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Futures of Modernity

Challenges for Cosmopolitical Thought and Practice

September 2012, 240 p., 29,80 €, ISBN 978-3-8376-2076-4

Global risks, mobilities and interdependencies transnationalize local life and working worlds. These processes lead to an inner globalization of societies in which worldwide constellations of »reflexive« (Ulrich Beck), »multiple« (Shmuel N. Eisenstadt), »entangled« (Shalini Randeria) and »global« (Arjun Appadurai) modernities simultaneously and immediately clash in social action: a process of cosmopolitanization in which »the global« is localized and »the local« is globalized in radical new ways. In this book, an international selection of prominent critical thinkers address this premise and provide their interpretations of imminent challenges, concomitant social dynamics and political implications.

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Futures of Modernity: An Introduction

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The controversy prompted by the thought and writings of Ulrich Beck over the multifaceted dynamics of the fundamental transformation that modernity is undergoing under conditions of globalization raises new kinds of challenges for politics and everyday life worldwide, but especially for a social science that deals with these issues. At issue is what conclusions should be drawn from the recognition that, neither in the West nor at the level of global pluralism, are modern societies the normatively integrated formations developing in linear ways as which they were characterized and described, for example, by the long-dominant structural functionalism (see Schwinn 2006). The plural, contingent present of global modernities points, on the contrary, to worldwide processes of reflexive modernization and to the interrelation between successfully enforced goals of modernity and the dynamic of unintended side effects. These very side effects of the process of modernization represent the driving force of an epochal transformation that is changing the coordinates of this transformation itself toward a *modernization of modernity* (Beck and Bonß 2001; Beck and Lau 2004) and is directing it into new, hitherto unexplored channels. The authors of this book have made it their task to survey this other modernity that is overlooked and concealed by linear conceptions of modernization and to address the production of uncertain social futures in the present.

Multiple futures

The contours of a ›world risk society‹ (Beck 2009) that are beginning to take shape can no longer be described and explained in terms of the categories of social science that take their orientation from the framework of the industrialized nation state and the apparent exclusivity of European or Western modernity. Global risks – such as, for example, climate change and terrorism – the question of global social inequality, the increasing plurality, multi-directionality, and

transnationality of global mobility and communication, and the confrontation between diverse cultural outlooks and paths of modernization unfolding at different levels call for the development of further perspectives on emerging social realities and the associated opportunities and problems. Beyond that, however, the fundamental question of a further pluralization and globalization of modernity is acquiring a new explosive quality in both social practice and scientific theory. With the increase in transnational interdependencies and interrelations, complex forms of *internal globalization* of local societies are developing in which the actors, ideas, and products of a worldwide constellation of »multiple« (Shmuel Eisenstadt), »interwoven« (Shalini Randeria), or »global« (Arjun Appadurai) modernities are confronting each other simultaneously and directly in social action: A process of ›cosmopolitization‹ (Beck 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006; Beck/Sznaider 2006; Römhild 2010; Poferl 2012) is occurring that, with unexpected radicality, is both localizing »the global« and, conversely, globalizing »the local« and is converting them into distinctive social and cultural configurations.

A major consequence of these developments, which is central to this book, is the opening up of new spaces of possibility that, as will be shown below, point to *multiple futures* of reflexive, cosmopolitan modernization. The traditional conceptions of the future associated with the Western, industrial modernity of the nation state were decisively shaped by a conception of the linearity of social experience and its continuation into the future. On this conception, modernization was a continuous, unchanging process whose social (symbolic and material) counterpart was a largely unfailing trust in an unknown future. Hence, the future that had still to be decided could be imagined within the framework of a dynamic of change geared to continuity as a »not-yet-present« from which the practices of the social production of the future – politics and economics, in particular, though also institutionalized life plans and individual decisions – could take their orientation and acquire stability (see Adam 2010). The institutions and premises of modern societies were regarded accordingly as »future-resistant,« as it were: an institutional framework that, although in need of reform, was largely stable made possible substantive connections between decisions and associated practical consequences, on the one hand, and new requirements and opportunities of action, on the other. The ineluctable openness of the future could be transformed, notwithstanding irritations, into a feeling of *future security*.

