producing a new kind of

Now, at stake in this, and in defining a thematic, is a decidedly nonlinear notion of change and modernity. The hypothesis of a reflexive modernization of modern societies examines a fundamental societal transformation within modernity. modernity has not vanished, but it is becoming increasingly problematic.

That is a fundamental point that we have mentioned several times, while crisis transformations and radical social change have always been part of modernity, the transition to a reflexive second, modernity not only changes social structure but revolutionizes the very coordinates, categories and conceptions of change itself.

So, in the latter part of this essay, we will see how he even theorizes this kind of changes because you require a reconceptualization of change itself to make sense of that, this meta change of modern society results from a critical mass of unintended side effects and this is a very favourite term for all these scholars who want to emphasize this whole point about unintended side effects of modernity.

We wanted modernity to move in a particular direction with the help of rationality, science and technology. But modernity also produced a lot of side effects which we never wanted, which we never intended and these side effects are now taking centre stage, taking assuming a central role and started, producing more and more unintended consequences and things have simply gone out of hand.

That is what Giddens says, when he talks about a runaway world. This unintended side effects, by unintended side effects or more precisely, effects that were originally intended to be narrower in the scope than they turned out to be, we mean the host of consequences resulting from the boundary shattering force of market expansion, legal universalism and technical evolution.

In short, the processes that Marx once celebrated as that by which everything solid melts into air. So, Marx used this particular phrase to describe the era of modernity and the rise of capitalism. So, here this rise of modernity is what it is something for us to look at. In the transformation from first modernity that was largely synonymous with the nation-state to second modernity, the shape of which is still being negotiated, modernization ends up stripping away the nation and welfare state.

Which at one time supported but later restrained it, in doing so, modernization is calling into question its own basic premises. So, this argument is revolving around the idea that some of the very basic coordinates, basic pillars of modernity including a nation state, a welfare nation, state and capitalism and centrality of science and rationality and industrial production, these are undergoing significant transformation.

But unlike postmodernists, these scholars are not ready to overthrow these courses, but rather they call into attention to understand and to problematize these emerging, features, emerging characterizations.

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social structures but to them. Empirical investigation and conceptual hard work are needed in order to produce a reasonable picture of this new world that people and institutions can use to orient themselves.

What is the difference between reflexive modernity and postmodernity? Despite the fact that there are many meanings to the word 'postmodernity', and many of them overlap with the concept of reflexive modernity, there is still a clear difference between the two. The theory of re-modernization² maintains that there are new rules of the game for our political and social systems, and the task of social science is to grasp them, describe them, understand them and explain them. So, whereas for many theorists of postmodernism the issue is one of the de-structuration of society and the de-conceptualization of social science, for re-modernization it is a matter of re-structuration and re-conceptualization. The goal is to decipher the new rules of the social game even as they are coming into existence. The old certainties, distinctions and dichotomies are fading away, but through close investigation of that process we can discover what is taking their place. This approach couldn't be more foreign to the 'farewell to science' view found in some quarters of postmodernism. Rather it is a call for the strengthening of social science. Social science can no longer aspire to take a god's-eye point of view and the control that goes with it, but it can find another way to know.

The following sections will examine different key aspects of re-modernization.



Now this sentence, this paragraph is something very important because in a very simple language, he makes a distinction between what is reflexive modernity and what is postmodernity? What is the difference between reflexive modernity and postmodernity, despite the

fact that there are many meanings to the word post modernity and many of them overlap with the concept of reflexive modernity, there is still a clear difference between the two.

The theory of re-modernization or reflexive modernization maintains that there are new rules of the game for our political and social systems and the task of social science is to grasp them, described them, understand them and explain them. So, whereas for many theorists of post modernism, the issue is one of the de structuration of society and de-conceptualization of social sciences for re-modernization, it is a matter of restructuration and re-conceptualisation.

