Exacerbating Beck’s *Risk Society* (1992) – The ‘pandemic’ and Beyond

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**Abstract**
Abstract: Today, risk has been multiplied and exacerbated beyond anything that even Ulrich Beck’s work on ‘risk society’ seemed to suggest when first published, although – with hindsight – one can detect traces of the excessive risks of the present, centred on the Covid-19 ‘pandemic’, in his prognostications. Setting aside the contribution of Anthony Giddens to the social theory of the ‘risk society’, this paper concentrates on the work of Beck instead, with a view to mining it heuristically for a better comprehension of the risks unleashed by the Covid-19 ‘pandemic’ and everything associated with it. It is argued that, despite sharing the denominator of ‘technological’, compared to the kinds of risk distinguished by Beck, those introduced by the ‘pandemic’, lockdowns, Covid ‘vaccines’, and in their wake, economic hardship – to mention only some – are of a different, more deleterious order altogether. If, in contrast with the society of wealth-distribution (through goods), the ‘risk society’ was recognisable by the (by-)production and distribution of hazards such as toxic contaminants, pollution and climate-changing emissions, today society seems to be facing something far worse, namely the production of potentially, if not actually, lethal substances and conditions. If the hazards of risk society were seen as preventable (compared to ‘natural’ perils) – after all, they were socially produced and exacerbated (or sometimes moderated) by economic and cultural practices – one might expect that it would be the case with those faced today, too. This, it turns out, is highly improbable, largely because growing evidence suggests that most of the ‘ultra-risks’ that have emerged of late have been produced intentionally, or by design, and that it is too late to undo most of them, although others may be prevented. What Beck argued, namely that the potential for cataclysm was increasing, has been exacerbated...
beyond what could have been expected under ‘normal’ risk-conditions. Ironically, under these conditions the uncertainties of science in the face of unpredictable risk, which were highlighted by Beck, have made way for contrary, ideological claims concerning the ‘certainties’ of ‘the science’ in relation to COVID-19. These and other aspects of ‘pandemic’ society, are addressed through the lenses of Beck’s work on risk society, raising the fraught question of the possible extinction of humanity.

Nothing is so sure to make itself known as the truth – for what else waits to be known? (Henry David Thoreau, in his Journal, Volume 4, p. 203.)

The two faces of risk – chance and danger – became an issue in the course of industrialization, starting with intercontinental merchant shipping. Risk represents the perceptual and cognitive schema in accordance with which a society mobilizes itself when it is confronted with the openness, uncertainties and obstructions of a self-created future and is no longer defined by religion, tradition or the superior power of nature but has even lost its faith in the redemptive powers of utopias. (Ulrich Beck, World at Risk, p. 4.)

To see what is right and not do it is cowardly. (Confucius, Book 2 of The Analects of Confucius, p. 23.)

Here there is a kind of question, let us still call it historical, whose conception, formation, gestation, and labor we are only catching a glimpse of today. I employ these words, I admit, with a glance toward the operations of childbearing—but also with a glance toward those who, in a society from which I do not exclude myself, turn their eyes away when faced by the as yet unnamable which is proclaiming itself and which can do so, as is necessary whenever a birth is in the offing, only under the species of the nonspecies, in the formless, mute, infant, and terrifying form of monstrosity. (Jacques Derrida, in ‘Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences’, p. 370.)

The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity. (W.B. Yeats, The Second Coming.)
Introduction: Risk Exacerbated
It takes no genius to know that humanity faces risks of all kinds in contemporary society, and not merely in the plural; risk as such has arguably been exacerbated, multiplied, beyond all expectations and human tolerance. Before addressing Ulrich Beck’s conception of ‘risk society’ (below), one has to take note of this exacerbation of risk as such, or what one might call ‘ultra-risk’. In the first place it concerns the coronavirus ‘pandemic’ – which I put in scare quotes because arguably it was/is no true pandemic, given the low recorded mortality rate globally (Coronavirus World-O-meter; Olivier 2021; 2022). Yet, such low mortality notwithstanding, it signals an extreme aggravation and modification of risk as understood by Beck, involving as it does either the zoonotic transfer of a virus from an animal like a bat, via an intermediate animal such as a pangolin to a human (one of the hypotheses of its provenance) or its escape from a virology laboratory in Wuhan, either by design or accidentally (Kennedy 2021; Mercola & Cummins 2021; Breggin & Breggin 2021). Why? Because whichever of these alternatives happens to be the case, it either marks a point reached in the destruction of animal habitat by humanity where unpredictable numbers and kinds of pathogens may emerge in places like Asian ‘wet markets’, or it is symptomatic of either extreme neglect in a laboratory where pathogens such as the ‘novel coronavirus’ are handled, thus enabling its accidental release, or (worse) a deliberate release of a deadly pathogen with who-knows-what ulterior motives. And if the latter, it would explain the evidence pointing at so-called ‘gain-of-function’ research as being indicative of – as Peter and Ginger Breggin (2021: 41 - 43) put it – something sinister, given that this should be understood as ‘gain-of-lethal-function’. Needless to say, the latter constitutes a risk of unimaginable proportions; hence the turn to the theorist of risk and ‘risk society’, Ulrich Beck.

A Note on Prejudice
Given the probability that one would be accused of ‘prejudice’, or even worse (heaven forbid!) of being a ‘conspiracy theorist’ if certain non-mainstream views and claims were to be expressed, a brief consideration of the (un-)avoidability of prejudice – or, as Gadamer (2004: 268 - 270), following Heidegger, calls it, ‘pre-judgement’ – is necessary. (For a lengthier discussion of this, see Olivier 2022a: 2 - 4.) In his discussion of this notion on
Heidegger’s part, Gadamer argues that it is connected to other, similar Heideggerian concepts, such as ‘fore-conception’, ‘fore-having’ and ‘fore-projection’, and that these are constituent parts of the cyclical process of interpretation (the so-called ‘hermeneutic circle’). The point that Gadamer makes is that any act of interpretation – of a literary or scientific text, or of an event – unavoidably sets out from some implicit pre-conception of what to expect. As the act of interpretation unfolds (reading the text, or examining the event in question via various means), the initial ‘fore-conception’ or ‘fore-projection’ is modified in the light of what is discovered, and this modified conception becomes the new ‘fore-projection’, which – in its turn – comprises the basis of further interpretive moments. In sum: any and all interpretations commence with a prior expectation of sorts, and the latter is continually modified as the interpreter proceeds with his or her hermeneutic-interpretive activity.

The current COVID-’pandemic’ is no exception to this hermeneutic rule: from its inception, as increasing information about the ‘novel coronavirus’ and the illness it causes (COVID-19) became available, one unavoidably re-interpreted every fore-conception and fore-projection that new information gave rise to. In my own case the initial position I adopted regarding the provenance of the virus – based on available information – was that it was of natural, ‘zoonotic’ origin, but as more, and divergent, information emerged, a competing account of its origin was put forward, namely, that it had in fact been created in a virology laboratory in Wuhan, China, and either accidentally or deliberately released. Given the current state of information in this regard, it appears to me that the latter account carries more weight than the former, although in principle – because it is still the most recent ‘fore-projection’ – it remains revisable.

Similarly, regarding the much-vaunted Covid-19 ‘vaccines’, I initially shared in the anticipation that this would be the means of eradicating the disease, but as time wore on, and the attempts to suppress the early use of proven medications such as Hydroxychloroquine and Ivermectin became apparent (Kennedy 2021), this fore-conception on my part gradually changed. Why demonise safe, proven remedies, if the health of the world’s people was at stake? This process of revising my initial fore-projection was reinforced by the gradual, but accelerating evidence that these ‘vaccines’ were dangerous, and even lethal, despite health and government authorities’ denial that this was the case, and their assurance, that the ‘jabs’ were ‘safe
and effective’. Suffice to say that, at present, the ongoing interpretive process on my part has only found more confirmation of the danger, and in many cases, lethality, of the ‘vaccines’ (which are no real vaccines because they neither prevent contracting the illness, or the infection of others, or reinfection of the ‘vaccinated’, nor their death; see Kennedy 2021; Breggin and Breggin 2021 in this regard). Therefore, although my own understanding and interpretation of this aspect of the ‘pandemic’ remains, in principle, revisable, with each passing day my interpretation is confirmed by new official evidence of mortality linked to the Covid ‘vaccinations’ (see for example The Exposé 2022; 2022a). Hence, far from being a ‘conspiracy theorist’ (Kennedy 2022: 29), or prejudiced in the sense of maintaining unjustifiable bias regarding these matters, my research is carried out with a view to considering all relevant information before making a judgement.

Finally, to anyone who may object that I do not adduce sufficient informational material from mainstream media to give readers the opportunity to compare mainstream information with alternative media information (which I chiefly rely on here), on three previous occasions I have published full-length articles juxtaposing information from the mainstream and the alternative, and demonstrating their respective validity; to do it again here would double the length of the present paper. Hence, anyone interested in perusing these papers, would find them available on the internet (Olivier 2021; 2022; 2022a).

