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THE RISK MODERNISATION (ULRICH BECK)
IN INDUSTRIAL MODERN SOCIETY AND
MODERNISING SOCIETY

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The transformation from traditional to industrial modern society has begun since long time ago. Societies that were formerly based on culture and religious values, gradually moved to secular structure which prioritized notion of rationality. Modernity keep going with growing of rationalisation, individualisation and, secularisation within modern society, like in western society.

In the advance modern period the social production of wealth goes, unfortunately, coincide with the social production of risk. Modernity produce not only advantages and progressiveness for human beings but also result many risks and dangers. The consequences of scientific and industrial development are a set of risks and hazards, which never have previously been faced by humankind. The dangers can no longer be limited in time, where the impacts also will affect to the future generations. Furthermore, the consequences have no spatial limitation, they cross national boundaries. In order to prevent the dangers, Beck argues that modernization must become 'reflexive'.

For Beck, reflexive modernization is also proceeding in the family sphere. The structural change in the private/family sphere produces the individualization of people as social agents who then are force to make decision about wether and whom they shall marry,

whether they shall have children or not, what sort of family form they might have.

In this essay I want to argue, to some extent, I agree with Beck that in this time modern industrial societies become more modern and more industrial. Unfortunately, the more modernity within industrial society not only brought about benefits to the societies but also often cause dangers and hazards. The risks are not only affect to people who developed the modernity but also to other people over the world. For developing countries like Indonesia, Beck's theory is not appropriate yet because they still in industrialising time and the science and technology that are used is not as modern as in western countries. However, the impacts of modernity in modern western countries also influence to the developing countries, even sometimes the risks that are suffered are much bigger than in modern industrial countries because of the limitation of knowledge of modern science and technology. Moreover, developing countries often constitute as the 'market form of modernization risks'.

In my opinion developing countries should learn from western industrial countries which pass through the era of industrial which often produce not only progressiveness and advantages for human kind but also result the dangers and risks.

This essay will be divided into two parts, the first part will examine the impact of risk modernization on western industrial society and on women in the country. The second part will discuss the application of the development the risk modernization on industrialising country, Indonesia, and the impact on their women.

Some experts mentions that the era of modernism has already ended and has changed to 'post' modernism. Otherwise, Beck does not agree with the concept. Beck in his book mentions that this time is not the end but the beginning of modernity, that is modernity beyond the classical industrial society design. In his opinion, Beck argues that this is not an era of 'post modernity' but alternatively 'late modernity' or 'trans modernity'. Industrial society is a permanently revolutionary society, but the industrial society becomes bit more and more industrial after each revolution. 'Today' modernity breaks, revolts and is free from the shape of the classical industrial society and counterfeit a new form; that is the industrial 'risk' society (Beck, 198 :10-13). The way of changing the structure of the classical industrial society to be the industrial risk society is not far from the changing of feudal structure to be industrial society. Beck asserts in his book :

"Just as modernization dissolved the structure of feudal society in the nineteenth century and produce the industrial society, modernization today is dissolving industrial society and another modernity is coming into being".

In short, the notion of reflexive modernization of industrial society by Beck was worked out along two lines arguments: firstly is the concept of individualization and secondly is the logic of risk distribution. The process of individualization as a result of reflexivity can be defined as a process of 'detraditionalizes' the way of life in industrial society. This process actually also had happened when the form of living pre-modernity was swapped by the tradition of industrial society. Today the process of detradditionalizes industrial society is happening, such as the nuclear family, the standardization of labor, and so on (Beck, 1992:153).

According to Beck, human beings are living in the period of transitions in which the problems of distribution of wealth and of risks overlap each other. The wealth that can be taken from the modernization will often be accompanied with the risks. The relationship between wealth production and risk production is a process of the reflexivity of modernization. The structural social condition are radically transformed in the wake of reflexive modernization. Furthermore, Beck explains that the destruction of nature can no longer be shifted off into environment, but as they are universalized by industry, they become social, political, economic and cultural contradictions in the system.

In the era of the risk modernity the basic of fully developed modernity is the single person. Hence, in labor market the requirements of family, marriage,

parenthood and partnership are ignored. The contradiction between labor market and marriage erupts today to the degree that separation of family and professional work is placed within the options of the married couple. This is proved by the rapidly rising a single-person household, single mother and single father in western countries.