The goal is to decipher the new rules of the social game even as they are coming into existence. So, unlike postmodernist who are extremely critical of some of the conceptual categories of social sciences and the ability of social sciences is to theorize and then conceptualize them and to have an explanatory potential to make sense of this whole world, the reflexive modernists still believe in that potential, still believe in that possibility and they believe that social scientists need to be more rigorous.

Social scientists, social sciences need to develop more rigorous frameworks and categories and theoretical perspectives to make sense of this unfolding society rather than saying that they cannot be made sense of. But the old certainly distinctions and dichotomies are fading away. But through the cross investigation of these processes, we can discover what is taking their place.

This approach could not be more foreign to the farewell to science, you found in some quarters of post modernism and we know that some sections of post modernism almost says that science is over or they want to reduce science, to the status of say for religion or magic or any other kind of existing world system that offers a certain explanation.

So, there is a very serious attempt concerted attempt to discredit science. Of course, science centric argument is very problematic. But at the same time, the attempt to completely discredit science completely, to consider science and scientific research and scientific outlook as just one among the various available, frameworks to lead your life is extremely problematic. It is extremely problematic.

Rather it is a call for strengthening social sciences. This of course, could not be more foreign to the farewell to science view founding some quarters of post modernism. Rather, it is a call for strengthening social sciences, social science can no longer aspire to take a God's eye point of view and control that goes with it, but it can find another way to know that.

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find another way to know.

The following sections will examine different key aspects of re-modernization:

- the distinction between first and second modern society;
- the discontinuity at the heart of the modern; the hypothesis of an historical break;
- forms of meta-change and concrete examples;
- empirical and analytic criteria for testing the theory of reflexive modernization.

The Distinction between First and Second Modern Society

So what is the central meaning of the word 'reflexive' in 'reflexive modernization'? 'Reflexive' does not mean that people today lead a more conscious life. On the contrary, 'Reflexive' signifies not an 'increase of mastery and consciousness, but a heightened awareness that mastery is impossible' (Latour, 2003). Simple modernization becomes reflexive modernization to the extent that it disenchant and then dissolves its own taken-for-granted premises. Eventually this leads to the undermining of every aspect of the nation-state; the welfare state; the power of the legal system; the national economy; the corporatist systems that connected one with the other; and the parliamentary democracy that governed the whole. A parallel process



The following section will examine different key aspects of modernization and we will do it one by one and this is the kind of a sequence in which he analyses this particular chapter. The first is the distinction between first and second modern society. Second one is this discontinuity at the heart of the modern, the hypothesis of an historical break forms of meta change and concrete examples and empirical and analytical criteria for testing theory of reflexive modernization.

So, I intend to take maybe two more sessions to complete this essay, because I want to go slow, I want to explain as much as possible, because it is a very important essay. So let us begin with this first one, the distinction between first and second modern society. So, what is this, central meaning of the word reflexive in reflexive modernization? Reflexive does not mean people today lead a more conscious life.

On the contrary, reflexive signal signifies not an increase of mastery and consciousness, but a heightened awareness that mastery is impossible. Look at how jarring or how forceful that argument is, because we all were under the under the impression that we can understand society better you can control society better, but now the reality is that, now we realize that such a mastery is impossible to attain.

Reflexive signifies that not an increase in the mastery and consciousness, mastery, your ability to control things around you, it could be the nature, it could be society, it could be social institutions, political institutions, it could be the people around you, the mastery over it and to and consciousness to understand how it works, but a heightened awareness that mastery is impossible.

Simple modernization becomes the reflexive modernization to extend that it disenchant and then dissolves its own taken for granted premises. Eventually, this leads to the undermining of every aspect of nation-state, the welfare state, the power of legal system, the national economy, the cooperative systems that connected one with another and the parliamentary democracy that govern it as a whole.

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will limit ourselves here to six important points. The first three focus on the structural and systemic presuppositions of modern society, and the last three on the self-description of social action.