Beck on ‘risk society’
When the English translation of Risk Society – Towards a New Modernity appeared in 1992, Ulrich Beck could be understood as having articulated what had been simmering under the surface of modern civilization for some time already, but with a difference. This is acknowledged by Scott Lash and Brian Wynne in the Introduction to the English translation (1992) of Risk Society, where they contrast Beck’s reflective (reflexive) approach with the dominant technically oriented way in which matters of (technological) risk were considered at the time. One might think of Beck’s notion of ‘reflexive modernity’ by analogy with Immanuel Kant’s well-known 18th-century transcendental idealist epistemology (Scruton 2001), where Kant formulated the cognitive conditions of possibility of a world shared by rational agents. For Kant these conditions were the two a priori forms of intuition, namely
time and space, and the twelve categories (concepts) of the understanding, such as causality, substance, quantity, quality and the like. They supplied the formal or structural conditions for knowledge of a shared world, while their ‘material’ counterpart, or what Kant called the ‘manifold of experience’, provided the (‘raw’) content of knowledge claims. This distinction did not mean that these two components of knowledge were encountered separately; what one knows – say, a rolling ball – was always already the synthesis of the formal and the ‘material’ or experiential. But unless one presupposed their distinctness, one would not be able to understand the fact that knowledge-claims display both a universalistic (formally universal) and particularistic (materially or experientially particular) side. Borrowing Beck’s terminology, one might say that Kant’s epistemology is ‘reflexive’, insofar as it refers back to the (universal) knowing subject as the condition for knowledge.

So where is the analogy? Just as Kant (as Enlightenment-, that is, modern thinker) refuses to separate the rational endowment of human beings from the kind of knowledge they are capable of – ‘asking back’ (zurückfragen) regarding its possibility – so Beck refuses to separate risk from (modern) human sociality. This is why risk is for him inseparable from social structures and practices: it is socially constructed. Some of the examples of risk adduced by Lash and Wynne in the Introduction illustrates what this means. Kant’s zurückfragen amounts to epistemological ‘reflexivity’; Beck’s to ‘reflexive modernity’ – which one might see as steering a course between the Scylla of relativistic postmodernism and technocratic modernity, rather than modernism, which David Harvey (1990: 10-65) sees (correctly, I believe) as incorporating a critical moment vis-à-vis modernity. In this respect Beck’s ‘reflexive modernity’ is more closely related to modernism in its critical guise than to its technocratic embodiment. So what does Beck mean by this phrase? A good place to start is where he writes of his book (1992: 10; italics in original):

The guiding theoretical idea which is developed to this end can once again be best elucidated in a historical analogy. Just as modernization dissolved the structure of feudal society in the nineteenth century and produced the industrial society, modernization today is dissolving industrial society and another modernity is coming into being.
This ‘other modernity’ is being ushered in by what he terms ‘reflexive modernization’ (1992: 10), which is displacing an earlier form of modernisation that occurred within the context of industrial society confronting its ‘other’, namely pre-modernity or feudal society. This process, according to Beck, may be thought of as a rupture within modernity itself – one concomitant with the birth of a new form of modernity labelled ‘(industrial) risk society’ – from the embrace of ‘classical industrial society’ (1992: 9), which was predicated on the economic production of wealth, as opposed to risk. Not surprisingly, he observes that this process of engenderment entails a precarious equilibrium between processes of continuity and of separation within modernity. This becomes more comprehensible if we pause to remind ourselves that modernity (not to be confused with modernism; see Olivier 2013) is constituted by the institutional and functional juxtaposition of three discursive spheres (Habermas 1985) – themselves traceable to Kant’s three *Critiques* (via Max Weber) as elaborations of different aspects of reason (Scruton 2001) – of the cognitive (science), the moral (morality and law) and the aesthetic (art, architecture). In industrial society technology soon established itself as inextricably bound to science, so that the contemporary use of the term ‘technoscience’ is nothing unusual (Lyotard, Habermas). In other words, modernity has never been a monolithic cultural or social construct; on the contrary, it has always been riven by internal anomalies.

Returning to Beck’s thesis, it is instructive, as far as elucidating the meaning of ‘reflexive modernisation’ goes, to read that ‘… Modernization within the paths of industrial society is being replaced by a modernization of the principles of industrial society’ (1992: 10) – a formulation that clearly indicates the kind of transcendental Kantian gesture alluded to earlier. Put differently, it is one thing for industrial practices within modern society to be continually modernised – technologically and administratively updated – but it is quite another to reflect on the continuing validity of the societal principles on which these are founded. Beck himself hints at the Kantian analogy I drew earlier where he writes about the ‘… Kantian-inspired question – what makes society possible?’ (1992: 11), although it is to accuse those who theorised industrial society and capitalism of having forgotten its sense by changing this transcendently oriented question into one pertaining to ‘functional prerequisites’ instead, with the result that it became a (paradoxical) self-fulfilling prophecy that all the essentials of industrial
society change while simultaneously staying the same: ‘… industrial society is a permanently revolutionary society. But after each industrial revolution what remains is an industrial society, perhaps that bit more industrial’ (Beck 1992: 11-12). His insistence on introducing the notion of ‘reflexive modernisation’ is intended to break this theoretical impasse, to be able to come to grips with what he believes to be a fundamentally different society that is being adumbrated in various, albeit dimly perceptible ways.

The reason for this elusive, if not inscrutable state of affairs has to do with his remark (Beck 1992: 9), that: ‘In times of structural transformation, representativity enters an alliance with the past and blocks our view of the peaks of the future that are intruding onto the horizon on all sides’ – reminiscent of Jacques Derrida’s (1978: 370; see epigraph) enigmatic words, similarly hinting at the ineluctable difficulty of defining some emerging thing that is patently different from what is familiar, but is as yet only graspable as its grotesque other: ‘… the as yet unnamable which is proclaiming itself and which can do so, as is necessary whenever a birth is in the offing, only under the species of the nonspecies, in the formless, mute, infant, and terrifying form of monstrosity’. I allude to Derrida’s portentous words advisedly because – unlike what Beck seems to have in mind with the transition from industrial society to ‘risk society’ (namely, a fundamental change in the structure and principles of society itself – what I detect in what I shall provisionally call the forced change from contemporary ‘risk society’ to a society of excessive, or ultra-risk – a society courting human extinction – is something eerily reminiscent of the ‘monstrosity’ Derrida’s words conjure up. (How and why this differs from Beck’s enterprise in Risk Society is what the present paper is intended to demonstrate.) Indeed, his pronouncement also resonates uncomfortably with W.B. Yeats’s familiar words in ‘The Second Coming’ (Poetry Foundation): ‘And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?’ – where the employment of a Christian religious metaphor emphasises the gravity of a historical situation (the present) where the rootedness of traditional beliefs are being challenged at their very core, as they seemed to be when Yeats wrote these words a hundred years ago. Dorian Lynskey (2020) expressed this insight well vis-á-vis the meaning of Yeats’s poem where he writes: ‘The age of Christ (‘twenty centuries of stony sleep’) was coming to an end and a new era — antithetical to progress and reason — would begin with the birth of the rough beast in Bethlehem’.
When Beck writes (1992: 10): ‘The thesis of this book is: we are witnessing not the end but the beginning of modernity – that is, of a modernity beyond its classical industrial design’, he has in mind a modernity which is the product of ‘reflexive modernization’ (p. 11), which (he inti-mates) would express itself in what are today familiar phenomena, like the replacement of ‘… functional differentiation or factory-bound mass produc-tion’. Needless to stress, this was evident in the general introduction of, and eventual saturation of extant societies with electronic, computerised net-works which were soon at the very basis of all economic (and social) prac-tices – ultimately resulting in the so-called (global) ‘network society’ (Castells 2010; Hardt and Negri 2001) – where one witnessed what Beck here refers to. Importantly, these phenomena taken by themselves, may be innocuous enough, but the network-character of extant society would prove to be implicated in the emergence of the ‘risk society’. The latter makes its appearance when,

In advanced modernity, the social production of wealth is systematically accompanied by the social production of risks. Accordingly, the problems and conflicts relating to distribution in a society of scarcity overlap with the problems and conflicts that arise from the production, definition and distribution of techno-scientifically produced risks (Beck 1992: 19).

It is not difficult to see how ‘reflexive modernisation’ operates here. If the production of wealth was a response to the problem of scarcity by harnessing technological productive powers to extract the economic means for survival from nature (industrial modernisation), then the problems arising from development and use of the technical means of production themselves require a shift of focus: ‘Modernization is becoming reflexive; it is becoming its own theme’ (Beck 1992: 19). Why? Because, as the potential hazards – sometimes manifesting themselves in actual instances of industrial destruction (of lives, e.g.; recall the infamous industrial ‘accident’ in Bhopal, India, in 1985; Kovel 2002: 28-38) – proliferate, so does the need for economically and politically managing the risks associated with these. It follows that it would be difficult to pin risk down in objective terms; it tends towards the subjective in the transcendental (conditional) sense of the perception and anticipation of hazard that could potentially lead to
Risks are not the same as destruction. They do not refer to damages incurred. If they were, all insurance companies would be made bankrupt. However, risks do threaten destruction. The discourse of risk begins where trust in our security and belief in progress end. It ceases to apply when the potential catastrophe actually occurs. The concept of risk thus characterizes a peculiar, intermediate state between security and destruction, where the perception of threatening risks determines thought and action.

