



0 Chapter 15 – Social Progress and Cultural Change

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7 1. Culture in the study of social progress

- 8 Any project of social progress is likely to involve significant cultural change, transforming people’s identities, aspirations, loyalties, horizons, perceptual and cognitive regimes, norms and values. Drawing on the example of modernization theory in the postwar period, we discuss some common pitfalls in the ways in which culture and processes of cultural change are perceived and understood. We focus on two issues that are of particular relevance to the IPSP: the need to nurture an ethos of solidarity and citizenship; and the need

to address risks of cultural exclusions and stigmatization. Although these issues were acknowledged within modernization theory, it lacked the tools to analyze them, and to address them today requires a more sophisticated understanding of the politics of cultural inclusion and exclusion. This requires both a refinement of our general theoretical concepts, and also a comparative and historically nuanced perspective on culture that takes into account regional differences, asymmetric developments and social specificities.

- 9 We define “culture” broadly, to refer not primarily to “the arts” or so-called high-and-low culture, but to culture in the anthropological sense of the everyday social norms, ideas and identities that define the meaningfulness of social interactions of individuals and societies. Culture in this broad sense is invoked for political purposes in a bewildering array of contexts. In some contexts, it is used to justify claims for the legal recognition or political protection of particular practices, on the grounds that these are “essential” to a group’s culture. In other contexts, it is used to explain inequalities between groups or societies, as when people say that Roma poverty is due to their ‘culture’, or that failed democratization in Arab countries is due to Arab/Islamic ‘culture’. In all of these contexts, and further heightened by the invocation of the “return of religion”, culture appears as an essentialized and fixed imperative, tied to a specific bounded and clearly identifiable group, ignoring the reality that cultures are always evolving, contested and interacting as social practices, and that individuals can and do take a critical perspective, explicitly and implicitly, towards cultural inheritances.
- 10 In response to these problems, some commentators have proposed that we abandon references to culture, both in academic analysis and public discourse.^[4] But this is neither feasible nor desirable. Human beings are not only social beings, as the IPSP emphasizes, but also cultural beings. We are meaning-making beings, who evaluate options (including visions of social progress) by how they fit into our “cultural scripts” and “collective imaginaries”, and whether they recognize and respect our collective identities, loyalties, and sense of belonging. Struggles for social and political change are therefore also cultural contestations. Recent manifestations of political protest (for example the Arab Spring, Pussy riot, Iranian protest culture) make conscious use of forms of cultural representation to articulate new visions of life and social engagement.^[5] We need to find a way constructively to engage with these cultural frames, and we ignore them at our peril, as we will see in the case of modernization theory.

11 2. Post-war modernization theory

12 One important obstacle to taking adequate account of culture lies in the persistent, if not always explicit, influence of “modernization theory” in the social sciences: a legacy which obscures rather than illuminates the challenges involved in cultural change. Even though modernization theory today has few explicit advocates, its influence remains pervasive, shaping the background assumptions behind many academic and public conversations about cultural change. In this section, therefore, we attempt to unpack these background assumptions, and identify their problematic effects.

13 To begin, it may be useful to recall the main tenets of postwar modernization theory. Ideas about “modernity” and “modernization” have taken many different forms over the past decades and centuries,^[6] but our focus here is a specific school of thought known as “modernization theory” that emerged in the US in the 1950s, and dominated Western social science (and Western foreign policy) from the 1950s to 1970s. Its academic proponents included W.W. Rostow in economics, David Apter in political science, S.M. Lipset in sociology, and Alex Inkeles and David McClelland in social psychology. But it was much more than just an academic fashion: it emerged in close collaboration with policy-makers, and shaped the work of governments, international agencies, and philanthropic organizations.^[7]

14 According to this theory, modernization is characterized by a series of social processes – such as education, literacy, urbanization, legal codification, and bureaucratization – which dis-embedded people from their traditional ways of life. People no longer simply inherit ascribed roles and relationships within a traditional culture, but are exposed to different ways of life, and (to varying degrees) have options for the kind of person they want to be, and the kind of life they want to lead. The inevitable result, according to modernization theory, is a kind of *individualization*. People’s horizons were no longer bound to a particular tribe or village, and this in turn leads at an individual level to the privileging of individually-chosen goals over ascribed group norms, and at the political level to the privileging of civic identities over primordial ethnic or religious identities. As modernization proceeds, individuals come to orient themselves politically towards modern public institutions, and to define themselves as citizens of the society as a whole.

15 It is important to note that this process of individualization had a double movement: in the first instance, it involved emancipating or *dis-embedding* individuals from their traditional ways of life, so that

they could become autonomous and achievement-oriented individuals;[8] in the second moment, it involved *re-embedding* these autonomous individuals within larger civil societies and public institutions.[9] Individuals' solidarities and loyalties would thereby shift from primordial kinship/tribal groups to the civic nation. In this way, the account of individualization as a cultural process was linked to, and helped generate, an account of the cultural foundations of the modern state, with its distinctively modern and secular modes of authority.

- 16 Viewed this way, modernization theory is not just about particular social reforms or institutional processes, such as urbanization or bureaucratization, but is also fundamentally about *cultural change*: about creating new kinds of individual subjectivities, with new values of individual choice, individual achievement, and civic commitment. Modernization theory sought to create the very autonomous individuals and civic-minded citizens who in turn would sustain and support modernizing public institutions. Modernization theory was, in the title of one of its most famous works, about “making men modern” (Inkeles, 1969). It was not just institutions that needed to be made modern, but the individuals themselves.
- 17 As this brief summary makes clear, modernization theory rests on a basic dichotomy between “tradition” and “modernity”, and defines social progress in terms of how far individuals and societies have moved from the former to the latter:
- 18 According to modernization theorists, modern society was cosmopolitan, mobile, controlling of the environment, secular, welcoming of change, and characterized by a complex division of labour. Traditional society, by contrast, was inward looking, inert, passive toward nature, superstitious, fearful of change, and economically simple (Gilman 2003: 5)
- 19 Like other grand narratives of history and progress, this narrative of “from tradition to modernity” is now widely discredited. Indeed, it suffered a “shockingly rapid collapse in the late 1960s and early 1970s” (Gilman 2003: 23). This is partly because so many modernization projects in the developing world failed miserably, leading not to stable and prosperous civic societies, but to unstable authoritarian regimes. Defenders of modernization theory often blamed these failures on people's irrational attachment to their traditional culture, but most observers concluded that modernization theory itself was partly to blame, with its “hopelessly reductionist” account of cultural change.[10]

- 20 Why is it reductionist? To oversimplify, culture appears in modernization theory in two ways. First, it acts as an obstacle to social progress. When modernization projects failed, the common explanation was that people were too attached to their traditional ways of life. Processes of cultural transmission and cultural affiliation had therefore to be ruptured or dissolved in order to reduce cultural obstacles to modernization.[11] Second, culture is treated as an outcome or dependent variable on the individual level, allowing development to be measured in terms of whether people had indeed become “individualized” (that is, come to have civic identities in place of traditional ethnic/tribal loyalties, and have “achievement-oriented” values in place of passive or fatalistic traditional attitudes and values).[12]
- 21 What modernization theory lacked was any account of how people’s inherited identities and ways of life could be a source of creativity and capability in addressing the challenges of development. While appeal to “tradition” can certainly be invoked to block progress, it is equally true that people often turn to inherited practices and solidarities to help make sense of change, to organize collectively to manage the risks of change, and to take advantage of the opportunities that come with change. Indeed, tradition is never just mechanically reproduced. Tradition is always subject to both creative and strategic reinterpretation, just as creativity and strategic innovation always takes place in reference to inherited practices. Categorizing cultural practices as either “tradition” or “modernity” thus obscures rather than reveals the actual dynamics involved: it ignores the ways tradition is always being creatively reinterpreted, and it ignores the way modernity is always dependent on inherited cultural forms and processes.[13]
- 22 This reductionist view of culture is now widely denounced and discredited amongst anthropologists and cultural sociologists, and few social scientists today take the “traditional versus modern” dichotomy as the starting point for analysis.[14] Yet many commentators argue that the tropes of modernization theory continue to inform public debates. Brohman argues that its reductionist views resurfaced in the Washington Consensus and other neoliberal visions of international development which “share a disregard for indigenous knowledge and popular participation”, and which blame failed development on dysfunctional cultures (Brohman 1995). More generally, modernization theory has arguably become the kind of default “common sense” when explaining progress or its lack:
- 23 In the collective view of most Americans (including intellectuals) poor countries and their peoples remained irrational, corrupt, inefficient, excessively fecund, technologically inadequate,

incompetent, disease-ridden, superstitious, mired in age-old ways of doing things, and so on (Gilman: 266-7).

- 24 In effect, modernization theory operates as a kind of zombie category: officially dead, but surprisingly alive and well, continuing to shape public views of what progress is, and how to achieve it.[\[15\]](#)
- 25 And not surprisingly, the supposed beneficiaries of “progress” are often keenly sensitive to this legacy. When progress is defined in antithesis to inherited identities and practices, individuals are put in the impossible position of having to choose between their culture and progress, a choice they resent and reject. A recent study of development projects in Ecuador illustrates the problem (Radcliffe 2015). Some international organizations started from the premise that indigenous women were disadvantaged by their traditional culture, and so framed development projects as encouraging and enabling women to challenge their community’s identity and culture through training in non-indigenous ideas of modern citizenship. Other projects, however, started from the premise that that “indigenous women must not be urged to choose between their culture and their rights”, and that women can find sources for empowerment through engaging with their culture, not distancing themselves from it (Walsh, forthcoming). Whereas the former projects collapsed in failure, the latter projects were more successful.
- 26 The same tendency has been observed within Europe. Some European feminist organizations start from the premise that Muslim women are inherently oppressed by their traditional culture, and this assumption persists even when the Muslim women themselves dispute it, because “once a conflict narrative has been forged...policy actors only hear Muslim women if they confirm cultural oppression” (Bassel and Emejulu 2010). The net result has been to render invisible the efforts of Muslim women who find sources of strength and empowerment within their inherited cultures and identities, who are told instead that they must choose between their culture and their rights.[\[16\]](#) (We return to this example in section 15.8 below). For all those who understand agency, self-recognition and self-development within the context of what is culturally meaningful for them, the emancipatory promise of modernization theory rings hollow.
- 27 Defining progress in antithesis to inherited cultural identities is not only alienating for the supposed beneficiaries of progress, but also risks exacerbating social exclusion. Defenders of modernization theory may have seen themselves as inviting everyone to participate in an inclusive civic life, but when this civic life is defined as the antithesis of a group’s culture, affected social groups are not just culturally excluded, but become socially ‘othered’. This social

othering occurs at the level of institutional ethos (e.g., in schools and the media) as well as the everyday interactions of social life, in which group members are marked out and subjected to stigmatizing stereotypes, paternalistic expectations, and constant monitoring. Such exclusion also deprives societies of the multiple sources of cultural vitality necessary for social progress. To address the massive challenges we face, domestically and globally, we cannot rely solely on hegemonic Western paradigms of modernization and rationalization. We need to learn from the insights of diverse cultural and civilizational heritages, and from the new ways of being together that can emerge when these diverse traditions interact. In this sense, modernization must be reframed, not as “resolving” cultural difference through a predetermined logic of rationalization,^[17] but as the often unpredictable crossroads of cultural change (Touraine 1997; Touraine and Khosrokhavar 2000).