1. First modern societies are nation-state societies defined by territorial boundaries. Modern social relations are conceived as 'contained' in a national territory and most institutions boast an integrated relation to the nation-state.
2. First modern societies distinguish themselves by a programmatic individualization. But this is crucially bounded on several sides by patterns of collective life that are heavily reminiscent of pre-modern structures that determined one's status by birth. Individuals in this society are theoretically free and equal and their associations are voluntary. But their freedom and equality are moulded by social institutions – for example, the sexual division of labour – that are in many respects coercive.
3. First modern societies are work societies or more precisely, gainful employment societies; in their fully developed form, they are what was once called in Europe 'full employment societies' – that is, societies in which unemployment is so low that it can justifiably be considered frictional. Status, consumption and social security all flow from participation in the economy, according to a model first propounded in the 18th century and finally realized in the 20th. Conversely this means that the opportunity to obtain gainful employment must be conceded to every member



So, this particular understanding is what he is going to elaborate and he begins with the premises of a first modern society. So, what were the basic premises of a first modern society and we know that we will realize it only when we compare these systems with a pre modern and agricultural feudal society that existed in the medieval period.

Now, first modern societies are nation-state societies, defined by territorial boundaries, modern societies social relations are conceived as contained in a national territory and most institutions boast an integrated relations to the nation state and this is something that we have discussed several times when we talked about methodological nationalism. Modern societies are seen as societies that are contained within the boundaries of a nation-state.

When we talk about Pakistani society, when we talk about Indian society, when we talk about it as a Sri Lankan society, we assume, naturally the idea that comes to our mind is a group of people who are living within the geographical boundary and this geographical boundary is defined by the boundaries set by the nation state and we could not really think of a society that makes these geographical boundaries irrelevant.

Second one is that modern societies distinguished themselves by a programmatic individualization. So, first modern societies distinguish themselves by a programmatic individualization, but this is crucially bounded on several sites by patterns of collective life that are heavily reminiscent of pre modern structures that determined one status by birth.

So, even when modernity celebrated the rise of the individual, we know that this individual in that sense was never born at least maybe in very few places, but these individuals also had located themselves in the larger societal markers of their religion, their ethnicity, their language, their nation, their affinity and other things. Individuals in the society are theoretically free and equal and their associations are voluntary, but their freedom and equality are moulded by social institution.

For example, the sexual division of labour that are at many respects coercive. So, who you are, you are an individual, but your individuality is heavily constrained by the fact that you are a woman or you are a man and then it proceeds the kind of roles and duties status jobs that are good for you, the kind of things that you can that you can aspire to a lot of stuff.

And third one, the first modern societies are work societies or more precisely gainful employment societies. In the fully developed form, they are what was once called in Europe, full employment societies that is societies in which employment is so low, unemployment is so low that it can justifiably be considered as frictional.

So, we think that gainful employment that people especially men, men are seen as the breadwinners, especially in the early modern period and a gainful employment, especially a lifelong employment, secure full-time employment with a retirement plan. So, that was seen as another taken for granted assumption.

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- employment societies; in their fully developed form, they are what was once called in Europe 'full employment societies' – that is, societies in which unemployment is so low that it can justifiably be considered frictional. Status, consumption and social security all flow from participation in the economy, according to a model first propounded in the 18th century and finally realized in the 20th. Conversely this means that the opportunity to obtain gainful employment must be conceded to every member of society (although in light of the sexual division of labour, this concretely means every male member of society).
4. First modern societies have a particular concept of nature founded on its exploitation. Nature is simultaneously central to society and marginalized. It appears as the 'outside' of society. Nature is conceived of as a neutral resource, which can and must be made available without limitation. This is the prerequisite of an industrial dynamic of affluence which regards its normal state as one of endless growth, and which succeeds in displacing its negative effects so that they seem to originate elsewhere.
 5. First modern societies unfold themselves on the basis of a scientifically defined concept of rationality that emphasizes instrumental control. Rational progress is conceived of as a process of demystification that can

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And the fourth point modern, the first modern society is a peculiar concept of nature founded on its exploitation, nature is simultaneously central to society and marginalized, it appears as the outside of society, nature is conceived of as a natural neutral resource, which can and must be made available without limitation and we know that nature was seen as an endless resource.