This peculiar reality status of ‘no-longer-but-not-yet’ – no longer trust! security, not yet destruction/disaster – is what the concept of risk expresses and what makes it a public frame of reference. The sociology of risk is a science of potentialities and judgements about probabilities…Risks, then, ‘are’ a type of virtual reality, real virtuality.

This distinction between destruction and risk will prove important when the difference between the present, fraught state of affairs, globally, and the ‘risk society’ is addressed (below). Indeed, it is ironic that what Beck observed in Risk Society (1992: 20), namely, that the problem of scarcity (of food, e.g.), which had become less urgent in western societies, to be replaced by problems like overweight, would again, unexpectedly, rear its ugly head in 2022, but for entirely different reasons, as I shall show. It is therefore astonishing that Beck’s words seem, with hindsight, to have been an uncanny prognostication, where he writes (1992: 20):

… the knowledge is spreading that the sources of wealth are ‘polluted’ by growing ‘hazardous side effects’. This is not at all new, but it has remained unnoticed for a long time in the efforts to overcome poverty. This dark side is also gaining importance through the overdevelopment of productive forces. In the modernization process, more and more destructive forces are also being unleashed, forces before which the human imagination stands in awe.

To be sure, there have been other expressions of this awareness – for example in cautionary terms by Manuel Castells (2010) and Michael Hardt and
Antonio Negri (2001), and with intimations of human self-deification by Yuval Harari (2016) and Dan Brown (2017) – but the important thing is that no one can claim the awareness of risk, in the sense specified above, to have caught humanity unawares. As I shall demonstrate below, some people have been only too aware of the affirmative potential for destruction contained in the modernisation process; in other words, while most people were understandably concerned with the containment and minimisation of the latent hazards accompanying risk (as an informed perception, underpinned by the theory of reflexive modernisation), it has become evident (only recently) that some have been buoyed by the possibilities of wielding irresistible power through the potentially destructive forces that have been accumulating in the course of modernisation – specifically regarding surveillance (Zuboff 2019; Stiegler 2016) and biomedical and genetic engineering (Rose 2000).

**Eight Points about Risk**

Rather than attempt a summary of *Risk Society* (1992) within the limits of a mere paper aimed less at engaging in the debate about all its ramifications – something exemplarily explored in the multi-authored volume, *The Risk Society and Beyond – Critical Issues for Social Theory* (Adam, Beck & Van Loon 2000), I shall avail myself of the useful synopsis of his own work provided by Beck (2000) himself in his essay in this anthology. At the same time one has to keep in mind Lash and Wynne’s remark (1992: 8; see also Beck 2009: 187ff), that a ‘new critical theory’ is needed today: ‘Such a theory – if it is to help realize even some of the aims of the Enlightenment – must be reflexively critical and disruptive of the assumptions of the very project of the Enlightenment’. It is significant that this is where they locate ‘the allure of Beck’s work’, and it is particularly the phrase, ‘disruptive of the assumptions of the very project of the Enlightenment’ that interests me here, keeping in mind that the historical Enlightenment was predicated on the possibility of the political as well as the ‘natural’ (that is, as regards dependency on nature) emancipation of humankind. As I shall demonstrate below, the disruption (and even the destruction) of human emancipation or freedom at every conceivable level is such today (2022) that one faces the grim possibility of it being extinguished altogether.

Returning to Beck’s (2000) synopsis, the **first point** he makes here
is that risk is not synonymous with destruction (already mentioned above); what has to be added in this regard is his remark (2000: 214) about the ‘… socially very relevant distinction between risk decision-makers and those who have to deal with the consequences of the decisions of others’, to which the issue (attributed to Niklas Luhmann) concerning ‘the acceptance of risk decisions’ is related. He also raises the crucial question of the legitimisation of decisions involving hazardous technologies, which presupposes that such legitimisation is, in principle, possible. But what about the possibility of decisions in favour of using such technologies and their products which cannot, in principle, be legitimised, where legitimisation is inseparable from a process which is demonstrably underpinned by the promotion of public safety? Beck (2000: 214) further reminds one of the associated question of the ‘subjectivity’ and ‘objectivity’, as well as ‘rationality’ and ‘irrationality’ of risk (and one could add: of decisions involving risk), which marks a fundamental difference between the sociology (and philosophy) of, on the one hand, and techno-scientific approaches to risk, on the other.

The second item is put succinctly as follows (Beck 2000: 214):

The concept of risk reverses the relationship of past, present and future. The past loses its power to determine the present. Its place as the cause of present-day experience and action is taken by the future, that is to say, something nonexistent, constructed and fictitious. We are discussing and arguing about something which is not the case, but could happen if we were not to change course.

On the one hand one has to disagree with Beck about the vaunted determinative priority of the past over the present, which has never been the case, although it is always interpretively preserved in the present – as Heidegger (1978: 370 - 378; Olivier 2002; 2012) has convincingly demonstrated in phenomenological terms, humans are future-directed, or rather, of the three dimensions of Dasein’s temporality (past, present and future), its ‘futurity’ is primary insofar as its present and its past are existentially and interpretively subject to how Dasein ‘projects’ its own future. On the other hand it means that the concept of risk reinforces Heidegger’s understanding of the priority of the future, modulating and exacerbating it by highlighting possible, not-yet-actualised dangers and potential catastrophe, and in this manner robbing humanity of its erstwhile
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openness, which has always been the ground of hope. In this respect it is the reverse of what happens in James Cameron’s (1991) second Terminator film, where Sarah Connor reflects on the manner in which she, her son John and the protector-terminator have managed to change a predetermined future to one that is open once again, by destroying the technological condition of its possibility (Olivier 2002: 109). It is ironic that, with hindsight, science fiction cinema functions here as early warning against any attempt to determine the future technologically (or technocratically) by erasing an essentially human part of its spectrum of possibility – an attempt, I hope to show, which is underway today. And unless (following Sarah Connor and her comrades) ‘we’ can change the course of unfolding history, universal catastrophe looms for humanity.

Beck himself (2000: 214 - 215) invokes the examples of the discourses on the climate crisis and on globalisation to illustrate how risk can be dramatised to create a sense of shock sufficient to call certain things into question or to foreground the prospect of certain horrors unfolding – not innocently, but with a view, no doubt, to optimising certain power-relations (of domination). This, too will prove to be highly pertinent to the unfolding events to which one is witness today.

Beck’s third point (2000: 215) relates to the question of the ontological status of risk: is risk to be understood factually, or axiologically? His answer is that risk is neither an exclusively factual statement nor a pure value claim; it is either both simultaneously or a hybrid in-between phenomenon – to use his oxymoron: it is a ‘mathematicized morality’. This means that its mathematical calculability is related to cultural conceptions of a valuable and tolerable, or intolerable life. Hence his question (2000: 215): ‘How do we want to live?’. Significantly, he further connects the ambivalent ontological status of risk, which nevertheless has the capacity to initiate action in the present, to ‘political explosiveness’, which, in turn, is related to two grounds – the ‘universal value of survival’, and the trustworthiness of the guardians of society. In his words (2000: 215):

Thomas Hobbes, the conservative theorist of the state and society, recognized as a citizen right the right to resist where the state threatens the life or survival of its citizens (characteristically enough, he uses phrases such as ‘poisoned air and poisoned foodstuffs’ which seem to anticipate ecological issues). The second source is tied to the
attribution of dangers to the producers and guarantors of the social order (business, politics, law, science), that is to the suspicion that those who endanger the public well-being and those charged with its protection may well be identical.

As I shall demonstrate, the ‘suspicion’ in question has never been more apposite than at the present historical juncture – available evidence suggests that even the Nazis ‘cared’ for the well-being of a part of the German population in the 1930s-40s, namely the non-Jewish, ‘Aryan’ people. In the fourth place, Beck avers (2000: 215): ‘In their (difficult-to-localize) early stage, risks and risk perception are ‘unintended consequences’ of the logic of control which dominates modernity’. The present is witness to a particularly perverse instance of such control (more on this below). Ironically, the very determination to assert control over all aspects of social life, engenders risk, particularly because of the complexity (indeterminacy and uncertainty) of risk and its diagnosis (Beck 2000: 216). If, in the ‘first stage of modernity’ (up to the early twentieth century), risk was regarded as the calculation of ‘unpredictable consequences’, thus ‘making the unpredictable predictable’, today – with the industrialisation of nature – one faces novel kinds of uncertainties which are ‘manufactured’, and which are exacerbated by the very attempts, on the part of ‘producers, analysts and profiteers from risk definitions’, to control and confine risks (Beck 2000: 216).