However, the consequences of social and political action – in particular through the interdependence with the decisions and actions of »global others« previously regarded as distant – which are increasingly perceived as uncontrollable, are undermining this feeling of security and challenging the associated social practices of the production of the future. The teleological understanding of modernity that associates time and history with purposeful »progress« is profoundly unsettled (see the contributions of Appadurai, Sznaider, Tsing, and Latour in this volume). The institutional arrangements of the First Modernity

founded on this understanding are increasingly powerless to meet, let alone master, the new kinds of challenges posed by a globalized or cosmopolitanized present. The formerly socially de-problematized decision-making contexts now exhibit potentially highly risky features at the level of both institutions and the individual conduct of life. Whether it is a matter of personal decisions concerning reproduction, of work and relationships, the production and negotiation of gender and cultural identities, the consumption of goods, the organization of leisure time, social commitment or other things – almost all areas of human life have been gripped by an insecurity engendered by modernity itself. The claim of industrial modernity to shape and master the future is proving to be a peculiarly transitory and eurocentric project, a presumptuous illusion of knowledge and control that is prone to uncertainty, and it is becoming problematic in concrete decision-making situations within a tension-laden context of knowledge and ignorance (Braun and Kropp 2010). The place of a fundamental confidence in the similarity between the past and the future is being taken by risky multiple futures that are anchored in a society of different presents where they have to be negotiated in the face of extremely diverse claims and outlooks. The quality of the »futures of modernity« consists in their (epochal?) new openness that is leading to an equally novel form of politicization of the future: The social imagination and production of our futures points to pluralist perspectives and interests and to highly diverse constellations of actors, to politics »from above« and »from below.« It is controversial, contradictory, and ambivalent. It can exhibit quite different features – whether this occurs in the form of mere practical responses to cosmopolitanized presents or, in addition, also issues in reflective cosmopolitan action. Moreover, which institutions and which normative positions can and must be activated or developed for this purpose remains open.

Reflexive modernizations

The relationship between uncertainty and the future is increasingly being integrated into the decision-making processes of contemporary societies. With reference to reflexive modernizations this means that, in addition to the structural *reflexivity* of the unintended side effects emphasized by Ulrich Beck – that is, the massive influence they exert back on the principles and institutions of modernity (see Beck, Giddens, and Lash 1994) – future-related, »reflexively prompted« *reflection* is increasingly becoming the sign of our times.

The current variety of »modernization stories« and the thematization of their side effects specific to localities not only lead to a tension-laden, competitive form of coexistence. As Anna Tsing shows (in this volume) using the example of the modern, postcolonial treatment of the Indonesian rainforest, the disastrous consequences of the capitalist modernization project, which is char-

acterized as »progress« from a Western perspective, are increasingly coming to light. However, this holds equally for the anticapitalist modernization projects of the socialist East, of the »second world« in the tripartite world of the Cold War; they, too, were presented to the »third world« as emancipatory development aid (see Chari and Verdery 2009; Boatcă 2007), based on a different ideological foundation, but in a similar colonial attitude. In particular, the promise made by both capitalist and real socialist modernization projects that economic and social progress would reinforce each other has proven to be fragile. The global hopes for social security and equality inspired by modernization are being replaced by global disappointments. This is also shown by the ethnographic analysis of Yunxiang Yan (in this volume) which discusses individualization processes under Chinese conditions. The example of educational aspirations clearly reveals the ambivalence of these processes: liberating Chinese individuals from the constraints of the previous all-encompassing social categories of the family, kinship, and socialist work, shifting the meaning of personal achievement to the individual and now resulting in »striving individuals« (Yan) driven by an urge to succeed (in materialistic terms) or a fear of failure, – but unless Western individuals without any underpinning emancipation politics.