So natural resources, we learned or capitalism taught us to look at the forest or look at the soil, or look at the sea as resources that needs to be exploited, resources that needs to be used and many times we thought that there would not be any short supply of that, we were under the illusion that most of these resources would be unlimited, they would be endless.

But we were all for a rude shock, when maybe 1960s and 70s, when we began to become more conscious about the ecological consequences of that and that is why a huge rethinking began to take shape among our people about the whole question of ecological balance, about environmental sustainability and a host of other things.

And the fifth point of modern societies unfolded themselves on the basis of a scientifically defined concept of rationality that emphasizes instrumental control, rational progress is conceived as a process of demystifying that can continue without limits.

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continue without limits. This implies a belief that *scientization* can eventually perfect the control of nature.

6. First modern societies understand and manage their development according to the *principle of functional differentiation*. A division of society into social subsystems and various patterns of social action makes development appear synonymous with the growth of complexity. The continuous differentiation of societal functions through progressive specialization is assumed to lead to a better and better calibration of ends with means.

This summary of the premises of first modern society is neither systematic nor complete, and a more extensive and exact formulation remains to be elaborated. But it should be possible, on this preliminary basis, to formulate some theses about how the changing structure of society is affecting them. These premises were generated as first modern society developed very gradually and laboriously. But the same process of modernization that made them first possible and then necessary, has finally rendered them obsolete.

Let us deal with the initial part of that process first. These premises were gradually integrated as tacit assumptions underlying first modern



This implies a belief that a scientistization can eventually perfect the control of nature. We know that the science was science and rationality was seen as the epitome of human achievement and science as the ability to control nature and we built huge dams, we created human wonders by very actively interfering in the natural events and it all gave us the confidence that you will be able to control the natural forces and the possibilities of science and technology are infinite and you can use these science and technology to control and to tame the nature.

I remember an advertisement of this Larsen and Toubro Company, L&T old advertisement which say that their technology can be able to move the mountains and stop the rivers. So that used to be the kind of optimism, with the technology they can move the mountains and then stop the rivers.

Obviously, it is true that we have consecrate huge dams and we have, we have Earthmovers and we can move the mountains but the point is that now we realize that we can do that, but it is better not done. We know that it is not always a good thing to stop a river and to construct a dam or to simply remove a huge hill or a mountain because the ecological consequences could be much disastrous.

So, this endless optimism about the prospects of science and technology was very defining character of first modernity. And the first modern societies understand and manage the development according to the principle of functional differentiation, a division of society into a social subsystems and various patterns of social actions, make development appear synonymous with the growth of composite.

So, it all based on this idea of functional differentiation, as and when, those who have studied Durkheim would understand it better. He talks about the emergence of society and an increasing division of labour and increasing functional differentiation, as and when a society increases more, division of labour increases.

And each specialized section works on specific functions and because of this extreme form of division of labour, there is also a kind of a complement that, there is also a kind of a mutual interdependence and that was again the basis of that.

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Let us deal with the initial part of that process first. These premises were gradually integrated as tacit assumptions underlying first modern society through a process of naturalization and anthropologization. Such a naturalization was a prerequisite for developing the following social structures:

- the nation-state – first seen as an achievement and later as a limitation – upon whose territorial framework every social institution of first modern society is based. This in turn entailed
- the territorial organization of production, corporations and regulation as the stage upon which the opposition of capital and labour was first



Now, this summary of the premises of first modern society is neither systematic nor complete. But then he also talks about certain kind of a processes of modernization that made them first possible and then necessary and finally rendered them obsolete. Let us deal with the initial part of the process first.