Beck in his book (1992:123-124) argue that the contradiction between family and labor market are built into the basic plan of industrial society, this is relation between production and reproduction, and familial and wage labor. This contradiction can accordingly overcome by offering 'institutional possibilities for the reunification of work and life'. In this case Beck gives an example by changing occupational individual mobility to be occupational family mobilities. 'If you want him or her, you have got to find a career opportunity for his or her spouse'.

For modernizing country like Indonesia the level of individualization of women in the workforce is not as strong as in western country. Because their everyday life is still influenced much by religion and tradition, the individualization seem still to be only an idea. Although in some regulation mention that women have same rights and obligation, their status and position within family and workforce are seem affected by the religion and tradition. That usually their position are as housewife and their husbands as bread winner. The concept of the 'occupational family mobility' that is suggested by Beck

is not easy to be done in this society. This is can be explained, if a husband has to move his job locally, usually his wife will follow his husband. The women status as 'ikut suami' (a husband follower) is very common in Indonesia. If a wife are working and then her husband has to move to another town, she usually will try to move her job as well, if she cannot move she usually will quit from her job.

In some cases in Indonesia, recently many young couple have lived separately because their job are placed in separate location. However, in this case, the separation is not in terms of individualization, but because of the economic demand. Furthermore, the religion and tradition usually demand a wife to follow their husband.

The idea of individualization for men and women within family and work, for Indonesian women might be still far difficult to practice because of their religion and culture. In my opinion, Indonesian women do not have to pass the era of individualization that make them to be single person who are trapped between family and work. This is a good idea if they can apply directly their position within family as the reunification of work and life.

In terms of definition and distribution of risks Beck pays more attention in the risks and consequences of modernity which are realised in the unchangeable

endangering of human, plant, and animal life. They represent a global of risks, which encroaches on the sphere of production and reproduction and also crossing national boundaries and not class specific. These are some theses of risk that are asserted by Beck:

1. Modernisation not only distribute wealth, but also risks. What damages health and destroys nature often cannot be recognized by the individual's vision. Many of the risks such as nuclear and chemical contamination or sicknesses cannot be identified by the human perceptive. Moreover, in some cases these dangers often difficult to be found out immediately, even do not show up during the lifespan of those affected, but are passed to offspring. The problem is, people who are influenced by the risks are neither responsible for nor competent to handle what has happened to them. They have no proportion of control over knowledge and information. At the same time what threatens them make them dependent on the knowledge's of others, hence they are forced also depend on the norms, interests and mistakes of the knowledge.

For western countries who are create some risks and dangers, because of their knowledge they can also try to find something that can prevent or at least reduce the risks and the hazards. In contrary, for developing countries that have not enough knowledge and technology the dangers of the risks will be much bigger. For example, the Indonesian government plan to install a

nuclear power for electricity source, unfortunately they might have not enough people who maintain the nuclear. Therefore, the risk of the sophisticated technology will be very dangerous.

2. The risks societies are not class societies. Even the rich and powerful are not safe from the results of modernization. For example, the polluted air, the destruction of forests do not merely bring about the loss of the whole species but also shrink the economic value of forests and land ownership.

3. Modern risks are big business. In this case Beck argues that the spread and marketing of risks does not break completely with the logic of capitalist development but raises it into a new level. This can be illustrated by using of fertilizer in developing countries that are produce from developed countries. Using the certain fertilizer in agriculture perhaps will bring about side effect such as additional chemical in the fertilized vegetables that can be very dangerous for health. In order to sell their product, the western country will offer another kind of fertilizer that is mentioned can neutralize the first side effect, but actually the second fertilizer might also will carry out another dangerous chemical effect that also can destruct human health. This will be over and over again, because the goal of selling the fertilizer is not only to solve the problem but for economic advantage. Unfortunately, the

market of the risks is usually the developing countries.

For developing countries that have not yet produced some dangers and risks come along with their production activities, maybe they should prevent the dangerous by learning from the developed countries.

In conclusion, modernization of industrial society can be divided into two concept these are individualization and radicalize of rationalization. The practice of the two concept not only produce many advantages but also bring along some dangers and risks. There is no national boundaries limitation for the spread of the risks. The risks also destruct class and the risks need the form market of modernization.

Fully modernization in western countries means single person. Individualization within risks industrial society has arose single parent within family. For women individualization also bring about contradiction between domestic role and work, and the way to solve the problem is by reunification on work and life. For Indonesian women who are still in traditional affection, they can learn from western women, therefore they do not have to pass trough the era of 'single person'

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