In many cases, a contrary downward spiral at odds with the logic of development is taking shape: The ecological impacts of these processes of modernization not only affect an apparently separate »nature,« but also react back with full ferocity on the social and economic foundations of modernized societies – which once again reveals their fundamental dependence on ultimately uncontrollable »natural« resources. The risks of reflexive modernization are not isolated; on the contrary, because of their conspicuous interconnections they develop an equally conspicuous internal dynamic. In this context, strategies for managing risk in one place can lead to all the more catastrophic accumulations of risks at another place, as not only Ulrich Beck makes clear in his contribution. Thus, one can already predict that the consequences of climate change and an increasingly unbridled exploitation of resources have long since gone beyond posing a threat only to living conditions in the regions viewed as »peripheral« from a Western perspective. With the new migration figure of the ›climate refugee‹ (Biermann and Boas 2010; Klepp and Herbeck 2012), with foodstuffs tainted with radioactivity or poisons that point to distant industrial catastrophes, with the crises of whole production sectors and associated financial markets, and with the economics of global organ trafficking, the side effects imminent in development have long since also reached the »centers« of modernization – long before the apocalyptic scenarios displaced into an indefinite future that dominate the discourse on world risk society have been realized.

In this process of mutually entangled reflexive modernizations and the »everyday catastrophes« that already have to be managed and discussed today (Latour and Hajer in this volume), the logics rooted in colonialism and in industrial mo-

dernity are increasingly becoming targets of criticism. This criticism is aimed in part against the ideas of modernity as still unfulfilled promises, in part against the practices of its self-declared authors and custodians. In the wake of the Cold War, Western-style modernization seemed to undergo a new upswing and to be getting ready for its final victory march in the socialist societies undergoing upheaval. However, the faith in this victory march had long since been definitively shaken in the postcolonial societies because of their long history of involvement with the Western capitalist modernization project (Ziegler 2008). Critical voices are being raised in these countries that call for a decentering of the Western dominance in the project of modernity. In his book, *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) connects this with the proposal for a renewal of modernity by its »others« who formerly were understood only as addressees but not as co-creators:

›European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the experiences of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes the task of exploring how this thought – which is now everybody's heritage and which affects us all – may be renewed from and for the margins‹ (Chakrabarty 2000, 16).

However, this renewal, which Chakrabarty understands primarily as an intellectual project, is also opening up an (indirect) route through the cosmopolitanized constellations and practices that are emerging at the interfaces between reflexively interwoven modernizations (see Beck in this volume). That surprising opportunities are opening up in the very ruins of the impacts of modernization is shown by Anna Tsing using the example of the subcontractor business that is developing around the cultivation of a gourmet mushroom on desolate former rainforest land (in this volume). Such precarious spaces of opportunity, which wrest an existence founded upon the failure of the modern past from this very failure, arise when people have to act at the interstice of no-longer-verified modern knowledge and an unknown future – hence practically everywhere.

Unlike in the present-fixated First Modernity in which the future was conceived as the progress of the present and was as a result neglected, decision-making processes in contemporary societies are increasingly contingent on a continuous imagining, gauging, and negotiating of (im)possible futures. As a result, the available social stores of knowledge and their legitimation, central modern institutions and their myths of origin, are unavoidably becoming embroiled in multifarious debates, as all of the texts in this volume illustrate. The fact that it is becoming increasingly impossible in these debates to ignore the interrelations between diverse modern presents and pasts could facilitate an active, cosmopolitical reflection on the foundations and consequences of reflexive modernizations. However, this would require a global dialogue »among equals« (see Beck and Grande 2010) that includes all experiences with modernity and

evaluates them in a (self-)critical fashion. In the Western centers of the modern production of knowledge, in particular, this is connected with an opening towards the outlook of the »others« and a »provincialization« of the epistemological foundations and the universal assumptions of the Western theorem of modernization, as this has long been called for in German-speaking, European social science (see, among others, Reuter and Villa 2010; Gutiérrez Rodríguez et al. 2010; Conrad et al. 2012). In this connection, the repudiation of the teleological phantasm of progress and the insight that the unfinished project of modernity could learn from other genealogies could prepare the ground for a reflective approach to the interwoven simultaneity of uncertain futures.