What kind of processes that were underlying in this process of modernity? These premises are gradually integrated as tacit assumptions underlying first modern society through a process of naturalization and anthropologization. Such a naturalization was prerequisite for the development, developing of the following social structures.

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- the nation-state – first seen as an achievement and later as a limitation – upon whose territorial framework every social institution of first modern society is based. This in turn entailed
- the territorial organization of production, corporations and regulation as the stage upon which the opposition of capital and labour was first witnessed, before their re-appearing as reconcilable;
- the sexual division of labour, often referred to as a 'fact of nature', as the basis of a highly unequal organization of paid labour. This phenomenon can be seen as underlying
- the nuclear family, as condition, reproduction and guarantee of the predominantly male labour power commodity;
- the relatively closed-off social milieus and life-worlds of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, upon which basis class cultures could develop into intermediary social identities;
- the differentiation and separation of social subsystems (economy, politics, technical management, culture, science) which were eventually experienced as separate, distinct and hierarchical;
- the restructuring of social knowledge, altering its hierarchy, so that experiential and occupational knowledge was devalued and theoretical and supervisory knowledge was increased in status. This typically flowed from the instrumental concept of nature and the identification of rationality with control. Related to it was
- the creation of a hierarchy between experts and laymen which was



There are quite a few let us examine one by one, one is the nation state as we mentioned, first seen as an achievement and later as a limitation, upon whose territorial framework, every social institution of the first moral society is based. This in turn entailed. The territorial organization

of production, corporation and regulation as the stage upon which opposition of capital and labour was first witnessed, before there reappearing as reconcilable.

So, the opposition between the capital and the worker was seen as having taking place within the boundaries of nation. Then the sexual division of labour, often referred to as a fact of nature, we were told that men and women are different, they are physically different and this sexual division of labour is something quite natural. And nuclear family as a condition, reproduction and guarantee of the predominantly male, labour power commodity.

Nuclear family, where only the man becomes the breadwinner and wife's duties only to take care of the family and kind of procreation and relativity close off social milieus and work and life worlds of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, upon which basic class structures could develop into intermediary social identities.

That differentiation and separation of social subsystems that is economy, politics, technological management, cultural science, which will eventually experience as separate distinct and hierarchical, they were never seen as integrated seemingly, but they were seen as separate entities. The restructuring of social knowledge altering its hierarchy, so that experiential and occupational knowledge was devalued and theoretical and supervisory knowledge was increased in status.

We know that especially in India, the kind of disconnect between theory and practice, we know with the rise of modern engineering, disciplines, the traditional craft and artisans have lost their significance. For 1000s of years, we have had made tremendous, achievements in metallurgy, in craft, in series of artisanship jobs and that included both the theory as well as that of the practice they were the practitioners, these caste groups or these artisanal groups were practitioners.

But with the rise of modern industrial, modern capitalism and the idea of modern engineering, this is a major break between theory you study theoretically and with least regard to the historicity of this particular transmission of these techniques and knowledge and with scant regard to these practitioners. So, that is a very, very important area of interest for many people who work in the history of science and technology.

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 - the creation of a hierarchy between experts and laymen which was grounded on the monopoly of knowledge by professionals.

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Now, the creation of a hierarchy between experts and laymen, which was grounded on the monopoly of knowledge by professionals the rise of the professional class as a group.

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These developments are naturalized in the self-description of first modern society in two senses. On the one hand, it is argued that they rest on natural distinctions. And on the other (and this is also a form of naturalization), these social distinctions appear as if they were largely unalterable. It is conceded by modern society's defenders that there are shortcomings and difficulties. But these problems are considered contingent, and do not seriously undermine the first modern faith – that continuing along this line of development is the only way forward: towards increasing differentiation, growing complexity and an expanding control over nature.

