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The Social and Political Dynamics of the World at Risk: The Cosmopolitan Challenge

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I wish all of you an inspiring congress and I am sure it will be. I am very very sorry I cannot be with you in person. I would have loved to come to Ankara but I am writing a small book on “German Europe” which I have to finish this month – I hope you will understand.

My contribution to your congress is a very general one and I am not even sure that it will be helpful for your concerns and discussions. The opening question is, do we, the social scientists, have the conceptual framings, the conceptual toolbox to understand and explain the social and political dynamics of the world at risk?

My thesis is: this is no longer the case. Just think for a moment of the ‘cosmopolitical events’ that changed the world during the last 25 years – the fall of the Berlin Wall, 9/11, the ongoing financial crisis, the ongoing climate change, the ongoing nuclear catastrophe in Fukushima, the ongoing Arab spring, the ongoing Euro-crisis, the ongoing Occupy-Wall-Street Movement. All of those have at least two features in common: (1) they came and come by total surprise, which means: they are beyond our political and sociological categories and imagination; and (2) all of them are transnational or global in their scope and implications.

From this follows my question: Are our frames of reference of political thinking and scientific analysis both: out of date and provincial? *Out of date* because they exclude analytically what can be observed empirically – fundamental transformations of society and politics *within* modernity; *provincial* because they mistakingly absolutise the expectation of Western, that is European or North-American, modernization and thereby fail to see their own particularity? I will discuss these questions in four steps:

First, I will call into question one of the most powerful convictions about society and politics, one which binds both social actors and social scientists: methodological nationalism. Methodological nationalism equates modern society with society organized in a territorially limited nation-state.

Second, what is meant by '*cosmopolitization*'? The best way to answer this question is through a paradigmatic example: that of global transplant medicine – '*fresh kidneys*'.

Third, what is new about *world risk society*?

Fourth, what is meant by the cosmopolitan turn?

1. Critique of methodological nationalism

Methodological nationalism assumes that the nation-state and society are the 'natural' social and political forms of the modern world. It assumes that humanity is naturally divided into a limited number of nations, which on the inside organize themselves as nation-states, and on the outside set boundaries to distinguish themselves from other nation-states. This dualism between the national and the international presents the most fundamental category of political organization. Indeed, our political and social scientific frame of reference is rooted in the concept of the nation-state. It is the national outlook on society and politics, law, justice and history that governs the political and sociological imagination. And it is exactly this methodological nationalism that prevents the social sciences and humanities from getting at the heart of the social and political dynamics of the world at risk.

Where social or political actors subscribe to this believe I talk of 'national outlook'; where it determines the perspective of the social scientific observer, I talk of 'methodological nationalism'. The distinction between the perspective of the social actor and that of the social scientist is crucial, because there is only a historical connection between the two not a logical one. This historical connection – between social actors and social scientists – alone gives rise to the axiomatic of methodological nationalism. And methodological nationalism is not a superficial problem or a minor error. It involves both, the routines of data collection/production and basic concepts of modern sociology, like society, class, state, democracy, family, imagined community etc.



It is evident that, in the 19th century, European sociology was founded and formulated within a nationalist paradigm and that any cosmopolitan sentiments were snuffed out by the horrors of the great wars. In the methodological nationalism of Emile Durkheim, fraternity becomes solidarity and national integration. He, of course, has in mind the integration of the national society – France – without even mentioning it (but true is also, at the same time both – Émile Durkheim and Auguste Comte – referred to cosmopolitanism as a future possible development of modern society). Max Weber's sociology involved a comparative study of economic ethics and world religions, but the political inspiration for his sociology is the national and the nation-state.

The critique of methodological nationalism should not be confused with the thesis that the end of the nation-state has arrived. Nation-states (as all the research shows) will continue to thrive or will be transformed into transnational states (for example, European Union). The decisive point is that national organization as a structuring principle of societal and political action can no longer serve as the orienting reference point for the social scientific observer. One cannot even understand the re-nationalization or re-ethnification trend in Western or Eastern Europe and other parts of the world without a cosmopolitan perspective. In this sense, the social sciences can only respond adequately to the challenge of globalization if they manage to overcome methodological nationalism and to raise empirically and theoretically fundamental questions within specialized fields of research, and thereby elaborate the foundations of a newly formulated cosmopolitan social science.

We have to find new ways to orient ourselves in a world that is a state of turmoil. Of course, it is necessary for political leaders to address national issues and react to people's specific demands, but without a cosmopolitan outlook, such a reaction is likely to be inadequate.