The fifth issue Beck turns to is that the ‘manufactured uncertainty’ of risk, today, is connected to a specific ‘synthesis of knowledge and unawareness’ (2000: 216). This means that one faces a commingling of risk assessment founded on empirical knowledge (of aeroplane crashes, for example) with decisions facing uncertainty and indeterminacy. On the one hand this is because, although ‘better knowledge’ is generally regarded positively, paradoxically it is becoming the very basis of novel risks; Beck (2000: 216 - 217) refers here to increased knowledge of brain functions, which makes it less certain to declare a person ‘brain-dead’ than before. Moreover, ‘science creates new types of risks’ by inaugurating new domains of knowledge and action, and here he refers to the very relevant instance of advanced human genetics, where the border between healthy and ill individuals is increasingly blurred because of the capacity to identify congenital diseases in ostensibly healthy people. On the other hand, however, non-knowledge or unawareness also comprises the basis of risk, not in the
sense of potential knowledge, but precisely in the context of ‘highly
developed expert rationality’, where ‘… the calculus of probability can never
rule out a given event, or risk specialists may call each other’s detailed results
into question because they quite sensibly start from different assumptions’
(2000: 217). Beck therefore comes to the conclusion that, in light of
increasing unawareness in the above sense, ‘… the question of deciding in a
context of uncertainty arises in a radical way’ (p. 217). Hence the question,
followed by a conclusion, both highly pertinent for the present paper (Beck
2000: 217):

Is inability to know a license for action or basis for decelerating
action, for moratoria, perhaps even inaction? How can maxims of action or of
being obliged not to act be justified, given the inability to know?
This is how a society based on knowledge and risk opens up a
threatening sphere of possibilities.

**Sixth,** risks in the risk society undermine the distinction between the global
and the local, so that these new sorts of risks are simultaneously global and
local, or ‘glocal’. Hence the experience that ecological hazards ‘know no
boundaries’ insofar as they are spread globally ‘by the air, the wind, the water
and food chains’ (Beck 2000: 218). (In light of recent local and global events,
he might have added ‘air travel’.) Because returning to an earlier modernity’s
‘logic of control’ is no longer an option, contemporary risk societies can (and
should) ‘become self-critical societies’ (p. 218).

The **seventh point** – again highly pertinent to the purpose of this
paper – relates to ‘…the distinction between knowledge, latent impact and
symptomatic effect’, given that the place of provenance and that of impact
are not obviously connected, and that (2000: 219):

… the transmissions and movements of hazards are often latent and
immanent, that is, invisible and untrackable to everyday perceptions.
This social invisibility means that, unlike many other political issues,
risks must clearly be brought to consciousness, only then can it be said
that they constitute an actual threat, and this includes cultural values
and symbols…as well as scientific arguments. At the same time we
know at least in principle, that the impacts of risks grow precisely
because nobody knows or wants to know about them.
The last sentence in this excerpt is a reminder of the psychic power of what Sigmund Freud (2006) called the ‘death instinct’ (or ‘death drive’), with its twin manifestations of aggression, on the one hand, and the ‘conservative’ tendency, on the other, to return to a previous state – that is, in colloquial language, to seek out one’s ‘comfort zone’. Very few people would be willing to exert themselves for the sake of what some ‘perceive’ to be a risk, but which has not, as yet, manifested itself as an actual danger. And the power of cultural values such as, at the present time, a widespread trust in ‘the science’ (that is, the ideological valorisation of a specific notion of science, as opposed to science as such) and technology, could act as restraint regarding the expression of concern pertaining to what some discern as being a risk. On the other hand, cultural values such as freedom of speech, that would ordinarily promote the chances of risks being brought to consciousness, may – counter-intuitive as it may seem, be trumped by the value attached to ‘the science’ and technology, as I shall show.

The eighth issue raised by Beck (2000: 221) concerns the fact that, in the risk society one can no longer make a cogent or clear distinction ‘between nature and culture’. To talk about nature is to talk about culture, and vice versa; the modernist notion of a separation of culture/society and nature is no longer tenable. Everything we do in society has an impact on nature, and everything that occurs in the latter has effects in the former. The industrialisation of both culture and nature, Beck reminds one, is responsible for the collapse of the vaunted boundaries between them, but also for the dangers that threaten all living beings (which cannot be separated from the industrialisation in question). Whether it is the pollution of the natural environment, or the possibility of engendering new pathogens in nature through the stress placed on natural ecosystems by human encroachment on animal habitats, it should be obvious that no impenetrable barrier can be erected between human (social or technical) activities and natural spaces. Nor can one separate nations, classes and other living beings; all are equally subject to the interpenetration of nature and society. Although Beck did not live to experience the advent of Covid-19 (he died in 2015), he would probably have regarded the emergence of the novel coronavirus (SARS-Cov-2) as catastrophic confirmation of his own thinking about risk, danger and destruction, whether the virus originated via zoonotic shedding from an animal to humans, or whether it was of techno-scientific provenance in a laboratory. In either case it would be a demonstration of the inseparability of
nature and human (scientific) culture. Adam Tooze (2020) summarises Beck’s importance in this context as follows:

Beck shared with the environmental movement of the 1970s and 1980s the dawning awareness of the gigantic risks produced by modern economic development. It was the nuclear question that catapulted risk society into public consciousness. But the 1980s also saw the emergence of widespread awareness both of climate change and the ‘emerging diseases paradigm’. If climate change was the result of carbon emissions, the emergence of viruses such as HIV, and the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 could be traced to the intrusion of humans into delicate forest ecosystems and the vast animal incubators of the agro-industrial complex. As citizens of successful modernizing societies, we face all-pervasive risks that fundamentally blur the distinction between the social and the natural. Beck could rightly claim to be one of the first thinkers of what we know today as the Anthropocene.

In light of Tooze’s remark, it goes without saying that, with hindsight, the last two-and-a-half years would gain in comprehensibility when approached via the heuristic of Beck’s ‘risk society’.

What can we Learn from Beck’s Notion of Risk about the Present Global Crisis?
Returning to the introductory remarks of this paper – those on the advent of the ‘novel coronavirus’ around the beginning of 2020 – it must be placed in a broader context for the interpretation of present circumstances through the lens of Beck’s theory to make any sense. It would probably come as a shock to many, if not most readers to learn that (as evidence will demonstrate below) the world is not at all as it is being depicted by mainstream media. That is, although people are being told about deteriorating economic circumstances, supply line difficulties and growing food shortages, all of this is being held up as being manageable, and that – ‘if only Russia can be successfully overcome in Ukraine’ – things should return to ‘normal’. Furthermore, the Covid-19 ‘pandemic’, while by no means ‘over’, is depicted as having been largely contained by global ‘vaccination’ programmes, although people are still being urged to ‘get the jab’, or the
‘booster’ to make sure that they are ‘protected’. Just recently the director-general of the World Health Organisation (WHO) – Tedros Ghebreyesus – issued a warning that the ‘pandemic’ was far from over (RT 2022). The impression therefore prevails that, although there are difficulties to face, the world is pretty much the same place as before the ‘pandemic’. This, I want to emphasise in the strongest possible terms, is the wrong picture – one that has been deliberately created by the most powerful media machine in history – and that, beyond the mediated state of affairs (Olivier 2022), a revolution in the shape of a shift in power is being played out that dwarfs anything the world has ever seen, mainly because of the well-nigh incomprehensible technological power that has made this possible, and which sustains it even now by means of, among other things, widespread disinformation and cover-ups (Mercola 2022c; 2022g).

What this amounts to, is a transition from a certain kind of society (to which we have been accustomed) to a fundamentally different kind of society, and although this claim beggars belief, it is being engineered by a relatively small group of people – the super-rich ‘Davos cabal’, or globalists, or New World Order, as they are variously known, among other appellations – who have more money at their disposal than one can imagine. In a nutshell, this group of transhumanist technocrats – that is, people who believe in the rule of, or through, technology, and in the inevitable synthesis between humans and machines (Harari 2016) – are engaged in a no-holds-barred attempt to force societal and cultural change that usually takes centuries into a mere ten years. Consider that it took at least four centuries for European society to make the transition from the Middle Ages to the early modern era via the Renaissance. Imagine such a fundamental change being coerced into the straitjacket of a mere ten years – between 2020 and 2030! And yet, it is all there, on the website of The World Economic Forum (the front for the globalist cabal), packaged as an innocuous, benign and benevolently motivated ‘Great Reset’ (see WEF under References), to move from the present dispensation to a ‘fairer’ and ‘more equitable’ world. Except that all these innocuous, hope-inspiring words hide a sinister agenda of world depopulation via COVID-19 vaccines, economic hardship through lockdowns, controlled economic collapse, systematic destruction of food resources (Philipp 2022), and so on, as will be demonstrated below.

That this is no ‘conspiracy theory’ (as argued earlier regarding the question of prejudice) – but in fact a colossal, demonstrable conspiracy to
rule – is evident by reflecting on just one recent event: the announcement, in January 2022, that the International Common Law Court of Justice has found 75 individuals guilty of crimes against humanity, which bear directly on the ‘power grab’ alluded to above. It was announced that (Annett 2022):

Brussels and Vancouver:

The International Court that forced Pope Benedict from office in 2013 has struck a blow against the COVID corporatocracy by convicting top officials of Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, China, and the Vatican of Crimes against Humanity.

The Court’s verdict sentences seventy-five individuals to life imprisonment, seizes their assets and disestablishes their corporations, and lawfully prohibits the further manufacture, sale, or use of their COVID vaccines as *products of medical genocide and mass murder*.

After a four-month trial convened under International Law, the judges of the International Common Law Court of Justice (ICLCJ) issued their historic verdict and sentence today, along with Arrest and Expropriation Warrants against the defendants.

The convicted individuals include Albert Bourla and Emma Walmsley, the CEO’s of Pfizer and GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals, Xi Jinping, President of China, ‘Pope’ Francis (Jorge Bergoglio), ‘Queen’ Elizabeth (Windsor), and Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada.