- 28 In these and other ways, the core assumption of modernization theory that progress requires disavowing tradition sets up false choices, exacerbates social exclusion, and closes down possibilities for progressive cultural change. If we are to truly overcome the legacy of modernization theory, we need to be aware of these pitfalls, and to expand our ideas about the complex relationships between social progress and cultural change.
- 29 In the rest of this chapter, we hope to take some steps in this direction. We begin by focusing on the core idea of modernization theory: namely, individualization, which as we saw earlier is understood as a dual process of “disembedding” from traditional cultures and “re-embedding” in modern civic societies. While individualization is certainly a very real phenomenon,^[18] modernization theory mischaracterizes both moments.
- 30 In section 15.3, we argue that modernization theory had no account of how or why disembedded individuals would “re-embed” – that is, why they would develop civic loyalties or solidarities, rather than simply becoming egotistical, apathetic, consumerist, or “hunkering down” (in Putnam’s terminology).^[19] Indeed, Ulrich Beck argued that this sort of “disembedding without re-embedding” is precisely what defines the contemporary world, as distinct from the early modern era “in which the disembedding of individuals from traditional feudal structures was followed by a relatively fast re-embedding in new social structures of capitalist society (nation, class, and core family)” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman (2000) finds no “mechanisms of re-embedding” in the era of “liquid modernity”. For Beck, Bauman and other sociologists of modernity, such as Richard Sennett, “radicalized

individualization has not resulted in more freedom for the individual but rather in a disembedding and a feeling of rootlessness” (Juul 2013).[20]

- 31 In our view, these assessments may be too bleak, and underestimate the extent to which individuals continue to generate civic loyalties and solidarities. However, this clearly cannot be taken for granted, as modernization theory tended to do. Indeed, we can see the costs of this indifference to the “mechanisms of re-embedding” in the destructive effects of neoliberalism (discussed in section 15.4). So the first point is to note that “individualization” is not inherently or unconditionally a marker of social progress, and the task of building solidarities remains pressing, for which a richer account of culture can help.
- 32 In the following sections we explore the flip side: just as individualization is not an unconditional good, so too “traditional” or “primordial” attachments are not unconditionally regressive or backward. The persistence of such attachments, and their political mobilization, is not always to be regretted, but rather can, under some circumstances, serve as a vehicle for progressive politics and cultural change. We need a more fine-grained way of assessing the mobilization of groups to protect their “cultures” and “identities”. We illustrate these dynamics through a case study of evolving identities in sub-Saharan Africa (section 15.6), and through debates over the new spatial dynamics of culture (section 15.7) and the idea of “multiple modernities” (section 15.8), all of which offer lessons for how to identify (and to render productive) the ambivalences inherent in both individualization and traditionalism, and thereby offer new ways to think about social progress.

33 **3. Paradoxes of individualization and social progress**

- 34 As we noted earlier, processes of modernization are in large part processes of individualization, disembedding people from ascribed social roles and requiring them to make their own way as individuals in the world. This is a dramatic historical evolution, but deeply ambiguous and paradoxical in its effects on human well-being and human freedom, with many different possible trajectories. Modernization theory failed to identify these ambiguities, in part because it had an overly-simple view of the relationship between

“modernization” as a *process* and “modernity” as a *value* or *goal*.

Modernization as a process can be understood as the ongoing reconstruction of society based on multiple forms of rationalization: economic, productive, organizational, bureaucratic, political, demographic, and of human capital. These processes of modernization are supposed to lead to “modernity”, understood as a particular sort of moral and political order built around values such as equality, individual liberties, and pluralism (Touraine, 1992). In the minds of modernization theorists, modernity in this sense was usually understood along the lines of a Western liberal-democratic nation-state, committed to individual rights and material opportunities guaranteed to all on the basis of their universal citizenship status (rather than on the basis of particularistic relationships of kinship, ethnicity or religion). This vision relied on the assumption of a virtuous circle between modernization (the rationalization of economics and politics) and modernity as a political culture of freedom and equality.

- 35 In reality, however, the link between modernization and modernity has proven to be anything but direct. In many cases, on every continent, modernization unfolded without modernity, and indeed even repressed or inhibited modernity. From fascist Germany to communist Soviet Union to the military dictatorships of Latin America, intense modernization processes were put in place, promoting bureaucratic modernization and industrial productivity and the expansion of human capital, but suppressing human rights and individual freedom.^[21] Modernization can lead to authoritarian if not totalitarian political orders as much as to democracy.
- 36 Moreover, even where political authoritarianism has been avoided, modernization processes have not necessarily generated a humanistic ethic of respect for subjectivity and diversity. Instead, all too often, we find an instrumentalization both of social life and of the natural world. The current crises of global warming, the extinction of species, the exhaustion of natural resources, and the pollution of water, soil, and air can be seen as the manifestation of a “depredation culture”, made possible by an unprecedented capacity to transform nature. Attitudes towards immigrants, children, the poor, the elderly, or those with disabilities are often governed by instrumental calculations of economic returns, not by a sense of solidarity or shared
- 37 To combat this, we need to “denaturalize” our ideas of modernization, and rethink our metrics of individualization, modernity and progress. Social progress has too often been conceived according to what can be statistically observed; that is, the “ratio mensura” has determined what is to be considered relevant for policies and politics. Thus, social progress has been fitted into a positivistic-instrumental view with an

elaborate system of aggregate indicators of welfare and capacity development (from poverty indicators to sector indicators in health, education, social security, housing, etc.). Constant self-reflexivity, informed by diverse cultural voices, is required to de-naturalize the embedded mono-rationality of economic or bureaucratic rationalization.[22]

- 38 This is obviously an enormous task, requiring a wide research agenda to explore how we can put together what has typically been kept separate or even considered contradictory: economic growth and a sense of belonging; productive time and free time; material production and spirituality; what is useful and what is useless information and knowledge; the relation between building human capital and educating for meaningful lives and active citizenship; responding to urgent needs and ensuring long-term intergenerational solidarity. This is a big task, partly addressed already in chapter 2 on the metrics of progress, but we will focus here on one dimension of the task: namely, how to rethink individualization. As we've seen, modernization processes entail individualization, but individualization has not always led to "modernity" as a moral and political order based on values of respect for individual freedom and civic equality. Instead, modernization has produced divergent and ambivalent forms of individualization, both emancipatory and harmful, and a central task for any project of social progress is to think about how to enable the former and contain the latter.
- 39 Let us begin with the more negative forms of individualization that have promoted instrumental attitudes towards others, and undermined a sense of belonging and solidarity. One is what C.B. Macpherson called *possessive individualism* (Macpherson, 1962), a view he dates back to the 17th-century liberal philosopher John Locke, with his emphasis on the centrality of appropriating private property to a fully human life. The other is what has been called *postmodern narcissism* or the reinforcement of narcissistic behaviors in late capitalism (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Lasch 1991; Lipovetsky 2004).
- 40 *Postmodern narcissism* emerges as a will to individual gratification and self-realization, where the Other is absent or instrumental to personal attainment (the Other here may be the community, society, those in need, or those far away).[23] Combined with the use of information flows for building pathways to personal achievement and gratification, postmodern narcissism strongly correlates individualization with *self-management*. Individualization along these lines is progressively "cabled" on a system of provisional affinities, mutual usefulness, and goal-oriented relations with others where such others are viewed as instrumental. Individualization moves

through short-term relations, with the rapid obsolescence both of projects and bonds, as goods, contents, discourses, events, and relations all become disposable.

- 41 Many commentators view postmodern narcissism as a pervasive ideology of the contemporary world. According to Jameson and others, it is a cultural expression of late capitalism or consumer capitalism, where individualization is more and more dependent on consumerism and the search for immediate gratification at an individual level; on self-image in a world centered on image exchange; on low compromise and provisional identification with self-centered projects (Jameson, 1998; Maffesoli, 2000; Bauman, 2007). Individualization in this form makes society overloaded with anxiety, due to the need to move on, to rotate through the use of objects and services, and to see the world and others as potential objects for consumption and disposition.
- 42 Needless to say, this sort of narcissism is not promoted on moral grounds. On the contrary, it is routinely denounced by educators, commentators, and indeed by everyday citizens, who bemoan its impact on individual lives and on social cohesion. Nevertheless, it is more and more “normalized” when it comes to individual aspirations, self-management, interpersonal relations, network communication, and life projects. Both postmodern narcissism and possessive individualism spread virally throughout society in everyday market operations, speculative economics, competitiveness, the self-management boom, consumerism as the basis for personal gratification, self-image idolatry in the pervasive circulation of images, and so on. Postmodern narcissism has acquired an unprecedented cultural and psychological drive. It has its own efficacy in building a prevailing personality, modeling expectations and goals, determining family life and forms of love, transforming the relation with work, the disposition to share or not to share, the nature and scope of commitments. Narcissism operates as a “molecular” mechanism (in the words of Deleuze and Guattari). It privileges personal gratification over social welfare and privileges self-management over collective projects; it tends to instrumental and aesthetic bonds more than to family or community bonds; and values immediacy over long-term projects. It nurtures an intensive and diversified interaction with symbolic and material goods that are replaced faster and faster, providing combustion to an economic order based on rapid obsolescence.
- 43 These forms of individualization are clearly problematic from the perspective of social progress. At the best of times, they lead to difficulty in sustaining long-term significant bonds with others. But at this historical moment, they leave us radically ill-equipped to deal with growing global challenges, including the intergenerational

solidarity needed to address global warming and other catastrophic scenarios; or the sense of social justice needed to address growing wealth concentration or rising populism; or the sense of international justice and humanitarian concern needed to address violent conflicts, migration flows, world-wide social fragmentation and anomie, and raising threats to democratic stability.

- 44 In one sense, none of this is particularly new. Since the Second World War, there have been repeated warning by academics, artists and intellectuals of the dangers that modernization-as-rationalization is leading not to a humane society but to the dominance of instrumental rationality.[24] In Jurgen Habermas’s influential formulation, modern society needs to prevent the systems logic of bureaucratic and market rationality, with its requirements of efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control, from “colonizing” the “life world”, with its focus on shared understandings of ethical visions. Other authors have discussed this in terms of the conflict between rationalization and subjectivity (Alain Touraine), or between formal and substantial rationality (Max Weber, Max Horkheimer, Agnes Heller), or between rationalization and meaning (Edgar Morin, Gianni Vattimo). In all of these accounts, modernization has the tendency, if unchecked, of creating a society in which social relationships are instrumentalized, with nothing (and nobody) seen as having intrinsic value, nothing worthy of enduring allegiance.
- 45 However, we should not reduce individualization to possessive individualism and postmodern narcissism. There are also emancipatory forms of individualization that challenge inherited social relationships, not in the name of consumerism and narcissism, but in the name of equality and justice. Individualization ‘de-naturalizes’ inherited social hierarchies, and thereby contributes to critical awareness regarding discrimination, social justice gaps, the invisibility of particular groups in public debate, and forms of alienation and domination in the modernization processes. This critical awareness in turn often leads to new forms of collective action, social solidarities and democratic agency, leading to new capabilities for meaningful freedom and valuable livelihoods (Alkire 2002; Sen 1984, 1999).
- 46 Feminist struggles for equal rights and non-discrimination are an example of such collectively mobilized individualization aimed at expanding autonomy and recognition, and reframing justice and redistributive politics. The goal is not primarily to give women an equal opportunity to be narcissists or consumers, but rather to deconstruct patriarchal ideologies about what sorts of lives and activities are worthy of respect. Similarly, the struggles of sexual

minorities today illustrate how individualization involves claims for public visibility, and articulates new ways of being human and of experiencing and valuing body, desire, love, and pleasure.