Uncertain hopes

Do we stand at the beginning of a »world society« with planetary networks of reorganization of the social, as certain columnists interpret the so-called Arab Spring? Or is the triumph of a »cosmopolitanism,« for which the humanists repeatedly hoped, and thus the triumph of a united »world bourgeoisie« with globally shared values and norms? Or is at least the isomorphic spread of Western institutions and legitimacy myths as a universally valid standard imminent (Meyer 2005)? Scarcely! The respects in which Western history turns out to be just *Western* history, not just with a fading aura but also with declining legitimacy, are too diverse. The international power and exchange relations, which operate essentially according to the modality of differentiation and exploitation, are too contradictory. The »cultures,« which cannot be described as nation states and then be united, are too heterogeneous. Finally, the living conditions, the involvements, and the room for creativity – but also the self-thematizations of successful and threatened societies alike, are too unequal. Underlying all of those notions of completion, as Arjun Appadurai shows, is ultimately a eurocentric, expansionist, imperialist ›trajectorism‹ – namely, ›a deeper epistemological and ontological habit, which always assumes that there is a cumulative journey from here to there, more exactly from now to then.‹ Trajectorism is based, implicitly or explicitly, on a ›project of conversion and conquest‹ – ›playing out on a global terrain of its own demons, divisions and unresolved anxieties‹ (Appadurai in this volume). As Natan Sznaider (in this volume) adds: ›This is not Kant's world of »eternal peace« but a world of eternal risk and negotiation.‹

The world includes incomparably more (and more fruitful) standpoints, it is likewise irrevocably networked, it is connected and entangled in more than one exchange relation, though it is also structured in local and particularistic ways. It is no longer possible for anyone to close him or herself off from the everywhere articulated, but different, perspectives on the future. While cosmopolitanism is propounded as a norm and an uncertain hope, Ulrich Beck speaks of *cosmo-*

politization as the – often coerced – inclusion of the excluded Other, as at once idea and reality of the ›enmeshment with the cultural Other‹ (Beck 2006 and in this volume). Microcosm and macrocosm are inseparable in this regard. But if even simple questions – what is a family? what is a culture? – can no longer be answered in a globalized, cosmopolitanized context, who can be surprised that perceptions of risk (Hajer), conceptions of individuality (Yan), notions of gender relations, family, and partnership (Beck-Gernsheim), of (in)justice (Hitzler), of good work (McRobbie), or of political-institutional integration (Grande) are not shared, but that in their various ways they challenge identity and universality, truth and knowledge, tradition and future. The question of the significance of religion that is often neglected by theories of modernization (Soeffner) must also be discussed in new ways in this context. And who would be surprised that such ›entangled cosmologies‹ (Latour in this volume) do not end on the earth but also include the heavens and the skies and other forms of life. For climate change also means establishing an indissoluble connection between human activities and global environmental change – in short, of doing cosmo-politics ›in the sense of altering the associations [...] that all beings establish with all other beings‹ (Latour in this volume). Therefore, climate change challenges us, as the anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup (2012) also believes, to re-examine the anthropocentrism of the modern (self-)understanding beyond the eurocentrism of modernizations. If debates over the ›gradual composition of the common world‹ (ibid.), decisions over the worlds in which we want to live, become necessary for the futures of modernity, then the barrier between science and politics also collapses.

An outlook on Futures of Modernity

The present volume is devoted to exploring possible Futures of Modernity, their acknowledged and concealed traditions and origins, their horizons of possibility and criteria of validity to be negotiated under entirely novel, cosmopolitanized conditions, and, last but not least, to the search for instruments and categories of a critical social science that has repudiated the nation state framework no less than the problematized routines of differentiation and trajectorisms. Based on the social scientific thought of Ulrich Beck, the volume brings together an avant-garde of critical thinkers to offer their interpretations of the coming challenges and their social dynamics and political implications. In what follows, we offer brief presentations of the four sections of the book.

1. Cosmopolitanizing European modernity

The Europe of today has become the major arena in which the hegemony of a Western modernity and its economic, political, and cultural claims to global dominance are being fundamentally contested. Not only global crises, but also transnational movements – of people within, outside, and across European borders, and of goods and risks, ideas and histories, extending from the »periphery« to the »center« – are putting the national, but also the Europeanized, will to political control under pressure. As a result, they are proving to be a major force in cosmopolitanizing European societies and the modern traditions on which they can rely less and less. Ultimately, these processes raise the question of how to acknowledge both theoretically and practically the simultaneous presence of »other« modernities within a truly global, cosmopolitan project of Reflexive Modernity that transcends Eurocentric restrictions.