2. What is meant by 'cosmopolitization'?

We do not live in an age of cosmopolitanism but in an age of cosmopolitization: the 'global other' is in our midst. The concept of cosmopolitization is surrounded by misunderstandings and misinterpretations. The best way to make it comprehensible is through a paradigmatic example: that of *global transplant medicine*. The victory of global transplant surgery (and not its crises!) has swept away its own ethical foundations and paved the way for a shadow economy that supplies



the world market with 'fresh' organs. In a radically unequal world there is clearly no shortage of desperate individuals prepared to sell a kidney, a section of their liver, a lung, an eye, and even a testicle for a pittance. The fate of desperate patients waiting for organs have become obscurely embroiled with the fate of no less desperate people, as each group struggles to find a solution to basic problems of survival. Thus arises what I call a real-existing cosmopolitization of emergency.

This impure, banal, coercive cosmopolitization of 'fresh kidneys' bridged the *either/or* between North and South, core and periphery, haves and have-nots. In the individualized bodyscapes continents, races, classes, nations and religions all become fused. Muslim kidneys purify Christian blood. White races breathe with the aid of a black lung. The blond manager gazes out at the world through the eyes of an African street urchin. A Catholic priest survives thanks to the liver carved from a prostitute living in a Brazilian favella. The bodies of the rich become patchwork rugs. Poor people, in contrast, are becoming actual or potential one-eyed or one-kidneyed depositories of square parts. The piecemeal sale of their organs is their life-insurance. At the other end of the line evolves the bio-political 'world citizen' – a white, male body, fit or fat, with an Indian kidney or Muslim eye.

Generally speaking, the traffic of living kidneys follows existing flows of capital from South to North, from poor to wealthy bodies, from black and brown bodies to white, from women to men or from poor men to richer men. Women are rarely the beneficiaries of purchased organs. The age of cosmopolitization is thus divided into organ-selling and organ-buying nations. The global poor is not just besides us, the global poor is *in* us – and for that reason alone no longer a 'global other'. Even if he or she stays excluded, the *excluded* global other.

Illustrated in the preceding example is the following: cosmopolitization means the basic facts of the *conditio humana* at the beginning of the 21st century. The dualisms into which the first nationally organized modernity was ordered and understood have, after the *victory* of universalized capitalistic modernization processes (in this case transplant-surgery), is being dissolved and re-fused. This goes for national and international, us and them, inside and outside, as-well-as for the binaries nature and society, center and periphery.

These facts of cosmopolitization are certainly concern of the social sciences, and therefore it is important to clearly distinguish between *philosophical* cosmopolitanism, which is about *norms*, and *sociological* cosmopolitization, which is about *facts*.



Cosmopolitanism, in the philosophical sense of Immanuel Kant and Jürgen Habermas, means something active, a task, a conscious decision, one that is clearly a responsibility of elites and implemented from above. Today, on the other hand, a banal and impure cosmopolitization is unfolding, involuntary, unnoticed, powerfully and aggressively below the surface, behind the façades of existing national spaces, sovereign territories, and etiquettes; from the top of society down to everyday life of families, in work situations, individual careers and bodies although national flags are still waved and national attitudes, identities and forms of consciousness are even growing stronger.

3. What is new about world risk society?

Why is the concept of ‘world risk society’ so important in order to understand the social and political dynamics and transformations at the beginning of the 21st century? It is the accumulation of risk – nuclear, ecological, financial, military, terrorist, biochemical and informational – that has an overwhelming presence in our world today. To the extent that risk is experienced as omnipresent, there are only three possible reactions: denial, apathy and transformation.

Denial is largely inscribed into first modern culture, but ignores the political risk of denial; this is evident, for example, in the case of nuclear energy after Fukushima. *Apathy* gives way to a nihilistic strain in postmodernism. *Transformation* marks the issue the concept world risk society raises: how does the anticipation of a multiplicity of man-made futures and its risky consequences effect and transform the perceptions, living conditions and institutions of modern societies? One of these striking examples is, of course, the global financial crisis or more specific the euro-crisis and the turmoil it creates in Europe and the world over.