- 47 Individualization in this framework can be seen as the repertoire of pro-identity and pro-recognition actions that converge into claims for more equality and justice. Individualization can thus be understood as a mechanism of horizontal differentiation that fosters visibility for diverse groups and generates visibility struggles. In this sense, individualization can be related to the “subaltern speaking” (in the words of Spivak). Individualization is visible in those acts or moments in which a subject who has been historically subordinated or discriminated on the basis of gender, race or caste, and who has lacked both power and recognition, stands for his/her dignity and rights, and by so doing changes (or makes no longer unquestionable) a relation of radical asymmetry in power.
- 48 Individualization is here both an autonomous action and a claim to be treated as an equal. Where there was a relation of power, it installs a relation of resistance, opening a gap or a hiatus in the midst of a relation where domination was the norm. Thus, individualization implies self-affirmation in a relation where prevailing patterns of asymmetry in rights and power appear as what they are (unmasked) and, at the same time, as what cannot continue prevailing if self-affirmation is to be considered a genuine claim for dignity and reciprocity.[25]
- 49 In this way, individualization is deepening our idea of equality, which is an evolving concept and value (CEPAL-ECLAC, 2010). It moves with history and enriches its semantics with both old and new meanings. Today, these include the redistributive struggle (not only between social classes but also in the spheres of gender, ethnicity, generation); access to an expanding spectrum of public goods and public services as part of the rights of the citizen; recognition and visibility of groups defined by their difference; the right of every citizen to fair treatment and fair access to justice; new ways of political participation that go beyond the boundaries of electoral democracy so as to give space to a diversity of actors who have no access to the mechanisms of liberal representation or who are skeptical about their efficacy or legitimacy; and the imperative of global and intergenerational solidarity vis-à-vis planetary economic and environmental challenges. The claiming and defending of equality in these forms not only builds solidarity amongst mobilized groups, but also helps build a broader sense of social membership that unites all citizens. The civil, political and social rights of citizenship provide a powerful basis for individuals to develop a sense of belonging and affiliation to society as a whole (Rawls, 1971; CEPAL-ECLAC, 2007).

- 50 Individualization has the potential to revive and strengthen democracy, not only by opening up the political process to previously marginalized groups, but also by demanding greater accountability in the pursuit of public goods and the common interest. Individualization delegitimizes older structures of political authority based on paternalism and deference, as individuals demand the right to judge for themselves, and seek the information needed to make these judgements. Transparency and accountability become more and more a democratic demand, a possibility made feasible by ICTs. The creative use of ICTs to expose and share information is both a source of power and a means of controlling power, including modern versions of Robin Hoods who steal information from the powerful to give to the people. While “bad” hackers damage your computers, use your credit cards or invade your private information, “good” hackers are the new heroes of the information society. They hold a critical stance towards the status quo and their deeds may show a deep sense of service to the community in ways that are still hard to grasp.
- 51 Hackers are not the only examples of such “emancipatory individualization”, understood here as the will to “make a difference”. Activists around the world are sharing capacities and knowledge, putting together initiatives aiming at the democratization of power throughout networks and communities, denouncing spurious proceedings and abuse of power in the corporate and political spheres, promoting alternatives for sustainable life at a personal and local level, spreading tolerance and openness vis-a-vis cultural diversity and creative options for living meaningful lives. ICTs allow these forms of individualization to gain visibility and support, and can become viral even when activists lack traditional forms of power or material resources. They may enter the big house of global debate through the small window of a house in a suburb.[\[26\]](#)
- 52 In short, emancipatory individualism makes possible new forms of horizontal solidarity amongst co-citizens as well as new forms of democratic agency and accountability vis-à-vis state institutions and other institutions of power. At their best, these forms of individualization offer the possibility of embedding democracy down to the roots of the social fabric, employing new discourses and new communication processes to create new understandings of what a global community should and could be, triggering new patterns of belonging and sharing, and more democratic relations of power.
- 53 In our view, these emancipatory forms of individualization are as much a part of the contemporary landscape as the possessive individualism and postmodern narcissism discussed earlier. It is a mistake, therefore, to assume that individualization is inherently inconsistent with social solidarity or civic-mindedness. Indeed, the psychological evidence suggests that the “individualism-collectivism

dimension is unrelated to the egoism-civicness dimension” (Rothstein 2017: 307).[27] Some countries with high levels of individualization (as measured, for example, by support for rights to dissent and to choice and to self-expression) are amongst the most solidaristic (as measured by redistribution). There is, in short, such a thing as “solidaristic individualism” which involves a robust ethos and practice of citizenship. Individualization here operates at a “higher level”, that is, with an integrative vocation and not as a mechanism that deepens fragmentation, social injustice and “bowling alone” (Bauman 2004, 2011; Sennet 1998, 2005; Putnam 2000).

- 54 However, it is equally clear that this sort of emancipatory or solidaristic individualism is always at risk of degenerating into narcissistic or possessive individualism. Both are prevalent in contemporary societies, and indeed are intermingled in complex ways. Different figures of individualism – homo economicus, user of public services, beneficiary of social policies, narcissistic consumer, equal rights-bearing citizen, autonomous subject – circulate globally. The new global order is permeated by the paradoxical coexistence of growing claims for equal justice and the globalized culture of possessive individualism and postmodern narcissism. Narcissism and equality live together, one as a naturalized everyday practice and the other as a consecrated value subject to political struggle and part of policy agendas.
- 55 The challenge is to turn vicious circles of individualization – in which postmodern narcissism feeds into a culture of depredation – into virtuous circles of emancipatory individualization, in which demands for equality and recognition generate new forms of living well together. In our view, we may be at a historical threshold where such a turn is possible, where individualization becomes a source of empowerment for social movements, of capillarity in resistance strategies, of democratization of voice and visibility, and of re-grouping according to new collective identities.
- 56 However, this is by no means guaranteed, and deliberate efforts will be needed to move individualization from the axis of possessive and competitive individualism to the axis of social citizenship, equality, and cross-cultural non-hierarchical identities. Addressing these complex relations between individualization and belonging, individualization and solidarity, and individualization and social justice should be a central focus of any account of the relationship between cultural change and social progress.
- 57 In the past, this challenge has often been discussed solely within a Western liberal framework, but today it must be broadened to include a more global flow of ideas and identities (see 15.7 below). Western experiences of individualization are not the only possible

starting points or endpoints. When informed and nurtured by different cultural traditions, individualization processes may evolve new ways of being together and new senses of belonging.[28]

- 58 Consider, in this respect, the idea of “Buen Vivir” or “Sumak Kawsay” that has been incorporated into the Constitution of Ecuador. “Sumak Kawsay” is an ancient Quechua concept, also present among the aymará in Bolivia as “suma qamaña”, and has been adopted officially into the new Bolivian Constitution as well. This vision considers humans as part of Mother Earth (in the Andean culture, related to the idea of “Pachamama”). “Buen vivir” (“living well”) stresses a sense of belonging of the individual to the community and to nature. It entails a strong sense of balance between human welfare and respect for the natural environment, and views economic growth and productive development not as an end in itself but rather a means to living well.
- 59 These ideas may be unfamiliar to Western ears, but they are directly relevant to the challenge of ensuring that modernization (as rationalization processes) lead to modernity (as values of freedom and equality). They offer a new way of ensuring that modernization-as-rationalization leads to empowerment and not to the colonization of social life. And indeed the Ecuadorian and Bolivian constitutions invoke Buen Vivir, not in opposition to modern ideas of equal citizenship, but precisely as a principle for interpreting ideas of equal citizenship.[29] The result is a novel cultural creation, a hybrid synthesis of diverse cultural sources, emerging to deal with the specifically modern social, economic, political and environmental challenges of Andean society.
- 60 This suggests that we need to rethink the modernization paradigm as the crossroads of cultural changes (Touraine, 1997, Touraine and Khosrokhavar 2000). Once we acknowledge that progress does not have a singular (Western) starting point or endpoint, the very idea of modernity must be re-scripted through the active acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of cultural worlds, civilization heritages, and future aspirations. This will entail seeing modernization as a process that every society confronts: not as an external influence with a singular (Western) origin, but as a set of processes that have local and extra-local sources and entanglements (García Canclini 1990, Appadurai 1996), and which require novel forms of cultural hybridizations (Castells 2010).

61 **4. From market economy to market society**

- 62 So far, we have argued that individualization can take diverse forms, with very different implications for social progress. At its best, modern individuals see themselves as belonging to a community of shared fate, embracing an ethos of citizenship and mutual obligation. This is the sort of “re-embedded” individualism that modernization theory assumed was the natural outcome of modernization processes. In reality, however, this civic-minded and solidaristic form of individualization is always competing with, and in danger of degenerating into, a more possessive and narcissistic form, in which dis-embedded individuals are not re-embedded in broader social solidarities. Deliberate political efforts are required to promote civic-minded forms of individualization, and we have suggested some of the cultural resources that are available for such efforts, including new forms of political awareness, collective mobilization, and cross-cultural interactions.
- 63 Unfortunately, there are powerful trends operating in the other direction, not least the profound influence of the neoliberal era, which in many ways has operated to tip individualization processes in the wrong direction. The economic and political dimensions of neoliberalism are described in other chapters, but our concern here is with their cultural implications. The spread of neoliberalism has not only changed the distribution of economic resources and political power, but also changed people’s subjectivities and identities: their sense of membership and belonging, and their views of what we owe each other as members of society.[30] Indeed, it has changed these in ways that modernization theory did not predict, and probably would not have endorsed.
- 64 Modernization theory operated within a framework that John Ruggie calls “embedded liberalism”, which dominated Western thinking from the end of World War II into the 1980s. This framework embraced the need for markets and international trade, but assumed that markets had to be embedded in (and regulated by) a larger social context that was not itself founded on market norms, including a substantial role for a national welfare state.[31] On this view, markets can serve to advance human well-being, but only if they are embedded within a political community that rests on norms of citizenship.
- 65 This framework was radically disrupted by the rise of neoliberalism in 1980s, in two different ways. First, social functions that were once the province of the state were handed over to the market (e.g., through privatization, deregulation and commodification). As a result, spheres of social life that were once regulated by a logic of citizenship are now regulated by a logic of market exchanges. Second, even where functions have been retained by public institutions, the operation of these institutions has been reconceived using market

metaphors and concepts. Public institutions of education or health care, for example, have been subjected to new management philosophies that emphasize ideas of competition, incentives, the return on investment, and “responsibilization”. As a result, even in their relation to public institutions, individuals are treated more as “consumers” or “clients” than as “citizens”.

