# THE REFLEXIVITY OF MODERNITY
# AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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## ÖZET

## MODERNLİĞİN DÜŞÜNÜMSELLİĞİ
## VE SOSYAL BİLİMLER

Bu yazı, sosyal bilimlerin doğası üzerine son zamanlarda özellikle sosyolog Anthony Giddens ve Ulrich Beck tarafından gündeme getirilen bir tartışmaya katılmayı ve bu konuda bazı katkılarda bulunmayı hedefliyor. *Modernliğin Sonuçları* isimli eserinde Giddens, modernliği karakterize eden şeyin, bilhassa gelişmesine yol açtığı sosyal bilimlerin doğasındaki bir özellikten dolayı, "düşünümsellik" olduğunu ileri sürdü. Onun bu iddiası, son zamanlarda sosyal bilimleri ve modernliğin kazanımlarını tartışma konusu yapan yeni Fransız düşüncesi veya postmodernistlere bir cevap niteliği taşıyor. Giddens ve sonradan tartışmaya onun tarafından katılan bir çok sosyologa göre, modernleşme sürecine paralel olarak sosyal bilimler gündelik hayata daha fazla nüfûz etmeye başlıyor. Örneğin, artık en sıradan insanlar bile sosyal bilimlerin her alanından bir çok terimle gündelik hayatlarında konuşup düşünmeye başlıyorlar. Herkesin asgari bir miktar ekonomi, bir miktar sosyoloji, bir miktar psikoloji bilgisi var ve bu bilgiler insanların öz-bilinç seviyelerine olumlu bir katkı olarak gitgide artmaktadır. Bunu modernliğin sosyal bilimlerden bir çeşit "Düşünümsellik" (yani kendi kendisi üzerinde düşünüp kendini kontrol edebilme yeteneği) transferi olarak algılayan Giddens ve arkadaşları, bu özelliğin, yani bu bilinç seviyesinin ağyarını mânî anlamıyla sadece batılı toplumlara ait olduğunu söylemektedir. Diğer yandan muhalifleri ise sosyal bilimlerin birer bilgi disiplini olarak insanları bilinçlendirmekten ziyade kapalı bir bilgi ve bilinç söylemini dayattıkları noktasından bir itiraz başlatıyorlar. Örneğin Foucault, her bilim disiplininin zaten insanlara bir söylemi anlatıp kapatmak üzere çalışan doğasına dikkat çekmekte, bunun da düşünümselliği artırmak bir yana

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kendine kapalılığın son derecede meşrulaştırılmış, dolayısıyla pekiştirilmiş bir versiyonunu üretmekten başka bir işe yaramadığını savunmuştur. Tartışmaya bu taraftan katılan Deleuze, Guattari ve Derrida gibi yeni Fransız düşünürleri, sosyal bilimlere ve modernliğe atfedilen bu düşünümselliğin sınırlarını göstermeye çalışıyorlar. Bu yazıda bu tartışmalar aktarıldıktan sonra, modernliğin, tanımından başlayan ciddi bir zihinsel inşâ süreci olarak kökenlerine dikkat çekiliyor. Bu kökenlere dikkat edildiği taktirde modernlik üzerine yapılan tartışmaların önemli bir kısmının fenomenolojik bir çıkış noktasına ihtiyaç duyacakları gösteriliyor.

## INTRODUCTION

It has almost commonly been accepted that modernity is in crisis. But the determination of the meaning of this crisis seems to go on further reproducing the traditional sociological discussions on the nature of modernity. We know from Hegel that Descartes, the grandfather of modernism, was like an island arrived at after a long and stormy journey, while reading from Heidegger that the same Descartes represented the darkest point of the Western metaphysics having been initiated by Socrates (Bumin, 1997). The eschatologies of modernity, too, flow into at least two major channels corresponding to Hegel's acclamation of modernity and Heidegger's rejection of it as an whole. The contemporary expressions of the latter stand, now, claims that modernity has come to its end with a clear failure of fulfilling its ideals promised through the Enlightenment. For the expressions of the former, however, modernity is not something to come to an end because it is an open-ended process. It had been projected by the Enlightenment and all that had seen projected haven't been accomplished yet. Therefore, once defined as an uncompleted project of Enlightenment, modernity, demands an additional credit to maintain its government. Represented by an apologist tendency of Giddens and Habermas' neo-modernism, this defence of modernity tries to restore the validity of modernity by appealing to a theme of the "reflexivity of modernity." It means that what we see as an approximation to the end of modernity is not but a realisation of the later stages of modernity. Whatever makes us feel a crisis in modernity is not resulted by the true application of modernity as the project of the Enlightenment but by a false application of it. The real solution of the problems arisen by such a misapplication is not a farewell to modernity but a genuine application of it. That is to propose more modernity