The Challenges and Dynamics of Second Modernity

First modern society regards itself as the end and culmination of history, as a social form that will last forever. The likelihood of this is severely put in question by the following processes:

1. Globalization undermines the economic foundations of first modern society, and with it the idea of society as nation-state. This is because structural changes that are often referred to in shorthand as the 'vanish-



These developments are naturalized on the self-description of modern society into two senses, one hand, it is argued that they rest on natural distinction and other it is also from a naturalization, these social distinctions appear as they are largely and alterable, so these things were seen as natural, natural means it is as if they were part of nature and since they are natural, they cannot be changed.

You remember the idea about homosexuality, the criticism against homosexuality or the Indian Penal Code which criminalized homosexuality, because homosexual relations are seen as against the nature because heterosexuality was seen as the norm, it was seen as natural, anything else was seen as unnatural, even now we use the term unnatural.

But these problems are considered contingent and do not seriously undermine the first moral faith. So, now he comes to the challenges and dynamics of second modernity.

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The Challenges and Dynamics of Second Modernity

First modern society regards itself as the end and culmination of history, as a social form that will last forever. The likelihood of this is severely put in question by the following processes:

1. Globalization undermines the economic foundations of first modern society, and with it the idea of society as nation-state. This is because structural changes that are often referred to in shorthand as the 'vanishing of borders' have effects far beyond their immediate impact on the economy. Globalization also has political and cultural dimensions which, by changing the relation between the local and the global and between domestic and foreign, affect the very meaning of national borders, and, with that, all the constraints upon which nation-state society is based.
2. From the 1960s onwards, the welfare state (and its half-private, half-public analogues in the USA, in health care, housing and education) has provided the basis for an internalization of individualization (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). The result has been the erosion of several ascriptive patterns of collective life, such of which has gradually lost its legitimacy. The internalization of freedom and equality represents a further development of key modern social principles. But it is creating turbulent reconfigurations of social forms, while undermining several foundations that once were at the institutional heart of first modern society.



So, if we have discussed all these points, which were the central concerns of first modernity, let us have a look at them, what are these foundational arguments of second challenges and the dynamics of second modernity? Now, globalization undermines the economic foundations of the first modern society and with the idea of a society as a nation- state.

This is a contentious issue, because we know that there are quite a lot of scholars who argue that this nation-state is regaining its lost significance. But there is a major refashioning; major restructuring of the roles of nation state is definitely taking place. This is because structural changes that are often referred to in shorthand as vanishing borders have effects far beyond their immediate impact on the economy.

So, this whole idea of a vanishing border, borders becoming immaterial, borders becoming porous, borders becoming flexible had a tremendous impact on not only on the economy, but on the cultural as well as the social aspects and the best example is that of the European Union, where several countries, around 24-25 countries come together and they decide to have a common currency, they decide to have a common visa rule, free movement of people, products, everything.

So, that was something quite unprecedented and we must know that these countries were kind of fighting with each other. Some a few decades back.

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1. Globalization undermines the economic foundations of first modern society, and with it the idea of society as nation-state. This is because structural changes that are often referred to in shorthand as the 'vanishing of borders' have effects far beyond their immediate impact on the economy. Globalization also has political and cultural dimensions which, by changing the relation between the local and the global and between domestic and foreign, affect the very meaning of national borders; and, with that, all the certainties upon which nation-state society is based.
2. From the 1960s onwards, the welfare state (and its half-private, half-public analogues in the USA, in health care, housing and education) has provided the basis for an intensification of individualization (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). The result has been the erosion of several ascriptive patterns of collective life, each of which has gradually lost its legitimacy. The universalization of freedom and equality represents a further development of key modern social principles. But it is creating hitherto unknown social forms, while undermining several familiar ones that once were at the institutional heart of first modern society.
3. An important aspect of this expansion of individualization has been the transformation of gender roles: research showed that categories like men and women were not copies of a more originary heterosexuality, but they showed how the so-called originals, men and women within the heterosexual frame, are constructed, performatively established (Butler, 1990). Thus, changing the internal relations of families, producing *The Normal*



And from 1960s onwards, the welfare state has provided the basic for an intensification of individualization. The result has been the erosion of several ascriptive patterns of collective life, each of which has gradually lost its legitimacy. So, the kind of individualization that was already in place with the first modernity reaches a more radicalized form. With that second modernity, the universalization of freedom and equality represents a further development of key modern social principles.