- 66 The net effect has been a substantial change in the everyday metabolism of social life, as markets have become disembedded from society (Latcher 1999). Some commentators describe this as a form of “market fundamentalism” (Somers 2008), but we might also describe it as a shift from a “market economy” to a “market society”, in the sense that market norms have come to characterize ever-wider domains of society, at the expense of norms of civic responsibility (Sandel. 2012).
- 67 Modernization theory did not foresee this change, since it took embedded liberalism as the natural end-point of modernization. This blind-spot parallels its blind-spot about individualization: just as modernization theory assumed that dis-embedded individuals would naturally be re-embedded in civic institutions, so too it assumed that markets would naturally be embedded in a larger framework of democratic citizenship. In reality, the embedding of both individuals and markets within society is a fragile achievement that needs to be continually fostered.
- 68 The negative effects of market fundamentalism on economic inequality and democracy are discussed elsewhere in this Report. Our focus here is on its implications for cultural change, on how individuals understand their own identity and construct the meaning of their social relationships. In one sense, the influence of market relations on people’s cognitive maps and moral values is a long-standing phenomenon, dating back to the origins of commercial capitalism in the 15th and 16th centuries, and has been a staple topic in the classics of social science (Marx, Weber, Simmel).[32] However, the neoliberal era has arguably defined a new “common sense”, operating through the media, universities, policy-making networks, and other spaces to advance not only a particular set of economic rules, but also a world vision aiming at re-educating subjectivities and identities in various ways. Neoliberalism as a cultural repertoire has deepened a one-dimensional form of individualization as the private quest for personal benefit and profit, within the framework of a “naturalized” ethics of possessive individualism. These ideas are no longer restricted to the sphere of market competition, but increasingly shape all of social life.

- 69 As a result, we are encouraged to think of ourselves as a “company of one”, with the responsibility to manage our life and our relationships as an economic asset (Lane 2011). Productivity becomes an issue, not just of corporate strategy or national planning, but of self-management. We are expected to acquire the knowledge, information and social connections needed, not just for a particular job, but to adapt in a world where skills are subject to rapid obsolescence and where forms of organization ceaselessly change. As Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han (2012) has pointed out, productivity goes well beyond economics and permeates a new superego where self-regulation becomes a pervasive mechanism in the reproduction of (increasingly unequal) social relations.
- 70 We can identify a number of perverse effects of this cultural shift. One is the gradual erosion of ideas of social citizenship. The idea of the citizen is being re-invented as a client and consumer, thus eroding the sense of solidarity and of entitlement to social rights that underlies the welfare state. The result is not only to diminish public support for the disadvantaged or vulnerable, but also to make receipt of this support a source of shame and stigma, since it is seen as a failure of self-management. In some cases, this may even lead citizens to forego the support they need rather than face the stigma that attaches to public support in a neoliberal era (see box 1 on recent welfare reforms in the Netherlands).
- 71 A second effect concerns the growing centrality of consumption to self-identity and social status. This has been fostered by many different factors, including the globalization of markets, low-cost economies, and access to credit and easy financing. Whatever the causes, *homo economicus* appears at full peak in the neoliberal era. The worldwide access to an expanding spectrum of goods and services, both material and symbolic, is at the same time a powerful means of status differentiation. The highly developed consumer world centers communication and self-esteem in consumption patterns and consumption talk.
- 72 A third effect is the decline of public space: The most eloquent expression of the commoditization of social life is the substitution of the public square by the shopping center as a place of social encounter and social exchange. The global mall, with its endlessly diverse and constantly updated merchandise, is an icon of the “life of the city” today, the new version of what Baudelaire, Simmel and Walter Benjamin saw in the illuminated streets of Paris or Berlin in the turn from the 19th to the 20th century. But whereas earlier liberals celebrated the urban public sphere as a space for public discussion and the formation of shared understandings (Habermas’s “communicative action”), neoliberals celebrate commercial space as shrines for private consumption.

73 These cultural effects of neoliberalism are sometimes said to be offset by certain positive cultural trends, such as the rise of a more multicultural or cosmopolitan ethos. Neoliberalism has sponsored economic globalization, and in the process brought people into contact with a much wider array of cultural products. Neoliberalism may encourage consumerism, but it encourages us to consume and enjoy the products of many different cultures, including the food, music and clothing of diverse societies. Commentators have called this a form of “neoliberal multiculturalism”, or “Benetton multiculturalism”, after one of the many global corporations that has specialized in celebrating the savvy consumer who relishes the opportunity to sample this cultural smorgasbord. Can we not see this as a positive cultural consequence of the neoliberal market society? [33]

74 Perhaps, but it is important to note that neoliberalism operates with a dualistic conception of globalization. It is a striking feature of the neoliberal era that global mobility applies much more to capital than to human beings. Capital is actively sought and encouraged to move across borders; indeed, the few barriers that limited the movement of capital were done away with as part of the global neoliberal offensive (Harvey 2007; Gosh 2005). By contrast, there is often strong opposition to the mobility of certain kinds of bodies. Members of the global elite, irrespective of their group designation, traverse the globe with increasing ease. But non-white poor and working class persons face mounting barriers in their attempts to move into this supposedly global village that is sold to them through all kinds of advertising media, cultivated through desires for a better life, and heightened by the relative affluence of those who have successfully migrated. Unlike capital, bodies carry and mark culture, and these cultures are often seen as “out of place” in the societies into which migrants move (see section 15.6 below). While some groups and individuals adopt new names and patterns of speech in order to meld into the places not meant for them, others resist melding-in. They insist on, and oftentimes openly display, their ‘other’ identities, sometimes at risk to their bodily integrity. They live their cultures, and in the process reconfigure the cultural maps of the world, threatening inherited assumptions about where culture ‘A,’ ‘B’ and ‘C’ belong. The neoliberal celebration of multicultural consumption co-exists with increasing efforts to restrict the mobility of these Others, and with attempts to impose increasingly restrictive “integration” conditions on those who are permitted to enter or stay. As a result, neoliberalism is characterized by a deep cultural cleavage between a cosmopolitan elite that makes everywhere home,[34] and an ‘other’ working class and the poor from the South that is largely unwelcome, especially in times of economic crisis. Xenophobia, Islamophobia, and a racism coded in the language of cultural difference are the reaction in the north to the presence of this latter category, resulting in

cultural othering, social exclusion and economic and political marginalization. This dualistic approach to globalization – celebrating mobile capital while policing mobile bodies, particularly those seen as ‘other’ in class or culture - is as much a part of the cultural idiom of neoliberalism as the celebration of consumerism. [35]

- 75 In these and other respects, neoliberalism has exacerbated the challenge of ensuring that individualization takes emancipatory and civic forms rather than narcissistic or anti-social forms. Where markets are disembedded from society, it is harder to ensure that individuals too are not disembedded.
- 76 Many commentators argue that the heyday of neoliberal economic ideology is over, having lost its legitimacy, or at least its hegemony, during the global crisis of 2008. However, memory is short, and the perception of the market economy as the dorsal spine of social life remains strong. In any event, the cultural effects of neoliberalism have already penetrated both institutional practices and individual subjectivities. A central task is to repair this damage, and to rebuild the cultural foundations of civility and solidarity.

77

Box XV.1: Fear of shame: citizens facing restricted access to state support for long term care in Netherlands*

As in many other countries, citizens in the Netherlands are encouraged to mobilize their private networks to arrange for long-term care (LTC) before seeking State support. Recent policies summoning such ‘active citizenship’ posit that public goods, such as the provision of care, are best arranged at the lowest feasible level of organization, such as the family and community. Against the background of an aging population and financial and economic crises, neoliberal policymakers deem cutbacks to healthcare both desirable and necessary: necessary because LTC costs have increased over the past decades, and desirable because the services-led model is said to have disengaged citizens from informal care-giving. To contain costs and to encourage citizens to take a greater role in informal care-giving, care under the Dutch Social Support Act (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning, WMO) is no longer a legal right of citizenship. Recent legislation restricts access to LTC to the most severely disabled. The rhetoric furthermore suggests that there are ‘welfare queens’ receiving excessive care, at times fraudulently. Implicitly, the rhetoric also suggests that those who are not ‘genuinely disabled’ should feel guilty about using publicly financed care.

The current redistribution of care rights builds on the distinction between relatively mild and critical care needs and preserves rights only for ‘those who really need it’. To enact this divide, around 230,000 LTC clients in the Netherlands were re-assessed. Sixty thousand people lost their entitlements to care entirely, while even more individuals, most often the elderly and people with psychiatric or cognitive disabilities, had their entitlements reduced. Many affected individuals reported increased dependence on their private networks, reduced psychological well-being and less time spent outdoors. Still, only a minority made use of the available opportunity to appeal against the decision of the independent needs assessment centre (the CIZ).

Emotions were central in our respondents' decisions not to appeal; none mentioned that they lacked the ability to do so. Those who did not appeal were, broadly speaking, too ashamed to do so, going to great lengths to avoid the risk of (further) stigmatization, of depriving other fellow citizens of care, or of showing distrust and disloyalty towards authorities. In contrast to the common perception that not making use of the right to appeal is a 'failure' on the part of dissatisfied clients, clients resisted appealing so as to manage their reputations and to avoid shame.

The fear of shame follows from seeing oneself in the eyes of others and prompts people to adjust their conduct and emotions accordingly. Older and chronically ill people did not want to risk potential shame by appealing. The shame of social stigma was evident as they did not want to be perceived as 'begging'. They refrained from identifying with people receiving more care as this would imply that they were among the 'most severely disabled'. They would rather become isolated than admit inability to manage their daily lives. Distributed on the basis of the severity of need, claiming the right to care today is a different matter than when these clients entered public care, then seen as a right of citizenship. They thus preserved their dignity by not asking for more than they were judged entitled to by the needs assessment centre.

Affected clients also distanced themselves from other, perhaps needier persons. In this way, they could see themselves as relatively independent and loyal to the authorities. When clients compared themselves to needier individuals, they actively downplayed their anger, feeling ashamed to claim their rights. At least they had 'a roof over their heads'. Avoiding shame proved a crucial concern for disabled and elderly persons who already felt that they had to defend their dignity. If policy states that only the 'truly needy' deserve publicly financed care, this raises significant emotional hurdles to individuals who, against the evidence, resist identifying themselves as 'truly needy'.

*This text heavily draws on Ellen Grootegoed, Christian Broer and Jan Willem Duyvendak (2013), Too ashamed to Complain: Cuts to Publicly Financed Care and Clients' Waiving of their Right to Appeal, *Social Policy and Society*: 1-12.

78

5. The politics of primordial identities – emancipatory or regressive?

79

Above we argued that both the real-world *processes* of individualization and modernization theory's *assumptions* about the disembedding of persons leave us with challenges of building solidarities, that these challenges remain pressing, and that to meet them a richer account of culture and progress is necessary. The remainder of this chapter addresses this necessity.[36]

80

Modernization has radically transformed traditional ways of life, but as Barth noted, ethnic group members may retain a strong sense of identity, which may provide the foundations for subsequent

collective action, despite or indeed because of radical changes in the content of their ways of life (Barth, 1969).[37] In Brubaker's terms, ethnic categories may augment their degree of "groupness" if people find themselves in institutions favoring collective action or if they encounter threats to shared interests (Rogers Brubaker, et al. 2008).