instead of postmodernity. They go further and claim that those who think they criticise modernity do not but a contribution to its self-consciousness. The technical term which express the extension of the self-awareness of modernity through the criticisms of its opponents is "reflexivity" which has recently been developed by Anthony Giddens (1990; 1991) and Ulrich Beck (1992). According to Giddens and Beck even those who criticise modernity radically contribute in the reflexivity of modernity and help it in restoring itself, so that the other name of the current situation of modernity is proposed to be "reflexive modernity" interchangeably with the "radical modernity." Modernity, for Giddens and Beck is radicalised by the criticisms of its opponents which operate just as self-reflexivity of modernity. Not only the criticisms of the opponents but also the social sciences are the basic constituent elements of the dimension of reflexivity.

My aim in this article is twofold. First I want to participate in the debate on the reflexive dimension of modernity to interrogate the role of social sciences in general and of some recent sociological and philosophical approaches, in particular, to the present conditions of the world into which it is supposed we all are living, in shaping the conception of the so-called modern reality. So that, such a task also will be seen to be involved with the general task of reproducing the self-reflexive potential of modernity. I'm not sure that I could take a measure against such an appearance or even against such a function, but my effort, surely, will be intended to the point of seeing that it is already this reflexive activity that create an entity that is called modernity together with its all 'high', 'low', 'pre' and 'post' variations. There have appeared a huge literature on the characterisation of the contemporary reality with certain concepts. Together with all these concepts we become to believe in a single world that is dominated by a phenomenon called modernity. Having taken place as a naming of a reality, it define the limits of what is to be involved and what is to be excluded in a domain that is not to be regarded as leaving the reality in its objective entity. Naturally such namings have worked with a claim for the truth of factual content of their statements just as Habermas' ideal speech situation asserts. We become to think that the things are necessarily as however they are named, and that they can not be named in other ways than we are calling them. To make the distance between the reality and its conception can at best be treated through adopting a deconstructionist approach in which this noological fact is conceptualised with the term *différance*.

The second task of this article, in its accomplished form, is to make visible the tautological character of the idea of the reflexivity of modernity.

The idea of reflexivity claims a capacity to involve everything happening in the world today and tomorrow. Such a claim leave no space to go out of such a world by definition. It produces by this way a kind of modernity-reductionism, out of which nothing is possible. I will try to follow a line unto which such a formulation will appear as a mental construction proposing its corresponding ethics.

### Reflexivity as a Constitutive Labelling of the Modern Self

By the concept "reflexivity of modernity" I do not mean any noological situation operating radically different from the so-called traditional societies. I think, reflexivity is a dimension of any human society. For it is present in the simplest action of the human being. As Heidegger thinks it is the animals that only act, without thinking, but it is the man who do not think only what he do but also thinks on what he thinks. And that is the basic characteristic that makes the man. By this I will not argue that the present society, which is still to be renamed after an interrogating of its names as 'modern', 'postmodern', 'highly modern' or 'late capitalism', has promoted in this direction, because it is characterised by its ability to think on itself, that is with full of self-reflection. Well, that is the case that it is differentiated from other societies with its reflexive ability. But what does guarantee for us that the traditional societies, too, have not self-reflexive activities? Moreover, is there any decisive universal position that would be ensured by such a reflexivity? I mean, if the self-reflexivity itself is not a radically distinctive characteristic of any human society, then, what is expected by an appeal to appropriate such a word?