Can we know the future we face? The answer of course is, no, we cannot; but yes, we must act “as if” we do. Present action requires knowledge of the future in order to govern the future. But the future is in many ways unknowable, and uncertainty is a basic condition of human knowledge and existence. This creates a paradox: How to provide certainty and security through knowledge of the future in the face of uncertainty as a basic condition of human knowledge? For this we at first have to distinguish between *risk* and *catastrophe*. Risk does not mean catastrophe. Risk means the *anticipation* of catastrophe. Risks are about staging the future in the present, whereas the future of



future catastrophes is in principle unknown. Without techniques of visualization, without symbolic forms, without mass media, risks are nothing at all. So global risks actually are globally medialized risks.

The sociological and political point is: If destruction and disaster are anticipated this produces a compulsion to act. The anticipation of threatening future catastrophes in the present (and the euro-crisis as again a living example) creates all kind of turbulences inside national and international institutions but also in everyday life. Politically speaking, global risks create global public which mobilize people beyond all kind of borders, national, religious, ethnical etc. borders.

What is new about risk society? Modern societies and their foundations are shaken by the global anticipation of global catastrophes (climate change, financial crisis, terrorism). Such perceptions of globalized manufactured risks and manufactured uncertainties are characterized by three features:

- *De-localization*: Their causes and consequences are not limited to one geographical location or space, but are in principle omnipresent.
- *Incalculableness*: Their consequences are in principle incalculable; at bottom it is a matter of 'hypothetical' or 'virtual' risks which, not least, are based on scientifically induced not-knowing and normative dissent.
- *Non-compensability*: The security dream of 19th century European modernity was based on the scientific utopia of making the unsafe consequences and dangers of decision ever more controllable; accidents could occur as long and because they were considered compensable. If the climate has changed irreversibly, if progress in human genetics makes irreversible interventions in human existence possible, if the 'Super-Gau' is happening – then it is too late. Given the new quality of threats to humanity, the logic of compensation breaks down and is replaced by the principle 'precaution by prevention' (François Ewald). Not only is prevention taking precedence over compensation, we are also trying to anticipate and prevent risks whose existence has not been proven.

The discovery of the incalculability of risk is closely connected to the discovery of the importance of not-knowing to risk calculation. It was Frank Knight and John Maynard Keynes who early insisted on a distinction between predictable and non-predictable or calculable and non-calculable forms of contingency. In a famous article in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (February 1937)



Keynes writes:

by ‘uncertain knowledge’, let me explain, I do not mean merely to distinguish what is known from what is merely probable. The sense in which I am using the term is that in which the price of copper and the rate of interest twenty years hence, all the obsolescence of a new invention are uncertain. About these matters there is no scientific basis on which to form any calculable probability whatever. We simply do not know.

However, Keynes’ admonition to open up the field of economic decision-making to the unknown unknowns of future systemic catastrophes hidden in normalized practices of risk taking was entirely neglected in the subsequent development of mainstream economics (including mainstream Keynesian economics).

The crucial point, however, is not only the discovery of the importance of not-knowing, but that simultaneously the knowledge, control and security claim of state and society were, indeed had to be, renewed, deepened and expanded. There is an irony in the institutionalized security claim, to have to control something even if one does not know whether it exists! But why should a science or a discipline concern itself with what it does not even know? There is certainly a conclusive sociological answer to that: because in the face of the production of manufactured uncertainties society more than ever relies and insists on security and control.

The talk of the ‘knowledge society’ is an euphemism of the first modernity. World risk society is a ‘non-knowing society’ in very precise sense. In contrast to the pre-modern era, it cannot overcome by more and better knowledge, more and better science; rather precisely the opposite holds: it is the *product* of more and better science. Because of sciences’ as and technology’s *victory* not-knowing becomes more and more important in world risk society.

In global risk there is hidden a very specific kind of not-knowing; therefore we have to distinguish between not-knowing as

- (1) not-*yet*-knowing,
- (2) wilful ignorance,
- (3) reflected not-knowing,
- (4) zones of conscious inability-to-know, by contrast,



(5) unconscious not-knowing (that is knowledge that does not reflect on its own limits; as I said before: one does not know what one does not know); finally

(6) the figure of unknown inability-to-know, that are those 'unknowns' in which there lurks the ineradicable element of surprise.

The major point is that in world at risk we are not only confronted with the yet-unknown any more, but with the (unknown) inability-to-know.