- 81 Modernization theorists expected inherited ethnic and religious identities to weaken under modernization, or at least for their "groupness" to diminish. Scholarly attitudes have evolved. The "modern vs traditional" dichotomy no longer provides the master-frame for social science,[38] and ideas of respect for "diversity" and "pluralism" have become part of the lexicon of "world culture".[39] Yet it is testament to the ongoing influence of modernization theory that many commentators today still express surprise at the persistence of ethnic and religious identities, inevitably described as the "revival" of ethnicity or the "return" of religion" (Smith 1981; Brown 1989; Robertson 2011; Ebaugh 2002)[40] as if these are premodern irruptions into modernity, and deviations from the straight path to modernity. And while a diversity of ethnic and religious lifestyles is often acknowledged and even celebrated, attitudes become much more ambivalent, if not hostile, when these identity groups become politically mobilized and make claims for rights and recognition. Even today, fifty years after the heyday of modernization theory, we still struggle to make sense of the politics of primordial identities.
- 82 Part of the difficulty is the sheer heterogeneity of such politics, spanning the spectrum in their ideologies and goals. Cases of fratricidal ethnic and sectarian civil wars tend to receive the most news coverage, but it is important to remember the far larger number of cases where the political mobilization of ethnic and religious groups is peaceful, benign, and indeed progressive. A prominent example is the political mobilization of indigenous peoples in Latin America, demanding (and in part achieving) the adoption of what Donna Lee Van Cott calls "multicultural constitutionalism" throughout the region, with the constitutional recognition of the distinct legal status of indigenous groups, including rights to self-government, land claims, and recognition of customary law in many countries, reversing centuries of economic dispossession, political marginalization and cultural denigration (Van Cott 2000; Yashar 2005; Sieder 2002).
- 83 There are vibrant debates in Latin America about how well these reforms are actually working in practice. Some critics argue that they involve merely symbolic changes. Indeed some argue that these policies were designed by neo-liberal elites precisely to deflect political attention away from underlying power structures (Hale 2002). Others argue that while perhaps providing tangible benefits

to indigenous peoples, multicultural reforms are creating new ethnic hierarchies in the process – for example, by excluding Black (Afro-Latino) groups who are not typically considered as “indigenous peoples” (Hooker 2005). Yet others argue that they are imprisoning people in cultural scripts, and jeopardizing individual freedom. In order to qualify for new multicultural rights, members of indigenous communities are expected to “act Indian” (Tilley 2002) – i.e., to follow “authentic” cultural practices – an expectation that strengthens the hand of conservative or patriarchal leaders within the community who assert the authority to determine what is “authentic” (Sieder 2001).

84 Most commentators, however, while acknowledging these risks, argue that the rise of indigenist politics in Latin America has been a positive force, and not just for indigenous peoples, but for society generally. It has helped to enhance democratic participation amongst previously excluded groups, to reduce the danger of a return to authoritarian rule, to build legitimacy for the process of democratic consolidation, and indeed to serve as a laboratory for innovative experiments in citizenship (Yashar 2005). In this sense, at its best, the new minority politics has been truly transformative, not just in the sense of transforming the lives of minorities, but more generally in transforming national politics in a more progressive, inclusive, democratic, tolerant, and peaceful direction. Based on these and other examples of transformative minority politics from around the world, [\[41\]](#) important international reports have strongly endorsed the idea of a “multicultural democracy”, including the UNDP’s ground-breaking 2004 Human Development Report on “Cultural Liberty in Today’s Diverse World”, and UNESCO’s 2008 “World Report on Cultural Diversity”.

85 Yet these ideas face strong resistance, including within the international community, in part because for every example of progressive ethnic politics, we can find contrary examples with very different results. Consider indigenist politics in West Africa. In this context, claims of indigeneity or autochthony are often used, not to challenge inherited forms of hierarchy and exclusion, but rather to consolidate them: to permanently relegate “outsiders” from other parts of the country to a second-class status, thereby perpetuating relations of enmity and exclusion, rather than building more inclusive relations of democratic citizenship (Geschiere 2005; Bowen 2005). What looks, on the surface, to constitute similar claims to indigenous rights turn out, in practice, to generate very different political results. And of course, at the far end of the political spectrum, we have even more violent and intolerant forms of identity politics, grounded in what Appadurai (2006) calls “predatory identities” whose “social construction and mobilization require the extinction of other,

proximate social categories, defined as threats to the very existence of some group” (51). This is the sort of identity politics that leads to segregation, ethnic cleansing or even genocide.

86 It is one of the central challenges of our age to figure out why identity politics sometimes takes a more progressive and emancipatory form and sometimes takes a more exclusionary or even predatory form. We are far from having a systematic theory or scientific consensus on this question. The factors at work are complex, operating at multiple levels. For example, the prospects for inclusive identity politics depend in part on the larger regional and global context. Minorities have often been used as pawns in interstate conflicts or to justify intervention by imperial powers. Where minorities are seen (rightly or wrongly) as fifth-columns for neighboring enemies or distant imperial powers, state-minority relations tend to become heavily ‘securitized’, reducing the space for democratic politics. In this context, international factors can often undermine the prospects for progressive identity politics.[42] Yet international actors can also have a constructive impact, as indeed they did in Latin America, where international human rights organizations and global indigenous advocacy networks helped promote inclusive citizenship (Brysk 2000).[43] [We discuss further examples of these linkages in the section on “new spatial dynamics of culture” below].

87 Similarly, national-level factors can either facilitate or impede progressive identity politics. Many nation-states have defined their identity and citizenship in homogenizing and “unanimist” ways that pathologize diversity and dissent, but other states have put diversity and dissent as defining features of their society and democracy.[44] And of course minorities themselves have their own traditions of authority, accountability, debate and tolerance, which may affect whether and how they take up the opportunities made available by international networks or domestic political structures. [We discuss further examples below in the section on multiple modernities below]. How these different transnational, national and local factors interact to determine the direction of identity politics is an open question requiring further research.

88 We cannot even begin to unpack these dynamics, however, unless we explicitly set aside the legacies of modernization theory, with its knee-jerk assumption that primordial identities, and identity politics, are *a priori* outdated obstacles to social progress. In reality, political mobilizations along lines of race, ethnicity, religion or indigeneity are often struggles against exclusionary features of the dominant conceptions of social progress. Modernization theorists typically assumed that the “public institutions” and “civic identities” they were defending were accessible to all. But we know that these institutions and identities are almost always marked by various cultural

hierarchies, valorizing certain groups as advanced, civilized and responsible, while denigrating others as backward and unruly. Social progress was presented by these institutions as the natural outcome of the history, language and culture of certain groups, while the language, history and culture of other groups were presented as obstacles to progress. In order to participate in 'public' and 'civic' life, members of these stigmatized groups were required to hide or suppress their distinct identities, and to constantly address prejudices about their worth and belonging. Even when the institutional rules do not formally discriminate on a racial or religious basis, they still may reproduce these hierarchies of status and recognition. Insofar as mobilization around subaltern group identities is intended to challenge these (implicit or explicit) hierarchies, they may be seen, not as evidence of uncivil sectarianism and tribalism, or as a futile rejection of cultural change or cultural influences, but as struggles for more inclusive and effective forms of democracy, citizenship and social progress. We need to be alive to these possibilities.

- 89 Of course, this is not to deny that uncivil sectarianism and tribalism also exist, but the challenge is precisely how to differentiate the more emancipatory from the more regressive forms of 'primordial' politics. Because of its knee-jerk dismissal of all such identity politics, modernization theory leaves us unable to either understand, or constructively respond to, the reality of, and indeed the modernity of, identity group politics.
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90 **6. A case study of African shifting identities**

- 91 To better understand how these changes in identity and values operate, it may be useful to consider a case study, one that brings together the dynamics of individualization, ethnic loyalties, and transformations in the nature of authority, in this case the fragmentation of authority in parts of Islamic West Africa. As mentioned above, the ways in which the tensions between individualization and belonging, individualization and solidarity, and individualization and social justice shape cultural change and social progress acquire different forms in different regions. In sub-Saharan Africa, individuation has often taken place within the context of collectivities framed by social understandings based on the sacred and the clan. In these contexts, the very process of individuation calls forth new rationalizations of the social world on which are then erected new sociabilities. This is a social process characterized by

corrosion of existing social orders, but the process of disruption is paralleled by other processes suggestive of the reconstitution of new ways of individual and collective being.

- 92 To start with the example of the sacred, we can trace how Islam has, over the millennia, shaped the processes of collective identity formation in parts of Africa stretching from Senegal to Ethiopia; and how individualization has happened in some of these societies. In this zone of sub-Saharan Africa, the processes of Islamization and state formation intersected in a complex web which can be analyzed in three distinct stages: containment, mixing, and reform.
- 93 'In the first stage, African kings contained Muslim influence by segregating Muslim communities, in the second stage African rulers blended Islam with local traditions as the population selectively appropriated Islamic practices, and finally in the third stage, African Muslims pressed for reforms in an effort to rid their societies of mixed practices and implement Shariah. This three-phase framework sheds light on the historical development of the medieval empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay and the 19th century jihads that led to the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in Hausaland and the Umarian state in Senegambia.' (SPICE Digest 2009).
- 94 In the Sokoto Caliphate, the emergence of the theocracy was preceded by the rise of the Sufi brotherhoods within the framework of Maliki Sunni Islam: 'During the eighteenth century, there was a meaningful shift in Sufi brotherhoods away from the old patterns of decentralized and diffusive affiliations toward larger-scale and more coherent forms of organization. In the process of restructuring, the role of the shaykh was expanded and brotherhoods became centralized, disciplined organizations that included networks of deputies ...' (Levtzion&Pouwels). Qadiriyya brotherhood identity was central to the jihad of 1804 that led to the creation of the Sokoto Caliphate: the Arabic verse, *qasidaajamiyyaqadiriyya*, penned by the leader of the jihad, Shaykh Uthmandan Fodio, was alleged to have 'had a hypnotic effect upon devotees on the eve of the jihad.' Shaykhdan Fodio was also reported to have said: 'I belong to the Qadiriyya and everyone who follows me belongs to it' (Loimeier 1997, 21). Furthermore, followers of the jihad were frequently referred to by ordinary people as '*qadirawa*' or followers of the Qadiriyya brotherhood.
- 95 However, this fairly homogeneous Qadiriyya community started to change by the 1830s. Fragmentation of religious authority took place as well as the disembedding of individuals from the dominant Qadiriyya template. This process of individualization would ultimately lead to the rise of new, radical groups such as Boko Haram.