Anthony Giddens (1990; 1991), distinguishing modern society through its reflexivity from the pre-modern ones thinks that what makes this reflexivity visible in modern society is the expert system. Sociology and psychology are examples of such expert systems. Sociology, can reflexively place into brackets in regard to the reproduction of social relations. Psychology's therapeutic resources, on the other side, are used in the maintenance of individual identity in the face of ontological security (Giddens, 1991: 32-35). Thus, thinking that we, as moderns, are living with reflexive possibilities gifted by of high modernity, Giddens attaches a positive roles to the social sciences in institutionalising this scholarly ability in the modern society. He argues that "sociology and social sciences ore widely conceived, are inherent elements of the institutional reflexivity of modernity... Not just academic studies, but all manner of manuals, guides

therapeutic works and self-help surveys contribute to modernity's reflexivity" (Giddens, 1991: 2). The reflexivity of modernity constitutes the fundamental phenomenon in the discussions of his book (1991). No doubt Giddens' all effort could not be summarised only with his emphasis on reflexivity. That is the point we caught in his study, for a special outline of the world-constructive strategies applied through the reflexive faculty of man. No doubt he makes some of the distinctions which all together, like the definitions made by other sociologists, reflect on (indeed, create) the global world an entity called modernity. He, for example, distinguishes modernity also with the increasing interconnection between the two 'extremes' of extensionality and intentionality: globalizing influences on the one hand and personal dispositions on the other. He characterises modern social life with its profound processes of the reorganisation of time and space, coupled to the expansion of disembedding mechanisms. This mechanisms:

...prise social relations free from the hold of specific locales, recombining them across wide time-space distances. The reorganisation of time and space, plus the disembedding mechanisms, radicalise and globalise pre-established institutional traits of modernity; and they act to transform the content and nature of day-to-day social life ... modernity is a post-traditional order, but not one in which the sureties of tradition and habit have been replaced by certitude of rational knowledge.... modernity institutionalises the principle of radical doubt ... modernity is a risk... and trust... culture... it reduces the overall riskiness of certain areas and modes of life, yet at the same time introduces new risk parameters largely or completely unknown to previous eras... in high modernity, the influence of distant happenings on proximate events, and on intimacies of the self, becomes more and more commonplace... (Giddens, 1991: 1-6)

The quotations might be more stretched out. But I think it suffices us to be able to show how a kind of reflexivity is exercised in a work on the reflexive nature of modernity. Then we can come to the point that would be the conclusive remark of that paper, quite early: is it not sociology that create the entity that could be called modernity together with its some characteristics attached on itself as its reflexivity? Again, the question can not be answered without being involved with the same mechanism of referring to such an entity. Because, the question itself arises from a reflexive moment of its situation. But here I should catch my point before missing it. That is already my contention that being in a reflexive moment is not peculiar to any epoch or any society. It is just a scholarly dimension of all human life throughout the history.

Indeed, here Giddens appeal to a mirror-image characteristic of the reflexive dimension of the modern society in the traditional society and he argues that in traditional societies ontological insecurity lies in the possibility of breakdown of social conventions. In traditional societies reactions are more often face-to-face rather than institutionally mediated. Yet reflexivity is still necessary to reproduce convention and hence reproduce social order threatened by ontological insecurity (Giddens, 1990: 98).

What incite us to think that it is peculiar to our epoch is perhaps the only peculiarity of our epoch to isolate itself from other epochs. There is quite influencive discourse that insists on the uniqueness of the epoch under the name of modernity. That is by no means to ignore the, really, radically different developments in the technologies and in their reflection on social level. That is definitely not the case. My contention is to reflect on the emphasis of the contemporary discourse on its distinctivities, so that they become to be conceived as privileges. For, from a deconstructionist point of view no conceptual duality can operate without a hierarchical superiority of the one over the other (Derrida, 1978; Said, 1978; 1993). In all reflexivity, ensured by the expert systems as sociology and the social sciences in general, modernity (of course it is very significant here to ask "who is modernity") thinks of itself as a very exception in the human history. Even those who criticise it think that it is a very exceptional deviance within history. Another part of its critics locates themselves in a historical chain ensured by its approval: "post-modernity." Look at the most radical critics of it, you will find not but a tacit adoption of a historical consciousness that is guaranteed by its reception. Otherwise the historical conception is thought to fall in a definite emptiness. That is the reality conception I shall try to name it as "modernity paradigm." Modernity paradigm, not in the sense of literally adoption the underlying philosophies, values and historical consciousness of modernism, but, choosing to name the present reality as modernity, the imagined world that we spontaneously become subordinate to create.