According to the Public Affairs Office of the Court,

*This case involves a monstrous, intergenerational crime and its equally massive coverup. The highest officials of Church, State, and Corporations have for years personally sanctioned and profited by the systematic torture, trafficking, and murder of children in deadly drug testing experiments to produce the COVID ‘vaccine’, as part of a Criminal Conspiracy to reduce humanity to slavery. That Conspiracy murders the innocent, traffics in arms, drugs, children, and human organs, and silences or destroys those who threaten to expose it.*
The gravity of the situation described here cannot be overestimated or exaggerated, and when one (downloads and) reads the full document containing the proceedings of the court, including the specific charges against the accused, as well as the details concerning the attempts on the part of the (agents of the) accused, to undermine the proceedings of the court and to threaten, assassinate or otherwise interfere with the court’s procedure, it is difficult to comprehend the full implications and ramifications, and the monstrousness of the actions on the part of the convicted individuals. Although the court, having found these people guilty of the heinous crimes attributed to them, ordered their arrest by the sheriffs of the court (or any member of the public, given that the court’s verdict empowers anyone worldwide to arrest the convicted individuals), it lacks the means to enforce it, and its findings – which nevertheless rest on voluminous documentary evidence – have therefore largely been ignored. (It is highly recommended that the full document detailing the court’s findings be read to grasp the full significance of what it bears on, and of which the general public is largely unaware because of the effectiveness of its cover-up; see Annett 2022, where it can be downloaded).

To reiterate: since around the middle of 2020 it has become increasingly evident that the ‘pandemic’ and everything it entails – from lockdowns and social distancing, mask-wearing and most pertinent of all, Covid ‘vaccinations’ – comprised only the beginning of a much more far-reaching attempt by a small group of billionaire plutocrats/technocrats to assume global power and enslave the rest of the world (at least, those who remain after wiping out a sizeable number of people, as indefatigable researcher, Dr David Martin, has unambiguously shown; Mercola 2022d; see also GRAND JURY, Opening Statements 2022; GRAND JURY, Injections and Psychological Warfare 2022a; Kennedy 2021; Mercola and Cummins 2021; Breggin and Breggin 2021; Olivier 2021; 2022; 2022a). At present there is a crucially important case (Rumble Humanity 2022) that has just commenced (1 August 2022) at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, similar to the one at the ICCLCJ referred to earlier, with the difference that, should it arrive at a similar verdict, its findings would carry much more weight than that of the ICCLCJ (Mercola 2022b).

Given this (admittedly succintly stated) information about the present fraught state of the world, of which the vast majority of people are blissfully ignorant, what can one learn about this from Beck’s conception of
risk? As Tooze (2022) remarks, ‘Beck argued that the omnipresence of large-scale threats of global scope, anonymous and invisible, were the common denominator of our new epoch’. Arguably, the coronavirus ‘pandemic’ has taken the validity of this observation to a new, unprecedented level, and not merely for expected reasons of the accumulation of the kind of threat that Beck was familiar with, such as that of nuclear radiation, or the reminder that there are innumerable, hitherto-unknown pathogens which could potentially affect, and infect, humans. As I shall argue below, today there are twists to the meaning of ‘risk’ that Beck probably never anticipated, and that have to do with the very ‘nature’ (or ‘character’?) of human beings themselves. In summary, what Beck’s theory can teach us is that one has to be constantly aware, not only of the mutations of ‘risk’ in our increasingly complex and uncertain ‘risk society’ as he understood it, but that the very concept of risk has to be placed under constant scrutiny, lest it hide itself behind commonly held assumptions regarding human benevolence and concern for others.

Specific Implications
To be more specific regarding the heuristic value of Beck’s conceptualisation of the ‘risk society’ for the present historical juncture, humanity faces several clearly identifiable risks, albeit not necessarily in Beck’s sense of ‘risk’. First, his distinction between risk and destruction (see above) enables one to perceive the relatively low mortality risk of Covid-19 for people worldwide – judging by the deaths per million of the world population; see Coronavirus World-O-Meter – on the one hand, and the colossal economic destruction brought about by government ‘lockdowns’ globally, on the other hand. During the latter millions of people worldwide lost their income and as a result their and their dependants’ chances of economic survival were dealt a severe blow (Chossudovsky 2022).

Shifting the focus to the controversial Covid-19 ‘vaccines’, the distinction between risk and (danger of) destruction or death is just as clear, but again with the rider that the risks involved are to a certain degree ‘virtual’ in Beck’s sense of being somewhere between possible and real – no longer completely secure but not yet actualised (Beck 2000: 212-213) – while their destructiveness has already been amply demonstrated in actuality (The Exposé 2022a). Recall that the ‘vaccines’ are not true vaccines, given that a vaccine supposedly prevents infection by a pathogen, as well as secondary
infection of others by the vaccinated person, while the Covid injections do neither of these. (In passing one should note that a book titled *Turtles All The Way Down: Vaccine Science and Myth*, was published in 2019, in which the authors ask the question: ‘Why, after 7 decades, don’t we have proof vaccines provide more benefit than risk?’ As Setty (2022) points out, despite criticism from the medical establishment, to this day the book’s claims have not been refuted because of the scientific integrity of its research.) As several researchers have indicated, these ‘jabs’ are purely experimental, and in that sense they entail a huge risk insofar as their precise effects on their recipients are not fully known, although some have been brought to light (Breggin & Breggin 2021: 226-256). But on the other hand, since the commencement of administering these ‘shots’ to people (eventually even children), it has become apparent that their destructiveness (in the sense of deleterious side-effects and deaths) is even greater (Wilson 2022; Kennedy 2021: 157-195; 174-176; Mercola 2022; 2022d; 2022e; McGregor 2022; Breggin & Breggin 2021: 226-256; The Exposé 2022a; Olivier 2021; 2022 and 2022a). To quote from one of these sources, emphasising the (probably deliberate) destructiveness involved here, Rhoda Wilson (2022) refers to the research of Dr David Martin on the reasons for administering the COVID jabs, revealing that there is probably a significant financial motive behind the ‘vaccination’ drive:

David Martin, PhD, presents evidence that Covid-19 injections are not vaccines, but bioweapons that are being used as a form of genocide across the global population.

The spike protein that the Covid-19 shots manufacture is a known biological agent of concern.

Martin believes the number that may die may have been revealed back in 2011 when the World Health Organisation announced their ‘decade of vaccination’.

The objective for the decade of vaccination was a population reduction of 15% globally, which would be about 700 million people dead; in the US, this may amount to between 75 million and 100 million people dying from Covid-19 shots.

When asked what timeframe these people may die in, Martin suggested
Exacerbating Beck’s Risk Society (1992)

‘there’s a lot of economic reasons why people hope that it’s between now and 2028’.

The projected illiquidity of the Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid programs by 2028 suggests the ‘fewer people who are recipients of these programs, the better;’ Martin believes this may be why people 65 and over were targeted with Covid-19 shots first.

Peter and Ginger Breggin are just as adamant about the lethal effects of the Covid jabs. Referring to the large number of people who died soon after the shots were first administered in the United States, they comment (2021: 230; italics in original):

*What is going on here? Those who fully understand what they are doing are probably certain they are doing the right thing—culling humanity. It is a principle with a long and honored history among eugenicists and euthanasia advocates, including many scientists, philanthropic organizations, and political leaders. It is twenty-first century eugenics. In the case of COVID-19 and the vaccines, there is nothing voluntary about it – and that makes it mass murder.*

I shall not dwell on the utter unscrupulousness that must be assumed to exist on the part of those who have planned this programme of unadulterated democide, which is not limited to destruction by ‘vaccination’, but includes what was mentioned earlier too, such as global economic collapse and food destruction. The long-term risk (as distinct from destruction) involved here, is that the New World Order (or globalist cabal) behind this programme could easily set in motion the extinction of the human race, given the complex, unpredictable relations entailed here, which include the systematic subversion of fertility on the part of people who have taken the jab, as well as the decimation of children and young people who received it (Trigoso 2022; Stieber 2022). All the evidence related to the above programme of world-domination via ‘vaccine’-induced population reduction and economic collapse has been carefully censored or suppressed, with the help of the mainstream media, by governments worldwide and organisations such as the UN, the WHO, the CDC in America (Kennedy 2022; Mercola 2022c; 2022i), and SAPHRA in this country. Regarding the latter, for example, in his open
letter to the South African president, forensic medical doctor, Dr Herman Edeling (2021), charged that the SA government and its health agencies (SAPHRA) echoed the same misleading narrative about the need for ‘lockdowns’ and the supposedly ‘safe and effective’ ‘vaccines’, spread internationally, ignoring and suppressing accumulating evidence of their harmful and destructive effects. In other words, to be able to discover the truth about all the components of the risky and destructive programme waged against the world’s people by a small group of self-aggrandising and presumptuous billionaires, one has to turn to alternative sources of information – this is an information war, after all (Mercola 2022g; Olivier 2021; 2022; 2022a) – such as Michel Chossudovsky’s Global Research website, The Exposé, The Epoch Times, Dr Mercola’s website, as well as thoroughly documented book-length studies such as those of Robert Kennedy (2021; 2022), Peter and Ginger Breggin (2021), and Joseph Mercola and Ronnie Cummins (2021).