One of the first, and fundamental, steps in this direction, according to *Arjun Appadurai*, would be to critically re-examine the »trajectorism« of Western projects of modernization, which means their obsessive ideology of predictable, controllable directions, goals, and outcomes of history. What is required is the risky, but necessary revision of an ominously successful, imperial cosmopolitanism of modern world domination, which can succeed only with the help of and in dialogue with those who are excluded in this imperial modernity, alternative cosmopolitanisms of other societies and civilization.

But, one could ask further with *Natan Sznaider*, weren't these alternatives already a major theme of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, which always also involved a self-critical fascination with the »noble savage« and a corresponding reflexive perspective on the Western societies and their path to modernity? Couldn't the twenty-first century gain a new approach to this age of not-yet-lost epistemological innocence – and in so doing effect a post-imperial cosmopolitanization of the Enlightenment, which would then have to be understood, entirely in keeping with Dipesh Chakrabarty, not as just a Western but also a global heritage and as an unfinished project involving global responsibility?

The willingness and ability to problematize oneself are forerunners of reflexive modernization since the Enlightenment, as *Wolf Lepenies* observes. Can cosmopolitan traces of the constant confrontation with the possibility of the other be detected here and in the associated capacity for (self-)irony, for an »ironic politics« – traces on which a contemporary political revision of modernist-imperial arrogance could draw directly?

Zygmunt Bauman directs attention back to the observation of a fundamental convulsion of the Western ideology of modern »trajectorism.« As he sees it, this ideology and the certainty that it once imparted confront a threefold challenge: 1. in the experience of an »interregnum,« hence of a transition in which the old order is no longer valid but in which a new order is not yet really visible, let alone

established; 2. in the closely related experience of fundamental insecurity; and 3. in the disparity among institutional arrangements that leads to a drifting apart of (global) power and (local) politics. We should start from this latter discrepancy, according to Bauman, by »complementing« the »negative« consequences of globalization with »positive« opportunities (for instance, forms of global political representation). However, this calls – and with this we could link up again with Appadurai – for a global confrontation with the »Other,« with the repressed of the European history of modernization; for a global politics that is shared by all can be developed only in an awareness of a shared history of interwoven modernities (Conrad and Randeria 2002).

2. World risk society – climate change in a cosmopolitical view

Contemporary societies are confronted with the problem of global environmental change – but not all in the same way. The thematization of climate change still largely conforms to those rigid Western, industrial preconceptions that played and continue to play a decisive role in its emergence. The claim to knowledge and control that was unleashed in the Enlightenment and has frequently been criticized as technocratic remains intact and not only permits unintended side effects to proliferate in its shadow but also management fantasies and authoritative discourses of constraint and political necessity. Moreover, to date those who claim to be able to specify what is good and bad for all places and relations from an ecological vantage point still scarcely bother to make sure that global comparisons among the criteria of judgment are possible. But climate change is a tricky business that assumes different guises for different publics and is represented in equally diverse ways. And, yet, the belief that an exact science that will make breakthroughs to clear and hence »true« statements, offers »one best way« problem solutions remains unshaken, notwithstanding all setbacks. Against this background, the following four contributions offer more than inspiring proof of the relevance of cosmopolitan reflections.

Anna Tsing situates her observations on the outsourcing of risk in supply-chain capitalism, on the one hand, in the global, but unequal, contexts of the displacement not only of goods but also, on an at least equal scale, of bads. On the other hand, she touches on the sore point of risk management that under Western capitalist hegemony has less the effect of avoiding risks than of ›shipping environmental consequences elsewhere‹ (ibid.), even if these in the next moment – in the shape of ordinary catastrophes – blithely escape the security cordons. In doing so, the ethnologist shows the extent to which the underlying thought patterns can already be found in Western literature and that, for example, Captain Ahab is part of that Western thought fixated on progress for which

the outsourcing of disaster – elsewhere and into the future – counted as smart fragmentation and positive accomplishment.