- 96 The introduction of other Brotherhoods within the Caliphate started with the Tijaniyya brotherhood in the 1830s. Though still within the Sunni fold, the Tijaniyya were rivals to the Qadiriyya (Mustapha 2014). Indeed, by 2009 the Caliphate community had become so fragmented that a survey conducted by the Pew Foundation found that across modern Nigeria, only 38 percent of Muslims identified themselves as Sunni, 12 percent identified as Shia (a religious orientation introduced after the Iranian Revolution of 1978), 3 percent as Ahmadiyya (an allegedly 'heretical' import from colonial Pakistan), and 44 percent identifying as 'just Muslim', and thereby eschewing any Brotherhood affiliation. Only 9 percent of the sample explicitly identified with the Qadiriyya, with the Tijaniyya having overtaken the Qadiriyya with 19 percent of the Muslim population (Pew Forum 2010; Ostien forthcoming).
- 97 Central to this process of the fragmentation of sacred authority was the process of individualization. As observed earlier, the process of Islamization was closely tied to the process of State formation. The consolidation of the Caliphate that resulted from the 1804 jihad was soon to lead to tensions in the management of political authority. The jockeying for dynastic privileges created factions within the jihadi aristocracies. These were made worse by pressure from the encroaching British colonial forces which were felt from about the 1860s. From about the 1830s, therefore, the perfect identity match of belonging to the Caliphate and to the Qadiriyya began to be undermined. Individual and dynastic interests soon led some to remove themselves from the claims of the Qadiriyya and change their religious affiliation, thereby reshaping the framework of individual and collective sociability. Being Muslim was no longer identical with being Qadiriyya. And the first to benefit from this process was the emergence of the rival Tijaniyya brotherhood from around 1830.
- 98 For much of the nineteenth century, this process of individualization and the resulting fragmentation of sacred authority involved only a relatively small circle of religious scholars and Caliphate aristocrats. From the 1940s, however, the process accelerated, fueled by economic and political developments associated with colonialism and the founding of the modern Nigerian state. Increased opportunities within the colonial world fueled the process of individuation, often expressed in the religious or economic spheres. Tijaniyya affiliation became pronounced in regions of market expansion, in which new mercantile classes resisted the old largely Qadiriyya aristocracies. After the 1970s, further rapid social and economic change intensified this process of the dissolution of older collective religious identities and the individualization of the process of religious belief and affiliation. In northern Nigeria, this remains a highly problematic process, as noted by Clarke & Linden:

- 99 'people are now "role performers" in isolation so that their moral beliefs and values have had to be privately contrived and constructed. The arbitrary quality of behavior that results from this privatization of morals and values is profoundly disturbing, and is worsened by the pressured and frenetic character of urban life, corruption and near social breakdown in large cities' (Clarke & Linden 1984: 92)
- 100 While the old Sufi brotherhoods were based on hierarchies and networks which maintained some semblance of order within the religious and social spheres, the reformist Islam that challenged them from the 1970s emphasized a reformist rationality which privileged the autodidact. This do-it-yourself character of millenarian, and later reformist Islam, faced with the post-colonial existential crisis, opened the gates for the emergence of violent groups such as Maitatsine and Boko Haram, hell bent on pushing their idiosyncratic versions of Islam (Mustapha 2014). Paradoxically, while individuation might have weakened old Sufi Qadiriyya notions of belonging, solidarity, and social justice, it has also provided the basis for the emergence of competing millenarian, Salafi and jihadi groups who claim to have the panacea for society's ills, but are oriented towards different notions of belonging, solidarity, and social justice. In this particular example, while individuation might have increased individual freedom of affiliation, it is questionable if there has been any step forward in social progress and social justice.
- 101 Although this example of the impact of individuation on sacred authority is based on the case of northern Nigeria, the general principles are applicable across much of Africa, where large populations of Muslims are to be found. Other factors, like the capacity of state institutions to regulate religious life, dictate the specific expressions of this general tendency in every specific instance. More common across sub-Saharan Africa, however, are clans based on kinship systems, which constitute our second example of the process of on-going individuation in this part of the world.
- 102 These kinship systems are quite distinct from the ideology of 'tribes' and 'tribalism' through which incorrect, cultural primordialist assumptions are often made about African social dynamics (Ekeh 1975; Mafeje 1971). The concern here is with kinship groups historically constituted in different parts of Africa in the course of its social evolution. As the distinguished anthropologist Archie Mafeje (1991) noted, these clans and kinship groups are the real building blocks of many societies in Africa. Furthermore, Ekeh (1990) suggests that in the history of these groups and clans there is a close connection between the transatlantic slavery, the strength and resilience of the clans, and the more modern phenomenon of ethnicity. In the times of slavery, he suggests, the individual sought

refuge in 'corporate kinship groups' as a defense against the oppressive slaving local state. Under colonialism, Ekeh argues, these kinship groups were conceptually expanded 'into the construction of ethnic groups.'

- 103 Despite the strength of ethnicity in modern African social and political life, the corrosive forces of individuation are beginning to weaken the fabric of these kinship groups. Migration, urbanization, and demographic growth have all contributed to undermine the notion of a corporate kinship group, tied together by co-residence. As co-residence became difficult or impossible to sustain, more and more individuals are breaking away from the common compound and reconstituting their households elsewhere, away from the kinship group.
- 104 Residential patterns in many African cities increasingly reflect social class status instead of the previous lineage ties. In many instances, ceremonies like marriages and burials become sites for re-enacting and re-affirming kinship solidarity, weakened by increasing dispersal and individuation. Amongst the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria, the *asoebi*, the clan 'uniforms' worn by all members of the clan at such ceremonies, are used to indicate the social closeness of the clan and its distinction from others. Though modern technologies like mobile telephony and social media are also increasingly used to overcome some of the consequences of physical dispersion, and sustain some form of sociability amongst kin groups, there is no doubt that the forces of individuation are also beginning to corrode clan solidarity, an important pillar of African social life.
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105 7. Global flows and transnational identities

- 106 Now we move outward from the level of religious and kinship groups in their relationship to national or regional networks, to consider the increasing globalization of identities, networks, and social movements.
- 107 While we do not subscribe to the apocalyptic notions of the end of history (Fukuyama 1992), the death of grand-narratives and the end of the nation state, we do think that the massive flows of persons and cultures across territories renders untenable the assumption of the nation-state as a container which restricts, governs and delimits the cultural world of a person. The nation state continues to confer civic identity but it does not delimit the range of cultural identification.

China Towns, the global Sikh community, or Ashanti Unions[45] across Europe and North America, have roots traceable to particular nation states, yet they are irreducible to no nation state. The Sikh girl born in Sweden is no less Indian than she is Swedish. The range of her self-identification could include Swedish national folklore, Sikh history, hip-hop, the Olympic Games and a craving for sushi.

108 But this cosmopolitanism is contested. Globalization from below makes it conceivable that the Sikh girl and others could be of non-privileged backgrounds. Another brand of cosmopolitanism is driven by middle and upper-middle class persons. Notwithstanding their achievements, they find themselves limited by their race and cultural otherness. An example is the Afropolitan movement which revolves around highly educated Africans of middle-class origins who move between a number of global cities and Africa (Bwesigye 2013). They bemoan the treatment they receive from the West, including the failure to be properly recognized for their personal achievements. Afropolitanism breaks from counter-systemic insurgent movements like Pan-Africanism[46] which addresses the question of imperialism in its economic and cultural dimensions, by settling for personal advancement and the performance and commodification of Africanity. While this movement speaks to the need to take account of competing cosmopolitanisms, it actually does not address the intersecting relations between class, cultural otherness and exclusion. It unsurprisingly fails to interrogate the place of class in the matrix of exclusion given the class position of its members. It is also not rootless because people orientate themselves to some places and practices that affirm them, that is, their culture. A Ghanaian hip-life musician and an Indian LGBTIQ+ activist draw on the respective local resources of high life and the struggles of Hijra transgender persons in their interactions with their American Hip-Hop artists and Swiss gender activists. They, in turn, may relay whatever experiences come out of the interactions to their constituencies in Ghana and India respectively. This picture of mutual sharing sidesteps the reality that the global village is an uneven one. The question that arises is: How can this rooted cosmopolitanism overcome the pitfalls of the *centro-centrism* of modernization theory? (Sitas 2014).

109 The lessons of the failed diagnoses by modernization theory regarding the hierarchy and place-boundedness of cultures must be taken seriously. This means undoing the hierarchy – implicit and explicit – that ranks cultures from simple to high, sophisticated to primitive, and/or traditional to modern. Cultures must be understood for what they truly are – human creations in the face of the social and natural environment. If so understood, the dynamism that makes cultures possible in the first place will be recognized as the destiny of all cultures (Kagan 2006). Distinct cultural products will be

appreciated while syncretism is encouraged. The valorisation of others' cultural practices will lead to an openness to criticism once a basic measure of respect has been established. This does not mean seeing cultures as floating objects with no spatial base as some insist (Mbembe 2002). It means identifying the multi-spatiality of cultures without surrendering to cultural immobility and non-sharing.

- 110 If a culture is no longer bound to a single place, it follows that the dangers of cultural exclusion and the accompanying inhibition of civic-mindedness are also not limited to a place. The globalization of cultures and the cosmopolitanisms that they engender are often met with a politics of exclusion and indigeneity. Drawing on the old equation of place and cultures, movements and powerful segments of society emerge that want people and cultures to be left in their assumed natural places. The success of Donald Trump's presidential campaign is an important example of such a reaction. His proposal to "Make America Great Again" is a clear instigation to organized xenophobia. While his approach might appear crude, it is mainstream in today's world. The declaration in many European countries that multiculturalism eats at the fabric of society and thereby erases the uniqueness of Englishness or Germanness is the culmination of a long-held view inherited by modernization theory (Sarrazin 2010). From Hegel's (1988) distinction between people with history and those without history, to Durkheim's (1984) taxonomy between societies that are held together by mechanical solidarity and those whose social fabric is mediated by an organic solidarity based on functional specialization, to the different phases of modernization theory, what we have is an autarkic vision of society modelled on the idea that each people has a *lebensraum* (living space) where they incubate their cultures. And these cultures could be distinguished based on their levels of sophistication.
- 111 One response to the politics of exclusion in the age of de-territorialized cultural maps is the creation of a political community based on residency, cultural inclusion and civic responsibilities, irrespective of origin, while respecting historical association. This means a rejection of the unitary dictates of assimilation and the implicit cultural relativism of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism's insurgent egalitarianism is conceptually and practically limited by its departing assumption of the relationship (albeit a mutually respecting one) between a natural culture of place and the assumed outside cultures that deserve respect. Multiculturalism too often concedes to a culture-place association instead of a culture-in-constant-making-and-unmaking. Instead of separate cultures - the foreign ones accommodated by the natural one- the culture of a place should be tributaries that wash into a cultural river that is not

given but continually constituted. Here groups and individuals are part of a polity in which they live and make their livelihoods, not based on their capacity to trace their origins to a given place.

- 112 Basing politics on a presumed association of place to culture is socially dangerous. It is the bedrock of the right-wing resurgence we are currently witnessing across Europe that is creating a nascent hegemonic block through electoral gains. Combatting this trend entails a reworking of the constituent basis of the public sphere and the normative basis of civility and political incorporation. The ideas of the enlightenment and its universalized modernity must be made to take account of alternative, competing forms of sociality, values and morality that large numbers of people bring with them as part of their cultural universe. The preconceived notion of 'local culture' keeps many social groups out of the mainstream of society. The explicit message that is relayed is "you do not belong." Here, Europe's struggle with terrorism comes to mind. The many youths of migrant backgrounds that provide the fertile ground for ISIS recruitment have been allowed to function as outsiders cum insiders. Until recently, Germany took the position that it was not a country of migration, effectively denying social and political participation to hundreds of thousands of Turkish, Balkan and African immigrants and their offspring.
- 113 The promotion of a residential form of political belonging is not incommensurate with the need to recognise and valorise cultural difference. The lamentation of the pitfalls of culture talk (Mamdani 2000) is as important as the need not to fall into the trap of a discourse of floating subjects who have no cultural bearing. Cultural invention is always anchored in some history and a sense of continuity, no matter how dynamic a continuity. Culture talk as the use and abuse of culture for the purpose of exclusion and majoritarianism is not the same as the recognition of cultural rights and the celebration of cultures as the handiwork of human interventions[47]. A marginalized social group given the space to practice what they value and cherish, promotes openness and cultural progress, through waging a struggle for the recognition and equality of diverse cultural heritage. Culture talk as the resort to difference in order to exclude is the opposite of the expansion of the frontier of cultural resources to take account of different trajectories and cultural creations. The refusal to recognize cultural diversity does not do away with the fact of diversity. Accordingly, and as earlier stated, the cosmopolitanism that mobility facilitates is not rootless. It is tied to a history which people often trace to (a) given place(s). But it does not mean that it is contained and/or immobilized by the place(s). In India, for example, the resurgence of majoritarian politics in the form of a Hindutva movement which equates Bharat Mata (Mother India) with a single Hindu history and language is

already challenged from civic movements that proffer an alternative view of India, one premised on a long history of heterogeneity, cultural difference, and linguistic multiplicity (Chaturvedi, Garba and Pande 2016).