Habermas (1984: First and Second chapters) combine with Giddens especially in seeing the Western paradigm as a postconventional paradigm. Making appeal to Weber who placed a strong emphasis upon what he called the 'rationalisation' of culture furthered by the world religions, and finding its maximal development in modern Western capitalism. Weber had steadfastly refused to identify the expansion of rationalisation with heightened rationality; a more rationalised form of social life has nothing to command it over a less rationalised one. For Habermas, of course, this is not acceptable. Where 'rationalisation' means the furthering of procedures and

opportunities for argumentation, its development is convergent with the growth of rationality. Weber did not indicate clearly enough the ways in which the rationalisation of the modern West differs from that characteristic of preceding civilisations. According to Habermas, the West alone is marked by the pre-eminence of 'post-conventional' cognitive domains. 'Post-conventional' forms of constitutional order are those which have not only freed themselves from the dominance of traditional codes of conduct, but have become organised according to warranted principles. The most notable institutional sectors in which this process first comes to the fore are those of science and law.[1]

Here, I think it would be quite meaningful to ask what make Habermas think of his (modern) thought as postconventional, leaving other kinds of thoughts as conventional. It can neither be simply explained by his crude ethnocentrism as of Gellner, as it appeared in his approach to relativism (Gellner, 1985) and his identification of it with postmodernism (Gellner, 1992), and of Giddens nor, of course, can it be treated as a neutral depiction of the conditions we all are living in. But it is a subordination to a paradigm in question and, literally, what makes all think of the distinctive status of a world of their construction is the convention operating among themselves. Then, whether they can free themselves from the modernity paradigm that can not have any way for developing except of a kind of conventionalism, can not be answered, again, without opening their eyes into another kind of conventionalism.

Thus we arrive at the point of deciding on the role of reflexivity in the constitution of modern self-consciousness. As we have seen, reflexivity is the production of knowledge on one's own reality. That knowledge is never the only possible knowledge producible. It is of a contingent character, while it usually inspires that it is the only possible knowledge of the on-going reality.

## Poststructuralist Response to a Reflexive Delusion

The role of the social sciences in the course of reflexive modernity works as both the creation of modern reality and also more significantly as the constitutive force of the modern reality. Therefore, it is objectively undecideable whether their emancipatory interest is available or not. Even it

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[1]Thus, according to Habermas, the meaning of West's being the best lies in his standing in opposition not only to relativism but also to those schools of social thought which hold the development of Western capitalism to be fundamentally a noxious phenomenon.

is not clear whether their role in providing emancipation is negative or positive. Although Giddens, Habermas and Gellner insisted that the presupposed reflexive characteristic of modernity goes hand in hand with emancipation against the conventional, metaphysical and ideological influences through sciences in general, and social sciences in particular, Foucault's, Gadamer's and Derrida's hermeneutical or poststructuralist deconstructive contributions have made it clear that sciences works as some power producing mechanisms. Remembering the identification of Foucault, the discipline with its all possible connotations, as a scientific discipline and as verbally *disciplining*, we would be more tempted to think that it is just a contingency and not a compulsory thing to believe in the genuine informative capacity of the sciences.

### Foucault: The Disciplining Reflexivity

Foucault had found that the disciplines works together with the literal meaning of the word. Disciplining a domain and drawing the limits of what can be learned and what can not be learned about this domain, and constructing a truth *regimé* for each domain, they make us decide what is true and what is false, in single one. The *epistemic* communities, then, arise (Foucault, 1987: 41-48)[2] in each discipline not to function as an emancipatory factor but to construct an hierarchical hegemony over people. Therefore, the modern conditions in which the sciences has developed too much, are not in the position of boasting for achieving reflexivity and for revealing the emancipatory potential of the postconventional conditions. Rather, they reflect the surrounding of the power exercised by the development of knowledge under the discipline of sciences. For Foucault, then, the more the sciences have developed in a society the more the power flourishes there. That implies a full negation of the reflexive dimension of modernity. Instead of the emancipatory function it claims, he emphasises the power that these sciences brought about with our participation, and the temptation that occurs as a result of the "orders" which shape us and bring us to the position of obedience. With the domains it defined and constituted as "madness", "illness" and "sexuality" it orders and disciplines our freedom and educate our bodies and makes our minds healthful directs our tendencies and consolidates. (Foucault: 1987).

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[2]Foucault's approach to the contemporary prisons in his *Discipline and Punish*, (1977) relies on his comparative approach to the Disciplining function of the punishment mechanisms and of again the Disciplining functions of the sciences of an object as well as of the modern man.