Bruno Latour pursues this line of thought and in his diagnosis takes a further step back. He recounts the shock of the first astronauts, in spite of the most advanced technologies, not at conquering new terrain, but, when looking back from the barren moon at the precious Earth, at finally recognizing the need to protect its life-sustaining atmosphere and its continuation in spacesuits: ›And our condition on »biosphere one« is much worse than in the international space station, for learned astronauts, experimenters, can always turn to the motherland and say in a confident male voice: »Houston we have a problem.« But us here, on the blue planet, we've got no base to turn to,‹ according to Bruno Latour. In this world of ›entangled cosmologies‹, controversies over the correct knowledge, the correct practice, the correct epistemology, and, of course, the correct risk management become questions that decide over the future that have long since ceased to halt at the boundaries of science and politics, propaganda or proof, values or facts, but instead call for cosmopolitics.

The same problem is also addressed by *Maarten Hajer* who was assigned the complex task of placing the scientific and science-policy foundations of the most recent IPCC Reports on a less contestable footing from a constructivist perspective favorable to democracy, after its ›expert authority was problematized, directly and with outrage in the media‹ – the well-known climategate affair. Hajer takes up the challenge and strives – as reconstructed for us step by step in the text – to restore the claim to advise politics from the perspective of deliberative theory and thereby provides the tools for tomorrow to those familiar with the scientific and political scene. How is authoritative governance possible – in spite of the contingencies of modern futures?

Ted Nordhaus and *Michael Shellenberger* relate such considerations back to Ulrich Beck's interpretation of climate change as the quintessential global risk and social contradiction that undermines modernist institutions, especially the nation state. However, the two activists from California contradict the over-optimistic expectation that ›global norms can be created through cosmopolitan moments‹ (Beck 2008: 13). Instead they regard ›the rise of neo-liberalism [as] a second modernity phenomena, closely related to changing notions of the state, the economy, and modernity itself‹ and consequently explore whether explicit and direct state and collective responses to the crises of Second Modernity are even possible in a world in which the modern state has become simultaneously ubiquitous, intertwined with virtually every part of modern life, and at the same time virtually invisible to its citizenry. Either way, the big challenge facing the social sciences is arguably to overcome industrial mindsets and norms that cannot guide evaluations and decision-making any longer, and instead to invent ways, methods, and formats of reflexive, cosmopolitan thinking required to address the dramatic challenge of climate change.

3. Inequality, power and governance in the global age

One of the most troubling aspects of the »global age« is the supposed decline of the nation state as the principle of internal and external order. This means that the dimensions of inequality, power, and governance – which in modern societies are typically tied to nation state boundaries, and thus are supposed to be processed at the national level – can no longer be grasped from nationally shaped perspectives. Thus, the question is: How can we think about these issues from a cosmopolitan perspective?

In his contribution, *Ulrich Beck* uses these questions as an occasion to connect the analysis of global inequalities with the issue of human rights against the background of a methodological cosmopolitanism. His starting point is that ›cosmopolitization means the global Other is no longer out there, not only near us but ›*in*‹ us.‹ It seems all the more urgent that the social sciences as well as politics should overcome the constraints of the national outlook – for it is also the case that ›cosmopolitization enforces an enmeshment with the global Other, which opens up spaces and perspectives for the implementation of human rights regimes.‹ Thus, cosmopolitization itself provides the opportunity of confronting global inequalities with a cosmopolitan inflection of human rights.

In his contribution, *Edgar Grande* draws attention to the European context by throwing light on the process of European integration against the background of its increasing politicization. His central thesis is ›that the political foundations of the process of European integration and the conditions governing how the political system of the EU functions have undergone a fundamental transformation.‹ This transformation is made possible by the emergence of novel, and in their outcomes contrary, economic, cultural, and political conflicts that problematize cosmopolitan Europe itself: ›the political conditions for the further development of a cosmopolitan Europe have changed fundamentally‹ – in particular, as Edgar Grande shows, in highly paradoxical ways.

Anja Weiss deals with the future of global inequalities in her contribution. Taking her lead from the story of Barack Obama's childhood, she develops a comparison between different perspectives in social science, philosophy, and political science on how to conceptualize the globalization and cosmopolitization of inequality. Her diagnosis concerning the toolkit of social science for dealing with global inequality proves to be a sobering one: ›Currently, the strength of sociological analyses is not in the conceptual debate about global justice or in empirical analyses on a world scale.‹ An exception for Anja Weiss, however, is the study of contemporary reflexive-modern institutional change that results in ›moral economies transcending national container states.‹ This also prompts her plea for a sociology that should be more devoted to the institutions ›which go beyond the nation state.‹ Anja Weiss can be interpreted as arguing that only

then will a critical confrontation with global inequality that also generates political effects become possible.