- 114 If we take the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a minimal, widely shared vision, at least at the level of states, of how to overcome some of the ills of today's world, we could imagine what an alternative would look like. In Goal 4 which sets out to eliminate gender inequality, ensure social inclusion and human rights for all, the underlying premise of the goal is the intricate connection between social exclusion and general social disability. The inability to guarantee the rights to cultural expression, especially for minority groups, is invariably linked to a curtailment of the rights of such groups to pursue economic rewards in ways that make them socially whole, as subjectively defined. Equally important, social exclusion through cultural alienation, often compounds the social disadvantage that women suffer. Social inclusion, as envisaged by the SDGs will require the fundamental opening up of a totality of social arrangements from the economic to the political, anchored on cultural plurality and mutual respect of various ways of being, irrespective of origin. (See the following discussion of 'multiple modernities'.)
- 115 In sum, the cumulative result of developments in information and communications technology, the acceleration of intra- and inter-place inequalities, civil conflicts and ecological changes, and the transmission of increasingly homogenized desires across all corners of the globe have meant that cultures and places that were previously considered separate and isolated are now in close and intense interaction. What has been termed the 'Age of Migration' has drastically changed the configuration of cultural and human demographics across the world. Chinese small-scale miners and tuck-shop operators are common features of villages in South Africa and England. African traders are visible on the streets of Mumbai just as Syrian refugees can be seen in every part of Europe today. The Döner is as much a European cuisine as potatoes. *Balti* is Britain's gift to the world of an Indian cuisine that does not exist even in India. The changing structure of the world society towards some convergence is marked by the syncretic nature of youth culture and protest movements: their use of symbols, accoutrements of mobilization, and causes and sources of struggles and inspiration. The centrality of migration in the new waves of the peopling of the world, and the intractable presence of the ethnic question in all corners of the globe, go against the view which sees homogenization as modernity proceeds unencumbered. People are not losing their identities as

they move from one place to the other. They re-construct their identities and the self-perceptions of the (new) places (in)to which they move.

116

Box 15.2: Eastern Europe and the rejection of cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is not a neutral term. It often comes as a package. In Eastern Europe, the discourse of cosmopolitanism is often associated with liberal democracy, integration into the European Union and the surrender of aspects of national sovereignty to organs of the EU. The recent refugee crisis and the extension of German economic dominance to a moral leadership urging all EU states to respond to the humanitarian need to take in refugees is met with resistance by the populace, including those who describe themselves as progressive. Cosmopolitanism here is shorthand for the obliteration of their cultural integrity and the surrender of important aspects of their society to unaccountable bureaucratic control in Brussels.

117

8. Social progress and cultural change: multiple modernities?

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8.1 Multiple cultural pathways for modernization

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As we've seen, modernization theory and its less explicit descendants consider cultural identity and cultural minorities more a problem than an asset for the promotion of individualization, and they set a prescriptive agenda for social change aiming (explicitly or implicitly) at transitioning "backward" societies into "civilized" states through the process of modernization. Modernity was understood as anchored in demands for rights and struggles for social progress, in aspirations and trajectories of social emancipation and self-realization, and in the expansions of liberties and civic commitment, all of which were seen as requiring the rupturing or at least weakening of inherited cultural bonds.

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Against this vision, we believe that modernity can be realized through distinct cultural and religious traditions. Indeed, we see culture as a historical quarry from which social imaginations extract creative and substantial framing of modernization in local meaningful ways, and culture may be a powerful source for synergies between identity dynamics and socially-inclusive forms of individualization. We earlier cited the example of Buen Vivir as an illustration of this

potential, in which modernization processes are being reframed based on values that are not limited to the Western experience, and instead take account of other ways of knowing and being.

121 8.2 Progress and particularity

122 In much public and academic discussion, this idea is sometimes discussed under the heading of ‘multiple modernities’. According to this idea, modernization does not necessarily lead societies to convergence on particular economic or political forms (such as secular liberal-democracies), but rather can take very different forms shaped by different cultural or religious traditions, such as Muslim or Evangelical conceptions of modernity, or modernity as developed in a more authoritarian direction in Singapore or Qatar. Of course, even in the era of modernization theory there was a profound clash between capitalist and communist conceptions of modernity. But during the Cold War both sides shared the assumption that modernization would displace traditional religious and cultural frameworks: the idea of an “Islamic” or “Confucian” modernity was as inconceivable to Soviet as to Western modernizers.

123 Since its emergence in the 1990s, the idea of multiple modernities has been subject to critical discussion, in particular about its heuristic rigor and its possible implications for a particular political trajectory. For one, it is unclear whether ‘modernity’ can be defined in a clear way. Eisenstadt’s (2000) classical formulation emphasized the antimonies and conflicts unleashed by the loss of a taken-for-granted cosmic ordering. Of particular importance regarding religious change is recognizing that processes of rationalization and standardization have been accompanied by their opposite, explosions of sectarian and dissident movements (Hefner 1998). This perspective suggests that modernity is a world condition in which disparate movements and orientations compete and clash (compare Schmidt 2006). But is there then any value-orientation common to various flavors of ‘modernity’? Once one proposes any one core concept or value, whether secularism, or equality, or individual autonomy, then the concept points toward liberal ideal types or ‘promissory notes’ (Wittrock 2000), leaving as a subsequent task the reconciling of those ideal types with particular Islamic, or Confucian, or more locally-specific multiple modernities (Fourie 2012). However, one can adopt the historical perspective, set out by Max Weber and more recently by Charles Taylor (2007) in his conception of our ‘secular age’, that modernity came with the disenchantment of the world and makes it no longer possible to take for granted a uniform or universal social order or belief system. All who live in the modern world are then modern, whether they use, ignore, or reject words similar to ‘modernity’. In that case an exploration of the modern condition, rather than a set of modern values, becomes the object of study.

- 124 Some critics also argue that, while seeming to recognize the validity of non-Western conceptions of modernity, the ‘multiple modernities’ perspective unfortunately allows Western states to evade the post-colonial critique of Western modernity. This critique applies in particular to the ‘civilizational’ versions of multiple modernities (Wittrock 2012), which involve tracing disparate contemporary forms of modernity to their Axial Age origins. These versions acknowledge other trajectories but do not acknowledge the need to question either the histories of colonialism and imperialism that subtend Western modernity, or the particular assumptions about individualism and capitalism that lie at the center of triumphalist narratives (Chakrabarty 2002). From this critical perspective, the spread of ‘modernity’ was not an innocent transmission of ideas but the result of Western efforts to win control over trade, to exploit natural resources, and to exercise political domination. If Indonesian political and legal institutions look like French ones, it is because of a combination of French expansion within Europe and Dutch imperialism in Asia, and not because of parallel genealogies of concepts and institutions.
- 125 One finds also the opposite fear, namely, that such ideas allow authoritarian states to evade internal critique of their rule. Some of these critiques are embedded in and resonate with a tension concerning knowledge production between the global north and global south. Moreover, the idea of ‘modernity’ itself is embedded in historical processes and struggles and thus is not completely neutral. For example, the term “modernity” has been explicitly opposed, in particular moments over the past century, by currents within the Catholic Church and of U.S. Protestantism.
- 126 In our view, the idea of multiple modernities can be useful, not if it operates to evade critique or to provide a mere functionalist paradigm, but if it helps clarify the normative stakes in evaluating both different models or trajectories of social progress - a distinction to be elaborated below. We find that many of today’s intellectual and political struggles concern the tension between universalistic political ideas, on the one hand, and particular sets of norms and values that are generated and reproduced in specific political contexts, on the other. Adopting the idea of a plurality of viable and attractive trajectories toward social progress directs us to examine at a more detailed level the mechanisms that can and do move institutions and societies towards broadly acceptable goals and at the same time draw on (often disparate) elements of cultural and religious traditions and convictions. *Put simply, there may be effective convergence towards broadly-held ideals about equality and justice, but where these ideas are framed in terms of distinct cultural and religious views and resources.*

- 127 The issue is: given profound differences across cultural and religious convictions—which do not reduce to ‘societies’ or ‘regions’—what mechanisms can be said to both develop consistently with those convictions and aim to achieve social progress, as all might be able to recognize it? To take one broadly-held aspiration, do we find distinct pathways towards gender equality that also preserve key elements of, say, Evangelical, or East Asian, or Amazonian ideas and practices?
- 128 As Wittrock (2000: 55), puts it, modernity may be seen as “a set of hopes and expectations that entail some minimal conditions of adequacy that may be demanded of macrosocietal institutions no matter how much these institutions may differ in other respects.” This stricture emphasizes that different framings would nonetheless be susceptible to comparisons in terms of directions of substantive change.[48] Applied to the gender case, we would make it more precise as: Do distinct trajectories regarding gender roles and relations across different traditions tend in the same direction, i.e., toward promoting better conditions for women in everyday life? We would consider evidence of such convergences to indicate the pertinence of the multiple modernity perspective, as reformulated here, to discussions of social progress. Regarding certain mechanisms that could lead to such multiple trajectories, and looking at a meso or micro level, Göle (2000: 114) refers to “processes of cohabitation, hybridization, and reciprocal borrowing” across traditions. This direction of research helps avoid the assumption that the so-named trajectories and convergences stem from entirely endogenous factors. Legal changes may be enacted by individual states, but they also may reflect global or transnational shifts and outlooks, via cross-readings of international legal literature, new religious interpretations, or shifts in ideas of fairness and justice.
- 129 These formulations offer not solutions but pertinent questions. What role for social progress can be found in these borrowings? Can consensus be reached regarding ‘minimal conditions of adequacy’? What is meant by ‘consensus’: explicit agreement as when representatives of different traditions, groups, or societies cosign a text or treaty? Or implicit, though measurable, progress toward achieving such ‘minimal conditions’? Those speaking for traditions may feel constrained to declare complete coherence (without the acknowledgment of hybridity) even when analysts can discern such changes.
- 130 What emerges from this discussion is that *if* the overriding question is the degree to which social progress can occur within distinct and disparate frameworks, *then* we should not be primarily interested in whether people claim the label ‘modernity’ for themselves, interesting though such a study might be in answering other questions. Accordingly, we do not here seek to survey various ideas

associated with the word ‘modernity’ in different times and places, but to develop the specific ideas put forth above, namely, that social progress can proceed on multiple tracks and with disparate framings, that it may be observed through the study of changes in practical circumstances, and that such changes may or may not be made explicit in enunciated models of society, culture or religion--indeed that such progress may in some cases require *not* formulating explicit models of ‘modernity’ but rather framing change as the development of tradition. In order to offer a concrete example as a basis for further theoretical reflections, we consider the question of the social progress made (or not made) by women in Muslim-majority countries.