### Gadamer & Derrida: The Horizons of Reflexivity

For Gadamer, again, we are born as embedded in the effectivity of our history that charge on each of us a series of prejudices. Apart from the classical hermeneuticians and also phenomenologists, Gadamer do not think that we could take our prejudices into brackets in our scientific approaches or in any communicative encountering. Rather, in such cases we replace them, at best, with other ones. The prejudices are the constituent or the results of our ontological positions and they can not be totally abolished aside. In the most advanced levels of our understanding process what we can achieve is at best, a fusion of horizons and that is the understanding itself (Gadamer, 1975).          ·

In Derrida, again there is a clear *différance* between our concepts and their corresponding realities that can not be closed by the more development of the sciences, but by deconstructing the underlying hierarchies etc. What is to be noted in all this tendency which is commonly to be marked as "posmodernist" or "potstructuralist", is that they tried to show the negative aspects of the self-reflexivity, while their efforts have had some features to be considered as contribution to the self-reflection of modernity. Moreover, while showing the negative consequences of the process of reflexivity in the modern conditions, they all insisted on its unvoluntaristic nature. That is, although from the postconventional will to the postideological or postmetaphysical will there is a strong emphasis on the epistemological emancipation from the forces surrounding the subject, they always fail to arrive at such an emancipation. Because they always have relied on belief in the Enlightenment ideal of self-sufficient sovereign subject. That is very akin to what Althusser called the ideological representation of the ideology ensured by the belief in subject (Althusser, 1971).

Another point that should be noted is that the so-called modernist or neo-modernist philosophers such as Habermas, Gellner and Giddens, are not certainly naive ethnocentrists in advocating some modernist ideals. On the other hand, they are in many respect not more contributing to the discourse of modernity than those who refuse or criticise it. Let me make this point more clear. What I wanted to discriminate as the discourse of modernity is not just as Habermas or any other modernist applies it. Nor as the critics of modernism implies in using the term. They all take a modern entity for granted. I think, they forget that it is just their naming and their reflexive activities that has crated such an entity. That is what I mean from the discourse, and therefore, even for criticising it you have to reproduce the

discourse by applying the word. For, the word is usually not being used without its practical and constitutive implications. That is one side of the point. On the other side, I have said that the modernist thinkers, too, don't reflect on the reflexive dimension of modernity as naively uncritical. Now I shall try to summarise some ideal travels of these thinkers and conclude that it is very consolidated, improved and cured kinds of metaphysics, ideology and convention that underlies the conceptions of those delusions of reflexivity.

In reconstructing the philosophical discourse of modernity, for example, Habermas addresses himself to all these themes. He agrees with Foucault that reason is a "thing of this world." One of his most significant efforts is his rejection of the "paradigm of consciousness" and its associated "philosophy of the subject". Even he defines his role as to retake the road opened and indicated by the counter-discourse of modernity, as Nietzsche and Heidegger, but not yet taken:

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"While it is his intention in these lectures to resume and renew the "counterdiscourse" that, as a critique of subjectivism and its consequences, has accompanied modernity from the start, his immediate focus is on the "counter-Enlightenment" path hewn by Nietzsche -or, rather, on the two paths that lead out of Nietzsche into the present, one rinning through Heidegger to Derrida, the other through Bataille to Foucault. " (McCarthy, 1987).

Thus, the argument of the *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* takes the form of a series of colloquies with various authors, in which it is presented as a false-start to conceiving modernity. Throughout these discussions Habermas is relying on and developing his own theory of communicative action which is discussed in the final lecture and which is favoured against the "paradigm of consciousness" and its associated "philosophy of the subject". In conclusion I want to mention one considerable definition of modernity as an adoption of Hegel's. Hegel defines what is both the distinctive quality and also its problem as the need 'to create its normativity out of itself' (Habermas, 1987: 7). Hegel, for Habermas, recognised that in the modern age the normative could no longer be derived from the dogma of some transcendental faith, and he turns instead to the acting subject.