Finally, in her contribution *Angela McRobbie* addresses working lives in the new creative sector. Drawing on Richard Sennett's reflections on the flexibilization of work, the city, and craft, McRobbie develops a perspective that is able ›to think in new ways about the creative industries.‹ The result is ›a vocabulary which refuses hyperbole, glamour and excitement and which brings into play topics such as under-employment, craft, dedication, public-mindedness, social care and the retrieval of time and space from the speeded-up creativity-machine.‹ This paints a haunting picture of life and work in the creative sector that exposes the manifold risks, inequalities, and precarities in a domain is marked more than almost any other by new cosmopolitan populations in large urban environments.

4. Individualization cosmopolitanized

Individualization is both releasing individuals from traditional structures and re-embedding them in new social relations, giving rise to a paradoxical »force to freedom.« However, individualization is not confined to European borders or the Western World. Rather, we have to consider simultaneous varieties and complexities of individualization that interact in different ways in a global world. This is why we have to understand and define individualization and its ambivalences in a cosmopolitan perspective, why we have to ask for divergent as well as for convergent developments, and why we have to identify historically and culturally specific meanings, conditions, and challenges.

Yunxiang Yan opens the series of contributions with an analysis of social processes of individualization in the Chinese context. He works out the peculiarities of the Chinese path of individualization and its political-economic and historical background from a vantage point informed by social and cultural anthropology and devotes particular attention to the distinction between macro-social, institutional, and biographical-subjective dimensions of individualization and their contingencies. In this way, the varying role of the individual in the process of individualization acquires importance in the comparison between China and Western Europe; but, on the other hand, different influences of individualization on the production of the ›new individual‹ depending on social settings are also apparent.

Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim draws on recent research on transnationalization to exhibit distinctive features of gender-specific differences in individualization. In doing so, she concentrates on the connection between individualization and migration that remained a ›blank spot‹ into the 1990s in research on trends towards change in modern societies. The discussion of individualization is not

an exception when it comes to this deficit either, according to Beck-Gernsheim. Today it must be assumed that migration represents an important driving force of individualization, contradicting the stereotype of a migration population primarily wedded to tradition. Moreover, striking similarities between the mainstream society and immigrants crystallize out in typically »male« and »female« patterns of individualization.

Ronald Hitzler takes up the broad and explosive issue of the relation between social inequality, injustice, and natural »facts.« His starting point is the diversity of human beings, which, despite all social imprinting – and notwithstanding omnipresent processes of social construction – has an individual aspect that is largely excluded from traditional models of class and social strata. A multiplication of experiences of inequality can also be established under conditions of individualization, among which are, for example, deprivation according to age, gender, and bodily and mental capability. Hitzler argues that inequality can develop its political conflict potential only when it is evaluated as – more or less illegitimate – ›injustice‹ by society. The question he raises is what status individual, »natural« injustice can assume in this dynamic.

Hans-Georg Soeffner deals with the religious presuppositions of social individualization and with the associated development of types of individuality specific to (European) modernity. The range of explanations in the sociology of culture and the sociology of religion extends from the anthropological foundation of the experience of limits and of overcoming limits, which is at the source of human religiosity, through the structurally imposed individuality in modern societies with its over-elevation of the individual, up to the idea of *A God of one's own* developed by Ulrich Beck (2010) and its cosmopolitical potential. According to Soeffner, a heroic optimism of reflexive (theory of) modernization appears in the hope for a ›polytheistic baldachin‹ of cosmopolitan individualization. Only the further course of history can demonstrate its chances of realization – and with this, the question of the futures of modernity concludes not only the discussion of individualization but also this volume as a whole.

The contributions to this volume originated in a symposium in honor of Ulrich Beck organized by the editors that took place at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich in July 2009. We would like to thank all of the authors for their willingness to confront the question of the »Futures of Modernity« in productive ways on that occasion and in their contributions to this book. Furthermore, we would like to thank the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Allianz Kulturstiftung and the Institut für Soziologie of the LMU Munich for their generous support of the symposium, without which this book would not have been possible either.

Translation by Ciaran Cronin

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