The findings of these, and other courageous people who have spoken out despite the persecution to which they have been subjected (see Mercola 2022e regarding the persecution of Dr Ryan Cole in this regard), further show that what Beck calls ‘risk decision-makers’, on the one hand, and those who are at the mercy of the consequences of others’ (often dubious) decisions, are clearly perceptible in the context of the Covid-19 ‘pandemic’. Among the former one would have to count the supposed ‘health authorities’ in South Africa, namely SAPHRA, who simply ignored Dr Herman Edeling’s (2021) open letter, alluded to earlier, in which he expressed his concern about the deleterious economic effects of the ‘lockdown’ in this country, as well as the unacknowledged harmful effects of the Covid ‘vaccines’. In the United States, it is the FDA and the CDC that are conspicuous regarding the questionability of the decisions they make. Recently, for instance, according to Joseph Mercola, the FDA surreptitiously allowed ‘vaccine’ manufacturers to avoid (what is usually seen as obligatory) clinical trials (Mercola 2022f):

In a rather shocking turn of events, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration [FDA] sneaked in a ‘Future Framework’ scheme that will allow Pfizer and Moderna to reformulate and release updated COVID shots without conducting any additional human clinical trials, other than what’s already been done.
Needless to point out, this is an egregious sidestepping of an essential step in the development of vaccines to optimise their safety, which the FDA, as ‘risk decision-maker’ blithely ignored, leaving the future recipients of these jabs at the mercy of the ‘vaccine’ manufacturers. Those people who are at the receiving end of risk-related decisions by these organisations include everyone globally who – perhaps understandably and (initially) forgivably – trusted their national health authorities and governments blindly when they were assured of the ‘safety and effectiveness’ of the ‘vaccines’. To their demonstrable detriment, one has to add, in light of the comparatively high death rate among people who received two or three Covid-injections – according to a recent report, 92% of those individuals who died of Covid-19 in the United Kingdom, were ‘fully vaccinated’ (The Exposé 2022; see also The Exposé 2022a; Kennedy 2021: 174-176; 2022: 17-27). Given the availability of relevant, ascertainable information at this stage, however, no one can still be forgiven for blindly swallowing the mainstream media narrative about the Covid ‘vaccines’.

Admittedly, there are exceptions as far as risk decision-makers are concerned, for instance in countries such as India and Japan (Shukla 2021; Campbell 2021), where, in the course of their negative experience with Covid-19 ‘vaccines’, authorities decided to turn to early-treatment medicines such as Ivermectin (which, together with Hydroxychloroquine, was systematically demonised by Dr Anthony Fauci and Bill Gates in America, with disastrous consequences for patients who could have survived Covid-19; Kennedy 2021: 145).

Turning to the question of what Beck refers to as the ‘rationality or irrationality’ of risk, one can legitimately ask whether the risk of death on the part of recipients of the Covid jabs – the worrisome initial trial results of which were not fully disclosed (Mercola 2022a; Kennedy 2021: 168; 170-177) – was an instance of irrational risk, or rather the expression of careful, instrumental-rational concealment, in light of evidence that the Pfizer pharmaceutical corporation was aware of the dangers that their ‘vaccine’ posed for recipients. What has subsequently emerged in this regard points in the direction of the latter (Kennedy 2021: 172). In stark contrast with this systematic suppression of information regarding risk and danger concerning the jabs – and evidently precisely to promote the ‘vaccines’ – the horrors of falling ill with and dying of Covid-19 were dramatised internationally by the mainstream media (see Kennedy 2021: 53, 661-662, regarding the vastly
exaggerated death-rate forecasts by Neal Ferguson, which (as observed earlier) were contradicted by the relatively low global Covid mortality figures. This does not mean that Covid-19 is not a dangerous illness; only that its mortal danger was exaggerated for strategic reasons. After all, people were less likely to subject themselves to ‘vaccination’ against it if they did not have cause to believe that their lives were at stake. At present (August 2022) one witnesses the same strategy being employed in America as far as ‘monkeypox’ is concerned, where the Biden-administration is making millions of doses of a ‘vaccine’ against this disease available to the public (RT 2022a), and judging by the number of doses already ordered by various states, the strategy is working yet again, despite the illness being described as ‘mild’.

Then, still on the theme of the rationality, as opposed to the irrationality, of risk, there is the question, raised trenchantly by internationally renowned virologist, Dr Geert Vanden Bossche, of the mutation of the coronavirus, and whether it is possible that a more virulent variety may appear as a result of it adapting to the ‘vaccines’. Vanden Bosche (McMillan 2022) is of the opinion that highly Covid-19-’vaccinated’ societies display a weak capacity to neutralise the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and as a result this could lead to the dissemination of ‘super variants’ that are severely infectious and virulent in ‘vaccinated’ individuals, while displaying complete resistance to all the currently available (as well as possible future) spike-producing Covid-19 ‘vaccines’. While this is a debatable assertion, Dr McMillan (2022) – who labels this a ‘risk-management’ issue – admits that, since Vanden Bossche first expressed this anticipation of the coronavirus’s adaptive reaction to the mass ‘vaccination’ drive, his expectation has proved to be largely accurate (see Mercola 2022h, where this is confirmed in light of the rapid spread of the latest, hitherto most infectious coronavirus variant, dubbed the BA.5 variant). In the light of Beck’s distinction between rationality and irrationality of risk, the (difficult) question concerns what Vanden Bossche’s assessment tells one about the risks entailed by the relentless mass global ‘vaccination’ programme: were these risks rational or irrational? It seems to me that, on the assumption that the ‘vaccine’ developers had the public interest at heart, the risk was rational in one sense and irrational in another. Rational, insofar as they may have taken a calculated risk that the virus would not react the way Vanden Bossche predicted, and irrational, insofar as one is here dealing with the realm of
complexity, where consequences are ‘overdetermined’ by causes; that is, where a cause (in this case the ‘vaccinations’) can be shown to have multiple consequences, and not necessarily predictable ones. The other possibility, from the perspective of instrumental rationality, is that the ‘vaccine’ developers were indeed aware of the possibility of creating ‘super variants’ of the virus through ‘vaccination’, and went ahead with this precisely because of such a possibility. Again, given the complexity involved here, even if the developers were as unscrupulous as this (and arguably this is just a possibility, although evidence suggests that it was actually the case; Kennedy 2021; 2022; Breggin and Breggin 2021), it would have been impossible to predict such an outcome; as one has seen, the ‘Omicron variant’ of the virus turned out to be far less virulent than the Wuhan virus and the Delta variant, so even Vanden Bossche could prove to be wrong in the end. But precisely this uncertainty endows the ‘vaccination’ programme with a high degree of risk, whether this is arguably rational, or alternatively, irrational.

There is another side to the question of the ‘rationality’ of risk under ‘pandemic’ conditions – one that independent investor/investigator, Melissa Cuimmei (RylandMedia 2021), brings into stark focus: the vaccine passports acquired by everyone who has been ‘vaccinated’ have a different rationale behind them altogether, and have less to do with medical motivation (in terms of depopulation), or risk, for that matter, than with financial considerations. Cuimmei points out that what is really behind the ‘vaccination’ drive is the need to transition to a digital ID – a digital social passport – for everyone (who has been ‘vaccinated’) which would contain all the data pertaining to a person, from health and social data to financial information, and would enable complete control over people’s lives. The need for this, she points out, is the fact that the debt-based financial system has been collapsing under its own weight for some time now, with the 2008 financial crisis, and more recently a comparable crisis in late 2019 precipitating the Covid-19 ‘health crisis’ to leverage the transition to a new digital economy, in which everyone will be fully controlled via their digital social ID. Not only does this mean that businesses as they exist at present will have to be destroyed. Ultimately the perpetrators behind this mendacious scheme have their eyes on children, however, she emphasises, because without children being assimilated into this totalitarian system (via ‘vaccination’), it has no chance of being sustained in the future. To the
question, what one can do to avoid, or at least resist this imminent dystopia, her answer is unambiguous: DO NOT COMPLY. Needless to stress, this puts a new complexion on the question of the rationality of the risks involved here: the only relevant kind (as far as the cabal is concerned) is an inhuman instrumental rationality, predicated on the benefit of the few, to the detriment of the many.

With Beck’s description (above) of the value-orientation pertaining to risk and survival in mind, and taking seriously indications that pharmaceutical companies were conscious of the risks and dangers posed by their products, his question is more pertinent than ever, namely: Are the guardians of the polis trustworthy, that is, deserving of public trust? Connected with this, there is the related question of ‘the right to resistance against governments’, which Beck (2000: 215) detects in affirmative terms in the work of 17th-century thinker, Thomas Hobbes, already. This is further related to what Beck terms the ‘dangers’ ascribable to those individuals (in law, science, politics and business) who are responsible for the maintenance of social order. He adds a caveat, however, namely that those people who are accountable for the protection of the public well-being, and those who endanger it, on the other hand, may really ‘be identical’. Uncannily, Beck appears to have been remarkably prescient, more than twenty years ago, apropos of what is unfolding in the world today, considering that national and international organisations and governments that are supposed, by virtue of their respective professional and constitutional functions, to protect and promote the health needs and interests of citizens globally, increasingly appear to count among those parties which undermine and erode such interests systematically (as has already been indicated above; GRAND JURY 2022; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c).