## Toward a Conventional Reception of Postmetaphysical Delusion

"...every metaphysical question always covers the whole range of metaphysical problems. In every case it is itself the whole... every metaphysical question scan only be put in such a way that the questioner as such is by very questioning involved in the question." **Martin Heidegger,** from the *What is Metaphysics,*

In one of his recent books, *Postmetaphysical Thinking,* Habermas maintains his project of consolidating the so-called postconventional privileges of modernity by attributing to it a postmetaphysical potentiality. Apart from being uttered by different words, this arrives at the same point where Giddens and some others attribute to modernity a reflexive dimension.[3] Habermas bases his approach with a critique of the Western metaphysical tradition and its conception of reason with a caution against relinquishing that conception altogether. For the wholesale rejection of the metaphysical tradition, for him, inevitably undercuts the possibility of rational critique itself. Therefore, a genuinely postmetaphysical thinking can remain critical only if it preserves the idea of reason derived from the tradition while stripping it of its metaphysical trappings. For Habermas, this is not just a suggestion for stripping it of its metaphysical trappings, that contains a claim for objective truth of what actually has been going on in the modern Western society. It is, perhaps, to be taken as a step toward the accomplishing of the ideals drawn by the Enlightenment, that is now with some retardation taking place.

For Habermas this postmetaphysical thinking in the modern thought has been assured by various developments in the academical or nonacademical Western philosophical thinking. He discriminates four philosophical movements in our century: analytic philosophy, phenomenology, Western Marxism, and structuralism. Except phenomenology, all of these movements have left themselves behind with an arrival at their "post" version so that "the fact that the phenomenologists have not yet arrived at their own "post-ism" almost makes them suspect (p.

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[3]That is by no means to conclude that they always treat this reflexivity as positive, as I tried to show the counter-modernist tendency even within this modernist argumentation, the reflexivity can be treated as also neutral in terms of its consequences. That is, reflexivity always may not mean to be aware of the epistemological determinations or possibilities and constraints. In that case it would imply only the activity of man to think on himself. But then, what would be the distinctive side in that for our epoch? Giddens, and the others' answer then would be, as has been, the actual presence of expert systems.

4). But the specifically modern element that seized all movements of thought lies not so much in the method as in the themes of thinking:

Four themes characterise the break with the tradition. The Headings are: postmetaphysical thinking, the linguistic turn, situating reason, and reversing the primacy of theory over practice -or the overcoming of logocentrism... these themes... are among the most important motive forces of philosophising in the twentieth century, in spite of boundaries between schools. (p. 6-8).

It is with the postmetaphysical thinking that the emphatic concept of theory, which was supposed to render not only the human world but nature too intelligible in their internal structures, finally sees its decline under the premises of a postmetaphysical thinking that is dispassionate. Henceforth, it would be procedural rationality of the scientific process that would decide whether or not a sentence has a truth-value in the first place.

With the linguistic turn, however, the "world-constitutive accomplishments are transferred from transcendental subjectivity to grammatical subjectivity." The reconstructive work of the linguist replaces a kind of introspection that can not be readily checked on. And from analytical philosophy and structuralism to formal semantics of Husserl's theory of meaning and even Critical theory is finally overtaken by the linguistic turn.

By situating reason, Habermas tells that in the name of finitude, temporality, and historicity, an ontologically oriented phenomenology further robs reason of its classical attributes. Thus, transcendental consciousness concretises itself in the practices of the "lifeworld" and takes on flesh and blood in historical embodiments.

Finally, the reversal of the classical relationship of theory to practice or the overcoming logocentrism, which is at bottom indebted to the honing of a Marxian idea.

### What After Post-ism?

With all these themes flowed in the Western thought, Habermas, makes a depiction to the homogenisation and the approximation of the all philosophical tendencies under the meta-language of what he calls 'post-

ism'. That is, in its completed form, the true way toward the intellectual atmosphere of the accomplished project of Enlightenment.