4. What is meant by the cosmopolitan turn?

World risk society is a latent revolutionary society in which the state of normalcy and the state of emergency overlap. From this one can explain the historical power of global risks, which are neglected by the economics and sociology of risk: In dealing with catastrophic risks the present of a future state of emergency is being negotiated. The anticipated state of emergency is no longer national but cosmopolitical. The belief that the risks facing humanity can be averted by political action taken on behalf of endangered humanity becomes an unprecedented resource for consensus and legitimation, nationally and internationally. In this sense, the fundamental principles of modernity, including the free market principle, the natural science approaches and the nation-state order itself, become subject to change, the existence of alternatives, and contingency.

You might even say, the historical power of global risk is beyond all the 'saviours' brought forth by history: not the proletariat, not the excluded, not the Enlightenment, not the global public, not the migrants of global society – if anyone or anything at all, it is the perceived risks facing humanity, which can be neither denied nor externalized, that are capable of awakening the energies, the consensus, the legitimation necessary for creating a global community of fate, one that will demolish the walls of nation-state borders and egotisms – at least for a global moment in time and beyond democracy.

So, what is 'cosmopolitan' about the 'cosmopolitan momentum'? Global risks tear down national boundaries and jumble together the native with the foreign. The distant other is becoming the inclusive other – not through mobility but through risk. Everyday life is becoming cosmopolitan: human beings must find the meaning of life in the exchange with others and no longer in the encounter with like. We are all trapped in a shared global space of threats – without exit. This may

inspire highly conflicting responses, to which renationalization, xenophobia, etc., also belong.

The glooming catastrophe is a merciless teacher to all humanity. The market is not what economists made and make us believe, the answer, the saviour to all our problems, but a threat to our existence. We have to learn fast that modernity is urgently in need of an international constitution to negotiate conflicts over answers to global risks and problems – built on consensus between parties, nations, religions, friend and foe. Of course, this may not happen. But suddenly it is common knowledge that this is the precondition of survival. All this is part of the reflexivity generated by risk, by the anticipation of catastrophe. I cannot think of any power inducing, enforcing such a global learning process in such a short period of time. Be careful: not catastrophe does this. The anticipation of catastrophe does it. Global risk is, highly ambivalent, paradoxically also a moment of hope, of unbelievable opportunities – a cosmopolitan momentum.

In response to the question of how political action is possible in transnational, cosmopolitan contexts, John Dewey in his book *The Public and its Problems* (1927) argues: the binding power, which generates people's attentiveness, morality and willingness to act, emerges *only* in the course of public reflection about *consequences* of decisions. Its scope of influence does *not* coincide with national borders; instead, the public world is everything that is perceived as an irritating consequence of modern risk society's decisions. In one word, it is global risk – or, to be more precise, the perception of global risk – that creates a public sphere across all boundaries. Thought through to its conclusion, this means that the everyday experiential space known as 'humanity' does not come about in the form of everybody loving everybody else. It emerges instead in the perceived problem of the global consequences of actions within the risk society.

Although some insist on seeing an overreaction to risk, global risk conflicts do indeed have an enlightenment function. They destabilize the existing order but can also be seen as a vital step towards the construction of new institutions. Global risk has the power to confuse the mechanisms of organized irresponsibility and even to open them up for political action.

Egoism, autonomy, autopoiesis, self-isolation, improbability of translation – these are key terms for describing modern society in sociology and in public and political debates. The communicative logic of global risks must be understood on precisely the opposite principle. World at risk is *the* unwanted, unintended obligatory medium of communication in a world of irreconcilable differences in which everyone is turning on their own axis. Hence the public perception of risk forces people to



communicate who otherwise do not want to have anything to do with one another. It imposes obligations and costs on those who resist them, often even with the law on their side. In other words, large-scale risks cut through the self-sufficiency of cultures, languages, religions and systems as much as through the national and international agenda of politics; they overturn their priorities and create contexts for action between camps, parties and quarrelling nations that know nothing about each other and reject and oppose one another.

Important as all these arguments are, the decisive question is another one: to what extent does the threat and shock of world risk society open up the horizon *to a historic alternative of political action*? It is precisely this question that I have tried to answer in my book *Power in the Global Age*. I argued in 2005 (here I can only quote the basic idea):

Two premises: 1) world risk society brings a new, historic key logic to the fore: no nation can cope with its problems alone; 2) a realistic political alternative in the global age is possible, which counteracts the loss to globalized capital of the commanding power of state politics. The condition is that globalization must be decoded not as economic fate, but as a strategic game for world power.