Recall also that Beck mentions the logic of control which dominates modernity politically and socially, and my remark, that the present is characterised by a particularly perverse instance of attempts to exercise control over all aspects of global society. By this I mean that, while an upshot of the typically modern logic of control is the creation of risks with unpredictable consequences because of the complexity of the things and (inter-)relations between them that such control pertains to (for example the risk of radiation sickness among people living in the vicinity of nuclear reactors, or of cancer among people in areas where certain pesticides are used), the present ‘logic of control’ (under ‘pandemic’ conditions) is of a
fundamentally different order. The reason for this difference is really straightforward: the ‘logic of control’ that is operative today does not concern processes and relations which comprise bona fide components of ‘normal’ scientific and technological developments, ideally conducive to ‘better’ societies, despite the need for critical awareness regarding risks. On the contrary, as clearly indicated by all available evidence – suppressed, censored and covered-up by mainstream media (Kennedy 2022; Mercola 2022c; 2022i) – the control in question constitutes sustained, perverse attempts which are aimed at eroding or destroying the economic, political, cultural and health-foundations of extant societies with the goal, ‘to build back better’ (as one of the New World Order’s mantras goes). The latter is intimately related to what the WEF (World Economic Forum), specifically its founder, Klaus Schwab (2020) refers to as ‘The Great Reset’, a phrase echoed, since the advent of the ‘pandemic’, by all ‘world leaders’, including Joe Biden, Justin Trudeau, Boris Johnson and Emmanuel Macron, with the exception of Vladimir Putin (who, as far as can be ascertained, opposes the cabal’s New World Order, to their ineradicable chagrin; RT 2022b). As intimated earlier, the ‘Great Reset’ entails global depopulation, the planned destruction of the world economy (no doubt accompanied by untold suffering) and its subsequent reconstruction by means of advanced technology, including artificial intelligence (AI; that is, robots) and a fully digitalised economy and financial system (see in this regard Chossudovsky 2022; RylandMedia 2021; Kennedy 2021; 2022; GRAND JURY 2022; 2022a and 2022b; Philipp 2022a; for a clear and substantiated discussion of this dubious ‘programme’, which cannot fail to impress upon one the gravity of the situation).

The ‘logic of control’ (or perhaps rather ‘logic of destruction’) at play in all of this would probably not make sense to the majority of people in the world, given that they have not done the research that I and many others have done and still do (Olivier 2021; 2022; 2022a), but I can assure readers that the information corroborating our claims is available to anyone who earnestly searches for it. Until recently a cursory perusal of the WEF website would have yielded the information that, by 2030, one would ‘own nothing, and be happy’ (which seems to have been removed, possibly because it is too revealing about the WEF’s plans; see Humans are Free 2020). This should have the effect on critically thinking people of ‘awakening them from their dogmatic slumber’ (with acknowledgement to
Immanuel Kant), when the realisation dawns on them, that we currently find ourselves in the thick of a global *coup d’etat* the likes of which has never occurred in the history of the world. After all, what does the claim, that by 2030 one would ‘own nothing, and be happy’ imply? That state of affairs is certainly not the case today; most of us do own something (a car, a house, a bicycle, etc.), which usually contributes to our relative ‘happiness’. In other words, that ostensibly innocuous statement about lack of ownership in 2030 has vast implications in respect of the cabal’s projected state of economic (and therefore social) relations in the world. In sum, therefore: the ‘logic of control’ that characterises the New World Order programme of assuming global power is a perverse, deadly logic aimed at reducing the world population significantly and enslaving the survivors – not that different from the fictional scenario depicted in the first *Matrix* film (Wachowski & Wachowski 1999), where the majority of people live in an illusionary, simulated world that they take to be real, while in fact being tethered to life-support pods, from where they supply energy to the machinery running the world. Today the people who still live in the illusion that ‘everything is normal’, with perhaps only a little economic glitch here and there, are the counterparts of the fictional ‘blue-pilled’ people in the *Matrix* pods, who live in a media-simulation, and those of us who are resisting the New World Order are the equivalent of Morpheus, Trinity, Neo and others who have taken the ‘awakening’ red pill in *The Matrix*. The risk involved here, from the perspective of ordinary people, is that the NWO may succeed, in which case human freedom would be obliterated; from the NWO’s point of view it is that they may *not* succeed, in which case – as Dr Reiner Fuellmich and others have indicated (GRAND JURY 2022; 2022a) – they will pay for their crimes. After all, the one risk factor that the NWO cannot remove from the equation is the *complexity of human beings*, which makes them unpredictable because the ‘same’ cause (the pseudo-pandemic, the ‘vaccines’ and the orchestrated disinformation campaign) has multiple, overdetermined effects; the large majority can be manipulated into believing that all is copacetic, as is currently the case (with most people displaying signs of a kind of mass-psychosis; Desmet 2022; Olivier 2022a), but that may easily flip into the awareness that things are not, in fact, hunky-dory, and swift resistance may follow.

Related to the ‘logic of control’, recall that Beck sees a ‘*synthesis of knowledge and unawareness*’ (2000: 216) as being constitutive of risk,
insofar as uncertainty (or lack of knowledge) and complexity operate in advanced technological processes. This phrase is subject to a fundamental change of meaning in the context of the present, illegitimate constellation of power comprising (largely) western states under the leadership of the WEF, an unelected group of technocratic billionaires whose financial resources enable them to exercise unheard-of power. Therefore, in contrast to the sense in which Beck employs the phrase, at present it applies to the amalgam of conscious unawareness concerning the precise effects of particularly the experimental mRNA injections on their recipients (Kennedy 2021: 54; Nass 2020), and to the question of knowing what the ‘ingredients’ of the ‘vaccines’ are (Noack 2021; Ahlawat 2021), to mention only two aspects of the present onslaught against humanity.

Nor should one fail to mention that the question of ‘knowledge and unawareness’ also relates to Beck’s argument about science (which applies equally to technology), that it creates ‘novel kinds of risk’ by opening up new spheres of knowledge and action – something clearly applicable to mRNA-technology. This insight implicates his question (Beck 2000: 217), whether the inability to know with certainty grants one the right to action, or alternatively, the right not to act. Put differently, in the light of fundamental ignorance, how does one justify one’s motives for acting, or the obligation not to act? Here one encounters a problem with Beck’s reasoning about risk: it rests on the assumption of the rationality of people, particularly those in positions of public accountability (including those populating the organisations at the centre of the present attempt to seize global power, evidence of which I have provided above, and the most revealing of which is probably the batch of videos on the GRAND JURY website). Importantly, when I allude to rationality, I do not have in mind instrumental rationality, as exposed by critical theorists such as Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (in Dialectic of Enlightenment 2002), or Jürgen Habermas with his notion of ‘strategic action’, but rather what one might call ethical, community-oriented rationality of the kind that Habermas subsumes under ‘communicative action’ (Habermas 1987: 73 - 77, 180, 196; Olivier 2018). While ‘strategic action’ comprises a disingenuous mode of communication aimed at wielding power over one’s audience or constituency, ‘communicative action’ prioritises the well-being of one’s interlocutors in relation to one’s own, by engaging in communication that optimises openness and transparency. Clearly, this is not what we have witnessed in
the ‘communication’ and provision of information on the part of the representatives of the New World Order (see Olivier 2021 and 2022 for in-depth scrutiny of this issue); on the contrary, and needless to highlight, the levels of risk (and danger) involved here are incalculable.

One could go even further by claiming that the only variety of ‘rationality’ which functions in the current context of suppression of the true state of affairs regarding the ‘vaccines’, lockdowns, controlled collapse of the world economy and concomitantly the destruction of food resources (to list only some of a long list of strategic actions), is perverse, necro-instrumental rationality, which would have shocked even Adorno and Horkheimer. A paradigmatic instance of this is encountered in the work and fate of Dr Andreas Noack (2021; Ahlawat 2021), who – like many other doctors/scientists – set out to analyse the composition of one of the mRNA ‘vaccines’ which he names in the video listed here. His findings include the discovery that it contains ‘graphene hydroxide’, the instrumental operation of which on the human cardiovascular system is tantamount to nothing less than lethal. Noack compares graphene hydroxide with ‘nano-size razor blades’ which cut through the heart, veins, arteries and smaller blood vessels, particularly when a person is engaged in strenuous exercise, with the blood flowing faster than usual through these vessels. In light of these findings, he ascribes the exceptionally high number of cardiovascularly induced deaths-in-action on sportsfields of sportswomen and -men, in the course of the last year-and-a-half worldwide, to the effects of the graphene hydroxide in the mRNA ‘vaccines’. Sadly, for his courage he was murdered a few days after he posted his video on the internet (Ahlawat 2021). Incongruously, doctors do not seem to be adding two and two together, but appear puzzled by these ‘strange’ casualties (Philipp 2022b). One of the ‘explanations’ I have come across is the claim, that the pitch of the referee’s whistle on the field is the cause of the sudden deaths. This is so disingenuous that it does not deserve comment. Add to this the recent phenomenon of ‘sudden adult death syndrome’ (Mercola 2022; 2022a), and it should be crystal clear that we are here dealing with ‘perverse, necro-instrumental rationality’. The only comment-worthy aspect of this is the common sense-defying readiness of the vast majority of the public, to accept the spurious explanations offered by ‘experts’ for the ostensibly inexplicable demise of these hapless individuals, who fell for the ruse on the part of governments and health ‘authorities’, that to survive Covid-19 it is imperative to accept the ‘vaccines’, lest one risk
dying prematurely (Edeling 2021; Breggin & Breggin 2021; Kennedy 2021; 2022; GRAND JURY 2022a; Mercola 2022b; 2022e; Nass 2020). Little did they know that the greater risk lay with taking the ‘jab’.