One is incited to think on the religious ideas that are developing their fundamentalist versions in almost these ideal conditions Habermas tries to depict. Comparatively, Marxism had already assimilated much of the outsider ways of thinking which had been excluded. Especially with the Frankfurt School experience Marxism had witnessed serious modifications in its theoretical structure. We saw, thus, the combinations as Kantian Marxism, Hegelian Marxism and Lacanian Marxism by which a psychoanalytic studies were achieved under the frame of Marxism. Indeed, the history of Marxism has been possibly read in terms of the rich experiences of the relationships between such dualities as theory and praxis, object and subject, ideology and science, voluntarism and determinism, science and ethics and even between the dualism and monism (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 13-14).[4] Now, with a post-Marxist response we came to the point of overcoming necessity in favour of contingency in all theoretical efforts (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Laclau, 1990). The concept of 'hegemony' arises to meet the requirement of the theoretical *différance* with the reality it claims correspondence. In scaling down the pretensions and the area of validity of Marxist theory, the Post-Marxist position also breaks with something deeply inherent in that theory, namely, its monist aspiration to capture with its categories the essence of underlying meaning of History. For them, only if they renounce any epistemological prerogative based the ontologically privileged position of a 'universal class', will it be possible seriously to discuss the present degree of validity of the Marxist categories. Now it is no longer possible to maintain the conception of subjectivity and classes elaborated by Marxism, nor its vision of historical course of capitalist development, nor, of course, the conception of communism as a transparent society from which antagonisms have disappeared (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 4).

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[4]The dualism of monism/dualism in this context is constructed by Laclau & Mouffe against the other considered dualities through the concept "hegemony" whose theory grounds its response on a displacement of the terrain which made possible the monist/dualist alternative possible. As the key concept of their book 'hegemony' "emerges precisely in a context dominated by the experience of fragmentation and by the indeterminacy of the articulations between different struggles and subject positions It offers a socialist answer in a politico-discursive universe that has witnessed a withdrawal of the category of 'necessity' to the horizon of the social.

One can ask what hold, still, the post Marxists within Marxism against all this. Because as they, too, note "political conclusions similar to those set forth in their book could have been approximated from very different discursive formations -for example from certain forms of Christianity, or from libertarian discourses alien to the socialist tradition- none of which could aspire to be the truth of society". Their answer to such a question would, then, be that "the validity of this point of departure is simply based on the fact that it constitutes our own past" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 3-4). The only point of validity of being gathered together under a frame of theory is justified just as in the inaugural "manifesto" of the classical period:

"When enters new territory, one must follow the example of 'travellers who, finding themselves lost in a forest, know that they ought not to wander first to one side and then to the other, nor, still less, to stop in one place, but to understand that they should continue to walk as straight as they can in one direction, not diverging for any slight reason, even though it was possibly chance alone that first determined them in their choice. By this means if they do not go exactly where they wish, they will at least arrive somewhere at the end where probably they will be better off than in the middle of a forest'." (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 2).

That is the situation in Marxism within its 'post-ist' form, as Habermas depicted with various developments. To turn to our question we put above, one is almost tempted to think various development in the religions in accordance with such a development of the 'post-ist' atmosphere, while there is some other developments that could not be treated in other way than falsifying such an approach. That is, on the one hand some modernist tendencies among the religious circles inspires one to think the strengthening of the 'post-ist' conception and on the other hand the development of various fundamentalist version of almost each religion, of course, especially of Islam (Aktay, 1994; Hanafi, 1978), and their unexpected popularity in spite of the modernist predictions, would have much to do with the picture drawn on the recent developments in the flow of thought.

## Conclusion

In this paper I wanted to interrogate various definitions of modernity, which I argued created the entity of modernity as taken for granted. Among the important definitions of modernity I tried to focus on the emphasis on its reflexivity. But of whom is such a reflexivity may differ depending on the flow of a discussion. In the flow my discussion I've chosen the most positive meaning and interrogated it as such. Among the most important consequences of such an approach would be a caution against being reproducing the discourse by reflecting on the taken for granted entity as modernity. To repeat during my discussion I have never tried to refuse whatever brought to correspond it in reality. But what I wanted to achieve is, demonstrating its ambivalence, to be aware of what extent any attempt of questioning the reflexive element of modernity would be involved in such a reflection. I found that modernity is a consciousness that discriminates itself from other consciousnesses. But when we think about it we attribute to it a kind of subjectivity that meaningfully makes us possible to ask "who is modernity?" Is there an entity out of our minds and out of our conceptualisations? Reflexivity is thought to characterise the modern society, while it can be found in every society. But, then, the expert system becomes the distinctive characteristics of the reflexivity of our time. I tried to make an encounter of the so-called poststructuralist thinkers who make the power producing dimension of the sciences. In that case if a reflexivity, still is to be discriminated as unique to modernity, I argued that this could not be necessarily positive reflexivity. It might even be a matter of self-temptation.

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