A new global domestic politics that is already at work here and now, beyond the national-international distinction, has become a meta-power game, whose outcome is completely open-ended. It is a game in which boundaries, basic rules and basic distinctions are renegotiated – not only those between the national and the international spheres, but also those between global business and the state, supra-national organizations and the rising powers China, India, South America, the US and the EU. No single player or opponent can ever win on his own; all are dependent on alliances. This is the way, then, in which the hazy power game of global domestic politics opens up its own immanent alternatives and oppositions.

The strategies of action which global risks open up overthrow the order of power, which has formed in the neo-liberal capital-state coalition: global risks empower states and civil society movements, because they reveal new sources of legitimation and options for action for these groups of actors; they disempower globalized capital on the other hand, because the consequences of economic decisions contribute to creating global risks and destabilized markets and even the global market system. Conversely, there is an opportunity to bring about what I call a *cosmopolitan form of statehood*. The forms of alliances entered into by the neo-liberal state



instrumentalize the state (and state-theory) in order to optimize and legitimize the interests of capital worldwide.

This is not wishful thinking; on the contrary, it is an expression of a *cosmopolitan realpolitik*. In an age of global risks, a politics of ‘golden handcuffs’ – the creation of a dense network of transnational interdependencies – is exactly what is needed in order to regain national sovereignty, not least in relation to a highly mobile world economy. The maxims of nation-based realpolitik – that national interests must necessarily be pursued by national means – must be replaced by the maxims of cosmopolitan realpolitik. In the world at risk nationalism is becoming the enemy of the nation.

A paradigm shift in the social sciences

It is evident, that the taken-for-granted nation-state frame of reference – what I call ‘*methodological nationalism*’ – prevents the social sciences from understanding and analysing the dynamics and ambivalences, opportunities and ironies of world risk society. A methodological nationalist as well as a national politician, who attempt to deal with global risks in isolation resembles a drunken man, who on a dark night is trying to find his lost wallet in the cone of light of a street lamp. To the question: did you actually lose your wallet here, he replies, no, but in the light of the street lamp I can at least look for it. In other words, global risks are producing ‘failed states’ – even in the West.

We are under the spell of a sociology, whose foundations were conceived and developed in the past hundred years. The first century of sociology is over. On the way into the second, which has now begun, the space of sociological imagination and research has to be opened up and determined anew. What we need is a *cosmopolitan turn* in the social sciences. A cosmopolitan sociology clearly distinguishes itself from a universalist one, because it doesn’t start out from something abstract (usually derived from a European historical experience and context, e.g. ‘society’ or ‘world society’ or ‘world system’ or the ‘autonomous individual’ etc.). Instead key concepts like contingency, ambivalence, interconnectedness take centre stage along with the methodological questions posed by them. Cosmopolitan sociology, therefore, opens up indispensable new perspectives on seemingly isolated, familiar, local and national contexts. With this new ‘cosmopolitan vision’ it follows the empirical and methodological paths which other

disciplines – such as contemporary anthropology, geography, ethnology – have already taken with enthusiasm.

Global risks

One primary effect of global risks is: they are *cosmopolitan*, they are not out there, they are in here. They create a common world, a world that for better or worse we all share, a world that has ‘no outside’, ‘no exit’, ‘no Other’ anymore. Thus we have to recognize that, regardless of how much we hate or critique the ‘Other’, we are destined to live with these Others in *this* world at risk. Abandon all dreams of political purity and ‘higher’ values’ that would allow us to remain outside!

But we have to realize that global risks are *Janus-faced*: there is the *Hegel-scenario: Cooperate or fail!* But there is also a *Carl-Schmitt-scenario*: normalizing the state of emergency, politics of re-nationalization and xenophobia emerges. And often those contradictory dynamics are interlinked and mixed in a way which has been called ‘dialectics’ some time ago.

But still against the grain of the current widespread feeling of doom – and this is my point – a global consciousness of global risks creates spaces for alternative futures, alternative modernities. World risk society forces us to recognize the plurality of the world which the national outlook could ignore. Global risks open a moral and political space that can rise to a civil culture of responsibility that transcends borders and conflicts. The dramatic experience that everyone is vulnerable and the resulting responsibilities for others, also for the sake of one’s own survival, are the two sides of the world at risk.

But there is also a political very important correspondence between not-knowing, trust and risk: the known inability-to-know dissolves the ‘anthropological security’, the trust in the key-institutions of modern society, such as politics, business and science, which are supposed to guarantee security and rationality. As a result, these institutions are no longer seen as trustees but as suspects. They are no longer seen as *managers* of risk but as also as *sources* of risk. And with the dissolution of institutionalized trust again global risks increase.