But this is creating hitherto unknown social norms, while undermining several familiar ones that once were at the institutional heart of first modernity. We know that the extreme form of individualization, extreme form of your reflexivity about your sexual orientation, now we know

that heterosexuality is one among the sexual orientations, a person could be bisexual person could be, the divisions are endless in that sense.

So, this is something quite new. It does not mean that people did not have these ideas or orientations earlier, but to have a discourse on this and to have an institutionalized acceptance and categories and divisions is something very new and an important aspect of this expansion of individualization has been the transformation of gender roles.

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- Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). The result has been the erosion of several ascriptive patterns of collective life, each of which has gradually lost its legitimacy. The universalization of freedom and equality represents a further development of key modern social principles. But it is creating hitherto unknown social forms, while undermining several familiar ones that once were at the institutional heart of first modern society.
3. An important aspect of this expansion of individualization has been the transformation of gender roles: research showed that categories like men and women were not copies of a more originary heterosexuality, but they showed how the so-called originals, men and women within the heterosexual frame, are constructed, performatively established (Butler, 1990). Thus, changing the internal relations of families, producing *The Normal Chaos of Love* (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1995) and dissolving the sexual division of labour, affects the labour market from two directions.
 4. The flexible employment practices that appeared in the wake of the 'third industrial revolution', express, in their chronic form, a breakdown in the full employment society, and perhaps even in the central significance of gainful employment. In the last two decades, in *The Brave New World of Work* (Beck, 2000a), status, consumption and social security choices have
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Research shows that categories like men and women are not copies of a more originary heterosexuality, but they showed how the so-called originals men and women within the heterosexual frame are constructed, performative established, he is specifically talking about Judith Butler and her argument about performativity of gender.

So, Butler does not agree with the argument that the sexist biological and gender is social, that is the conventional social, social theory that tells you that while the sex is biological, whether a child is born as male or female, it is biological, it is based on chromosomes, based on the, sexual organ, whether gender is social, whether you are grown up as male or female, but she goes much beyond that and then she argues that the gender is a result of performativity.

From the very beginning, a child is learned to perform repetitively, repetitively is forced to perform certain kinds of roles. So, gender is seen as a product of performativity, I am not going into the detail, but it is a very influential theory, she draws on Foucault and a host of other scholars. Thus, changing the internal dynamics of families producing the normal chaos of love and dissolving the sexual division of labour affects the labour market from two directions.

So, this gender role, so what it means to be a boy or what it means to be a girl and how are they supposed to live? How are they supposed to look like, what kind of dress are they supposed to wear, what kind of orientations, what kind of jobs, what kind of work they can do? All these are very open questions.

Now, we are now moving away from very specific kind of stipulations that used to be the order of the day. Now, this has a very specific impact on the employment practices, the flexible

employment practices that appeared in the wake of the third Industrial Revolution express in their own chronic form, a breakdown in the full employment society and perhaps even in the centre significance of gainful employment.

So, this whole idea about a full employment that you will have a lifelong job, you will have a permanent job and then throughout your productive life, you will be engaged in a particular job and you will retire, you will work only one job, these ideas are now fast changing, we are seeing an economy where people are hired, people work as freelancers, people are hired and fired with much of an ease. So, this whole idea of one person sticking to one job throughout his career is very seriously being challenged.

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– to some extent – become progressively independent of income, and thus of labour force participation.

5. Last, we must add the political dynamic that is being set in motion by the perception of a global ecological crisis, which includes the acknowledgement of limited resources. These consequences of the instrumental relation to nature are making it more and more difficult to continue conceiving of nature as a neutral and infinite provider of resources. Nature is no longer solely perceived as an outside that can be adapted to one's purposes, but increasingly as part and parcel of society.

