



# Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order

*Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, Scott Lash*

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The theme of reflexivity has come to be central to social analysis. In this book three prominent social thinkers discuss the implications of "reflexive modernization" for social and cultural theory today.

Ulrich Beck's vision of the "risk society" has already become extraordinarily influential. Beck offers a new elaboration of his basic ideas, connecting reflexive modernization with new issues to do with the state and political organization.

Giddens offers an in-depth examination of the connections between "institutional reflexivity" and the de-traditionalizing of the modern world. We are entering, he argues, a phase of the development of a global society. A "global society" is not a world society, but one with universalizing tendencies.

Lash develops the theme of reflexive modernization in relation the aesthetics and the interpretation of culture. In this domain, he suggests, we need to look again at the conventional theories of postmodernism; "aesthetic modernization" has distinctive qualities that need to be uncovered and analyzed.

In the concluding sections of the book, the three authors offer critical appraisals of each other's viewpoints, providing a synthetic conclusion to the work as a whole.

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