

SOC 576 Cultural Aspects of Migration, Urbanity and Gender

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Position paper

Beck, U. The Cosmopolitan Society and Its Enemies

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In his article on cosmopolitan society, Ulrich Beck puts emphasis on the fact that globalization is not merely a process of interconnecting places and thus blurring the difference between the global and the local, but mainly of an internal transformation, which he calls *cosmopolitanization* or *internal globalization*. The aim of cosmopolitan sociology as he presents it is to overcome the boundaries of methodological nationalism, which enables us to see social phenomena in their true global connections and influences.

According to Beck, the nation state is no longer a key division point for studying social, economical and political processes. Therefore, social sciences need to be deeply reorganized while facing the new, global reality. The most important point of reformulating sociology of today is to rework its core concepts, such as family, that no longer serve for describing reality. However, that does not mean that while doing research, one should embrace all possible global connections of the phenomenon. One should mainly leave the national perspective and start seeing things from the cross-national and multi-local point of view, which actually gives more importance to specific places.

It is very easy to agree with Beck that there are major cultural shifts on a global scale going on, throughout all societies, regardless of their national division. However, this has been the case in the past 150 years, although maybe in a slightly less accelerated fashion. There has never been a point when sociology did not have to react promptly to a new situation in the society and adjust its concepts to the new social reality. The tendency to see discontinuities in development and claim that “from now on, everything will be different”, is also not new; it is rather an ever-reoccurring figure of speech in sociology. However, it is important to note that the direction which Beck predicts for sociology is a very lucid prediction that is likely to lead to future success of sociology as a science that is able to capture the state of the society.

Beck, U. 2002. ‘The Cosmopolitan Society and Its Enemies,’ *Theory Culture Society* 19 (1–2), 17–44