How these developments are expressed and the potential they have for altering the course of modernization can only be made clear through empirical research. But the outline sketched above of a 'revolution of side-effects' shows why terms like 'ambivalence', 'ambiguity', 'perplexity' and 'contradiction' occur so often in the literature. Where indeed does one begin to define the situation? Who could be the possible 'subject' of feasible reforms? The institutionalized answers of first modern society to its self-produced problems – for example, more and better technology, more economic growth, more scientific research and more specialization – are less persuasive than they once were, although it is not at all clear what should



Last, we must add the political dynamics that is being set in motion by the perception of a global ecological crisis, which includes acknowledgement of limited resources. I do not need to explain that we are talking about you know, a host of other stuff, we are talking about renewable energy and other things, but they are all coming from this realization that the conventional energy sources are fast drying up.

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conceiving of nature as a neutral and infinite provider of resources. Nature is no longer solely perceived as an outside that can be adapted to one's purposes, but increasingly as part and parcel of society.

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This particular distinction between first and second modern society also has the virtue of setting clear boundaries for theoretical inquiry. Since this theory posits first modern society as a prerequisite for second modern society, there are groups of countries it doesn't apply to, for example, parts of Africa or Asia. According to the criteria laid out above, these areas never experienced a first modern society, despite the fact that they are now enduring several of the same destabilizing forces as regions that did.

In other words, the distinction laid out above only applies to one



Now, how these developments are expressed and potential they have for altering the course of modernization can only be made clear through empirical research. But the outline sketched above, a revolution of side effects, shows why terms like ambivalence, ambiguity, perplexity and contradiction occurs so often in the literature. Where indeed does one begin to define the situation?

Who could be the possible subject of a feasible reform, the institutionalized answers for the first modern society to self-produced problems? For example, more and better technology, more economic growth, more scientific research and more specialization and less persuasive than they once were, although it is not at all clear what should take their place.

So, our emphasis, our obsession with technology or obsession with economic growth or obsession with science, it is less convincing, you know that now, people are talking about de-growth, people are talking about de-growth, people say that you cannot really grow like this, the world cannot go at this pace, because there has to be an end capitalism cannot grow like this.

But what is alternative, if there is, if the cap if the economy does not grow, can we afford to have a recession? What are the consequences of recession? Do we have an alternative economic model, which can be applied? Of course, there are different experiments taking place. But can we have something which can be replicated, which can be employed at a global level. So, all these are important questions.

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In other words, the distinction laid out above only applies to one historical constellation. It is completely Eurocentric. It takes for granted that the institutions that second modern society dissolves or transforms are there in the first place: a nation-state, a welfare state (a rudimentary one at least), highly developed institutions of science and technology, and the institutionalized expectation of full employment. Naturally this European constellation must be enlarged and reassessed by studying the effects of second modernity on non-European constellations, where the dynamic of reflexive modernization displays its effects, not on first modern societies but rather on the distorted constellations of postcolonialism. Different non-European routes to and through second modernity still have to be described, discovered, compared and analysed.

Against a background of early intercultural exchange, Europe invented modernity. Therefore it has a special responsibility in 'de-inventing'



So, this particular distinction between first and second modern society also has the virtue of setting clear boundaries for theoretical inquiry. Since the theory posits first modern society as a prerequisite for the second modern society, there are groups of countries, it does not apply. For example, parts of Africa and Asia. So, he is very clear that what he is presenting is Eurocentric.

Because Europe is a place where the first modernity emerged and Europe is a place where this is experiencing this wave of second modernity. So, how it articulates in other places or do we have no alternative modes of the second modernity or reflexive modernity, these are yet to be

analysed and then argued, because there is quite a lot of literature on alternative modalities or multiple modernities.

So, this is also something interesting look into that. So, we will, I think we will stop here and continue with the second point in the next class. As I told will be, I will take two more sessions to complete this. So, thank you.