Thus this equation is a key to understand the cultural and political dynamics of world risk society:
The more the inability-to-know is being publicly reflected, the more institutionalized trust is being dissolved, the more risk perception dominates social and political life.



This can be illustrated by the fate of nuclear energy after Fukushima. Supporters of nuclear energy base their judgements on a concept of risk immune to experience, a concept that confuses the period of early industrialization with the nuclear age. Their risk rationale assumes that the worst can happen and that we have to be prepared for it. If the roof is ablaze, the fire brigade arrives, the insurance pays out, and the doctors are there to look after the casualties. Transferred to the 'risk' of nuclear energy, this would require that even in the worst-case scenario, the radiation from our uranium would be a hazard for only a few hours rather than thousands of years, with no need to evacuate the population of a nearby city. This is, of course, nonsense. Following Fukushima, anyone who still maintains, that French, British, American, or Chinese reactors are still safe fails to see that based on the weight of the evidence we ought to draw the opposite conclusion. After all, if anything is clear, it is that another nuclear disaster is a certainty. The only question is where and when.

There are those who argue that there can be no such thing as risk-free energy generation with any large-scale plants, and that is perfectly true. But if they go on to infer that in the clean use of coal, biomass, water, wind, sun, and also nuclear energy, the risks may vary but are comparable, they are trying to wriggle out of the awkward truth, which is that we are perfectly aware of what happens when there is a nuclear meltdown. We know how long radiation lasts, what effect caesium and iodine have on human beings and the environment, and how many generations would have to suffer if the worst actually happened. What is more, we know that these unlimited consequences – spatial, temporal, and social – do *not* apply to the alternative, renewable energy sources. Anyone who, like Monbiot, makes the number of fatalities the yardstick of risk obscures the damages done to the unborn and to the evacuees, thereby turning risk analysis into a kind of ideology.

Summary

Let me summarize my argument: the category of global risks signifies the controversial reality of the possible, which must be demarcated from merely speculative possibility, on the one hand, and from the actual occurrence of the catastrophe, on the other. The moment risks become real – a



nuclear power station explodes (Fukushima) or the euro fails – it is too late. Global risks are always *future* events that *may* occur, that *threaten* us. But because this constant danger shapes our explanations, lodges in our heads and guides our actions, it becomes a political force that transforms the world – to the better or to the worse.

In order to understand and research the dialectical dynamics of world risk society between a Hegelian and a Carl Schmitt future scenario, we social scientists need to overcome the methodological nationalism which is in the ‘backbone of our thinking’, our way of doing social science. Inventing and practicing a cosmopolitan social science in order to investigate into unknown territories of a world at risk could become an exciting adventure.

So what do I mean by ‘the cosmopolitan turn in social sciences’? Firstly, I criticize methodological nationalism: Much of the social science literature is caught in a resilient methodological nationalism bound up with the presupposition that the national-territorial remains the primary container for the analysis of social, economic, political and cultural processes. At the beginning of the 21st century, the world at risk is posing a political and theoretical challenge to this idea that binding history and borders tightly together is the only possible means of social and symbolic integration.

Secondly, I reject the regular meanings of cosmopolitanism, thus separating it from other concepts such as universalism, globalism, transnationalism, and internationalism, for me cosmopolitization is an *ideal* and *reality* of universalism that maintains a particular dimension, of globality that includes nationalism, and of trans-nationalism which does not exclude plurality of ethnicities and of cultures.

The question one needs to ask is ‘what *is* cosmopolitanism?’ rather than ‘what cosmopolitanism *should be*?’ Cosmopolitization, I claim, is not the universal antithesis of various particulars (nationalism, localism, culturalism etc.) but is rather then *synthesis* of previous theories. It is the *overcoming of the dualisms* between universalism and particularism, between internationalism and nationalism, between globalization and localization. Thus cosmopolitization is much more than a political theory, a philosophical utopia (or dystopia for others), a governance programme, a personnel life style or mental state-of-mind. It is the reality of our times. I turned the argument that cosmopolitanism is an unrealistic ideology on its head, claiming that the proponents of the national are the idealistic one’s: they view reality with obsolete national lenses and such cannot see the



profound changes in reality, which make their theory antiquated and misguided. Cosmopolitization is therefore a perspective, a political reality and a normative theory. And it is *the* critical theory of our times, since it challenges the most profound truths which we hold: the national truth.