The pertinence of Beck’s remarks on the distinction between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ in the risk society – that the new kind of risk is simultaneously global and local (‘glocal’) – is at present conspicuously the case across a wide spectrum of ‘pandemic’-related phenomena, from the rapid spread of the coronavirus from a specific locality (presumably Wuhan, China), throughout the world (with ‘glocal’ variants such as ‘Delta’ and ‘Omicron’ emerging in specific local contexts, only to become global again soon after; hence their ‘glocal’ status), to the globalisation of lockdowns, and perhaps most far-reaching of all, the prescriptive (attempted) globalisation (or universalisation) of Covid-19 ‘vaccinations’ by means of ‘mandatory’ ‘vaccination’ policies. Add to these the more recently worldwide implementation of ‘controlled economic collapse’, including the destruction of food resources (referred to earlier), and it should be obvious that one here encounters a wholly different kind of fusion between the local and the global than Beck had in mind: the globally implemented ‘plan’ has specific, local, manifestations, partly because of local exigencies from the cabal’s perspective, and partly because of unpredictably different responses to these ‘implementations’, which may (or not) become ‘glocal’, depending on whether other localities follow their example. The response of Dutch farmers to their (WEF-goaded) government’s stated intention, to ban cattle-farming on 30% of productive farmland, citing environmental concerns relating to nitrogen emissions, is a case in point (Philipp 2022; 2022a). Far from being compliant (as one is expected to be), the farmers are fighting back, in the knowledge that what their government (and the WEF) really want, is their land, to be used for farm rentals under the New World Order.

In the light of what was written here the risk, or perhaps rather the danger of destruction which accompanies these unprecedented events and deliberately orchestrated processes – all of which (as can easily be ascertained) are carefully ‘scrubbed’ from the mainstream media (Olivier 2022) – belong to a different order to what Beck understood by it. This is chiefly because of the absence, in cases of (what Beck called) modern risk, pertaining to the fusion of not-knowing, unpredictability and complexity, of demonstrably deliberate intent (Kennedy 2021; 2022; Breggin & Breggin 2021). This is exacerbated by the difference, that those who have been
exposed to risks and dangers concerning recent medical interventions (called ‘vaccinations’) were not merely kept ignorant of these risks; to add insult to injury, they were assured that that there were none (Kennedy 2022: 17, 19)!

Given Beck’s (2000: 219) distinction between ‘knowledge, latent impact and symptomatic effect’ – in light of the fact that the place of provenance and of impact are not conspicuously connected (something so strikingly applicable to the ‘origin’ of the coronavirus!) – it is all the more important for knowledgeable researchers who have been apprised of the dangers of the ‘vaccines’ to bring them to light, as Dr Noack did (see above), albeit in less dramatic fashion, which probably cost him his life. This should have the effect of increasingly making visible the latent and actual risks of these injections to those members of the public who are still unaware of their actual dangers. The same is true of making visible the risks and dangers of lockdowns.

**Conclusion**

Against the backdrop of the preceding one should remind oneself of the difference between two states of affairs. On the one hand there is ‘reflexive modernity’ in Beck’s sense of the term (as explicated above), which presupposes ethical and moral underpinnings, albeit critically interrogated, on the basis of which questions regarding the ‘modernisation of modernity’ can be approached without abandoning the broader civilisational orientation of social history. On the other hand, there is the hyper-technocratic, ‘transhumanist’ trans-modernity which has arguably abandoned any semblance of ethical (except in the sense related to a perverted ‘ethos’) and moral questioning, let alone justification, of action. The only justification of action that seems to remain, judging by the available evidence (see particularly GRAND JURY 2022; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; RylandMedia 2021), is the perceived need to move towards a technocratic, AI-oriented, financially fully digitalised and controlled society, on the ashes of extant society. (I leave it to readers to decide on the merits, or otherwise, of these ‘lofty’ aims; it is revealing to listen to all the evidence given before the GRAND JURY.) I am using these two terms – ethical and moral – which are customarily used interchangeably, in the distinctive philosophical meanings that they have acquired, derived from Hegel and appropriated by Habermas for specific aspects of his discourse ethics (Thomassen 2010: 84 - 96; 102 -
As already intimated parenthetically above (and following Hegel), ‘ethical’ presupposes a (sittliche) community that shares in ‘ethical life’ or an *ethos*, that is, certain cultural precepts and mores that are subsumed under its ‘ethical’ orientation, while ‘moral’ (following Kant) implicates a universalistic orientation regarding morally relevant actions. The members of the NWO-cabal can claim neither; as remarked above, at best, should they claim an ‘ethos’ and the ‘ethical’ behaviour derived from it (As Klaus Shwab [and Malleret 2020] indeed seems to!), it would – in the light of what has been uncovered here – be nothing more than a perversion, and should any individual belonging to this group of psychopaths or sociopaths claim affirmative *moral* standing for his or her actions aimed at promoting the ‘great reset’ and all it entails, it would fail, in terms of Habermas’s ‘universalisation’ principle (Thomassen 2010: 91-92), because such a claim, in their case, would entail an obvious performative contradiction, insofar as their own lives would be forfeit. The same goes, *mutatis mutandis*, for the applicability of Habermas’s discourse ethics to their collective and individual actions.

Lest anyone should feel any sympathy for the members of the iatrocatic, globalist democidal conspirators, allow me to remind them of a telling insight, on the part of one of the world’s great film directors, Stanley Kubrick, into the collective psyche of the world’s ‘mega-rich-and-powerful’. In the last film he directed before his death, *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), Kubrick gave us a cinematic *noir*-masterpiece redolent with rich allusions to the Freudian insight into the inseparable intertwinment of *eros* and *thanatos*, life and death, sex and mortality. He explores the tortured fantasies of his *noir*-protagonist, Dr Bill Harford (Tom Cruise), who embarks on a night-long exploration of *eros*, unable to banish the fantasy-image of his wife, Alice (Nicole Kidman) having sex with a sailor – something she confessed to him to have desired (but never consummated) about a year earlier. Through a chance meeting with an old friend at a wealthy patient’s house party (where he is called upon to attend to a beautiful young woman who has overdosed on drugs), Bill learns of the meeting of an exclusive, secretive society, and having received the password from his friend (the hired pianist for the occasion), he joins the ritualistic meeting, suitably cloaked and masked. Cutting a long story short, in the course of the orgiastic evening, where men are seen copulating with naked, attractive young women in various positions throughout the colossal mansion, Bill’s bluff is called, and
were it not for a masked, naked young woman intervening on his behalf (when he was about to be stripped of his clothes), and offering to suffer his punishment instead, one can only imagine what his lot would have been. The next day Bill is invited over by the same wealthy patient at whose house he attended to a young woman suffering the effects of an overdose. His patient, who acknowledges to have been present at Bill’s near-demise the previous evening, makes no bones about the fact that Bill should desist from probing the exclusive meeting – which he continued doing, having discovered a newspaper report of the recent death of a young woman. In the course of trying to convince Bill, he trivialises the young woman’s death by pointing out that she ‘was (only) a hooker’, and that she died from overdosing, as she nearly did before at his own house party, where Bill examined her earlier. It is when he urges Bill to recall the young woman (with ‘the big tits’) in his own bedroom before, as a candidate for an overdose anyway, that one realises that the woman was in fact ‘sacrificed’ in Bill’s place, and that the casual, offhand reference to her is a sincere expression of the wealthy patient’s utter contempt of her as a woman and a person – it does not matter one iota that she paid with her life for Bill’s folly, even though the latter, as medical doctor and potential future member of this upper echelon of society, is evidently worth some avuncular, admonitory investment. In the course of the conversation one gets the distinct impression that Bill’s pianist friend suffered the same fate as the hooker. This episode in *Eyes Wide Shut*, delivered by one of the geniuses of cinema, may be regarded as being paradigmatic of the attitudes of the super-wealthy towards ordinary mortals, as currently on display in the diverse miseries inflicted by these ‘elites’ on people throughout the world.

In closing, it is imperative to remember that the most serious risk today – in the precise Beckian sense of ‘the persuasive perception of the prodigious danger of losing humanity’s political and social freedom, and possibly its very existence’ – is that too few people will perceive this risk. Succinctly put: The real risk is to be blind to the mega-risk of losing our humanity, in more than one sense. And for overcoming this risk, we have to remind ourselves of F.D.R. Roosevelt’s words: ‘The only thing we have to fear is fear itself’. Why? Because fear paralyses, and precludes the kind of action needed to overcome threats to our liberty and existence.
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