131 **8.3 Women in Islam: a case study**

132 This case study lends itself well to the principal challenge we have set out, namely, to discern evidence for practical movement of practices and welfare towards broadly-accepted value horizons. Studying mechanisms of practical convergence as an empirical phenomenon obviates the need to define explicit and abstract principles, such as, in this case, ‘gender equality’, a phrase that has encountered resistance on many fronts. The very term ‘gender’, often used in English across different language communities, is contested—in France some have taken ‘gender theory’ to signal an attempt to dissolve male/female distinctions; in Indonesia, as the point of entry for Western imperialist thinking about family forms (see Oyewumi 1997). A history of debates and arguments about Western domination, secularism, and about the rightful relative autonomy of different religious and cultural traditions colors any discussion that begins with demands to renounce elements of traditions (for example, Catholic, Evangelical, or Islamic) if they violate a principle of ‘gender equality’.

133 We consider Islam in greater depth here (although parallel arguments could be made about social progress in other religious traditions.) We can discern areas of measurable movement toward fairness and equality in the legal treatment of Muslim women and men regarding family matters, including marriage, divorce, inheritance, physical violence, and the rights of children (see al-Sharmani 2013). This is ‘practical convergence’ from distinct starting points. For example, Indonesia, with the world’s largest Muslim population, has an Islamic legal code that deals with family matters and that is applied in the country’s Islamic court system and in some other settings. The code is based on broadly-recognized elements from Islamic law, particularly from the Shafi’i legal school dominant in Southeast Asia. The code preserves certain elements of formal gender asymmetry: for example, men have the power to divorce, whereas women must ask a judge to dissolve their marriage. But the

code also stipulates that both men and women approach a court in order to divorce, and that they prove one or more of the same list of accepted grounds for divorce. Most divorces are justified as due to the marriage's breakdown. Thus, the formal asymmetry is preserved but substantively equal possibilities for divorce are achieved. The complete divorce picture is far from symmetric, in that post-divorce payments differ for men and women (as has been the case for most of recent Western history); the example is apposite but partial.

- 134 More generally, reforms of Islamic divorce law carried out by countries with Islamic legal systems have sought to preserve local Islamic understandings but to place conditions on their exercise: men have the right to divorce their wives, but only with a judge's permission; daughters need their fathers' consent to marry, but fathers cannot compel their daughters to marry. These reforms are carried out through new legal codes and court decisions, without directly challenging the validity of long-standing understandings transmitted by scholars of Islam. In this way, they preserve the space between religious authorities and legal authorities that allows for trading concepts across different registers, different understandings of law (see Tucker 2008).
- 135 At the same time, divorce in the West has changed even more radically. Legally and religiously recognized divorce is a very recent phenomenon in Western Europe. Divorce rights also index the relative capacities of women and men, and since the 1960s, Europe and North America have witnessed both a reframing of marriage and divorce in contractual terms and an enhancement of women's legal and economic autonomy during and after marriage. In some respects, (post-) Christian regimes of marriage and divorce have become closer to Islamic ones.
- 136 Viewed in this way, these convergences are not matters of Muslims adopting Western ideas, but distinct trajectories that allow substantive progress while preserving distinct starting points in different cultural or religious frameworks. By contrast, demanding agreement to universal, secular propositions would preformat the field of acceptable responses in a way that privileges some over others, as well as hindering efforts to preserve distinct starting points. Universal propositions no longer bear the trace of their derivation from cultural or religious traditions; they cannot. Such propositions thereby lose legitimacy for some practitioners of the tradition. This outcome can be, we believe, deleterious for encouraging shared social lives.

137 **8.4 Judges' interpretations**

- 138 Along with statutory changes in Muslim countries, progress toward gender equality has also come from changes in legal practices themselves. Let us take a more micro-level look at the mechanisms that seem to be at work in shaping outcomes in Islamic courts. In most of the cases already referred to, statutes or codes are supposed to guide judges' work. But judges also respond (more or less) to extra-legal forces, which can include views on Islamic law that diverge from those contained in such codes. In addition, litigants may use courts as arenas for bargaining about family dynamics and resources. Studies in diverse countries shed light on one or more of these mechanisms.
- 139 First, judges have tended to interpret the legal framework (which retains its gender-unequal formulations) in such a way as to favor women when possible, for example by using wide definitions of "harm" (darar) done to a woman and narrow definitions of her "disobedience" (nushûz), which is the basis of counterclaims sometimes made by husbands. Tunisia provides one example. Judges on the Tunis family court (where almost all judges are women) have generally applied the norm that to abandon the marital home without good cause would indeed count as nushûz, and that in a divorce case such behavior could lead a judge to award the husband damages. But they also hold that if a wife claimed that she did so for good reason, she should be believed unless the husband can prove otherwise. Furthermore, even when the judges found that a wife had committed nushuz, they refrained from awarding damages (Voorhoeve 2014: 166-72).
- 140 Across many countries, Islamic judges tend to grant women divorces when asked to do so. The available evidence indicates that women usually win their divorce if they pursue the case. In some countries a major reason for this is the gradual acceptance of marital discord as grounds for dissolution. In Morocco, for example, legal reforms passed in 2004 led to a sharp rise in divorce suits, most brought by, and won by, women, and almost all women who brought suit on grounds of discord, notably easy to prove, won. Women's suits based on the husband's absence or failure to adequately support his wife also were granted most of the time: in a Cairo sample from 1972-82, women won 95.5% of their cases on these grounds or on other grounds involving the husband's failure to adequately fill his role. In 2000, new laws were passed in Egypt explicitly allowing khul' divorces, and a Cairo study done in the early 2000s found that 67 of 69 women bringing khul' divorce suits obtained their divorces (Rosen 2017). When Lawrence Rosen analyzed historical and contemporary data regarding Islamic courts, he concluded that "Women commonly 'win' their law suits in the family courts of the Muslim world roughly 65- 95% of the time" (Rosen 2017).

141 8.5 Judges' governance of courtroom bargaining

142 Procedures are also an important part of legal practice. In Iran, Mir-Hosseini (1993) documents ways in which a sympathetic judge allows a divorce proceeding to stretch out, allowing the wife to bargain for her consent. Even though the husband's right to unilaterally divorce his wife is clear, a judge can schedule a series of reconciliation sessions involving diverse relatives in order to push the husband toward a settlement. Wives may hold out for custody of children or favorable monetary settlements in exchange for agreeing to the divorce. In these cases, despite the husband's divorce rights, the judge's mandate to attempt reconciliation can tip the bargaining scale in favor of the wife.

143 What leads judges to act in ways that seem to ally with women? Courts may favor women to the extent that they see them as the weaker party. The favoring may be by way of placing the burden of proof on the husband. Such is often the case with regard to husbands' claims of disobedience, for example, or, in a related move, by stipulating, either explicitly or implicitly, that the very fact that the wife brought a divorce suit is evidence of marital discord and thus grounds for divorce. National laws also may do this: Indonesian and Malaysian laws both require that husbands wishing to take a second wife prove they are capable of financing two households and treating both women equally. That such equality of treatment is both broad and difficult opens the door to discretionary denials of polygamy requests. It also is important that the judges making these decisions increasingly include women. For example, in 2005, 28% of all Tunisian judges were women, but in the Tunis city child and family court, 88% of judges were women (Voorhoeve 2014: 13).

144 8.6 Changes in women's and men's legal consciousness

145 But in some cases reforms in divorce law have also changed the idea of the gendered power balance in negotiating marriage and divorce. Sonneveld (2010) points out that in the Egyptian case, the legislative reform transformed the idea of khul' divorce, initiated by the wife, from a transaction requiring the husband's consent, to an empowering of women to take unilateral action. Furthermore, sometimes khul' reform took place as part of a package that also increased women's rights to work. Hassani-Nezhad and Sjögren (2014) conclude that in Middle Eastern countries, making divorce easier for women to initiate has also increased women's labor force participation, especially for younger women.

146 Reporting from Iran, Osanloo (2009: 129-134) shows how women's claims to be rights-bearers are nourished by the codification of Iranian civil law, which makes explicit individual rights; the framing is

thus in terms of multiple pathways to asserting rights rather than the strategic manipulation of references in the courtrooms. Women become adept at formulating their cases in legal terms, precisely because they have to go through the courts to obtain a divorce, whereas men, possessed of the right of unilateral divorce, remain relatively ill-equipped to speak the language of the law.

147 **8.7 Practical convergence versus explicit translation**

148 This case study suggests that we look for evidence of social progress in ‘practical convergences’, or instances of reasoning toward a shared horizon from distinct starting points, and the concomitant changes in institutional arrangements. The material presented above is not intended to provide an overall assessment of how Muslim women are faring in the many domains of their social lives, but to provide examples of pertinent evidence that, in an exhaustive study, would be drawn from across those domains.

149 More generally, the case study indicates a crucial category of mechanisms that can provide social progress while not requiring explicit renunciations of religious and cultural traditions. These mechanisms involve reinterpretations of texts, creative use of procedural rules, and statutory supplements to authoritative (including religiously-revealed) canons.

150 We close this section by noting the difference between practical convergences of disparate traditions and the explicit ‘translation’ of culturally particular tenets into universal ones, an approach best identified with Jürgen Habermas (2006). Although this latter work focuses on questions of pluralism, it bears directly on questions of social progress if and when metrics for the latter are held to require adherence to universalistic formulations. The translation approach asks how, in the political arena, to construct equivalence relations between religious justifications (“God said so”) and those presumed to be accessible to all (“it preserves life”). Habermas (2006: 11) argues that when citizens bring religious reasons to public debates, they and others share a responsibility for translating those reasons into “generally accessible arguments.”

151 Habermas makes his argument with respect to justifications of the sort citizens might advance in debates over public policy: about abortion restrictions, or taxation, or foreign policy. It is relatively easy to imagine citizens arriving at these “translations,” even if they have derived the same-sounding justification from different sources. Citizens might oppose abortion on grounds that one should not kill, but one might derive that position from Catholic teachings, from the Qur’an, or from a moral stand that has no explicitly religious derivation. Framing the problem as one of translation implies that the

issue concerns propositions about the world that can be detached from distinct social and evaluative frameworks. It then appears as if the issue is neither epistemic nor social but one of pure form: by p , the Muslims mean q , and that is also what the Calvinists mean by r .

152 But the issues that arouse dispute and debate about the compatibility of different religious traditions with ‘modernity’ are not of this order. They concern entire ways of organizing life, where gender relations, ways of dress, patterns of socializing, ideas about education and faith, artistic practices, and pronouncements about marriage and divorce coexist in varyingly weighted combinations—something more like a culture or a way of life than a cognitive stance. They concern how distinct orientations can coexist, whether the incommensurability that some perceive between them does not render one intolerable to the other—whether, for example, gender asymmetry renders conservative Islam unacceptable for some secularists, or unregulated sexuality makes secularism unacceptable to some Muslims. We have sought here to raise the possibility that there are multiple ways to look for progress toward gender equality and other potential indicators of social progress, and that the distinction between practical convergence and translation raises one important area of methodological multiplicity.

153 Working toward shared outcomes requires practices of derivation and justification, which are processes of reasoning, carried out in public ways. Focusing on these takes us away from the assumption that secular ways of thinking are rational and religious ones are only defectively so because they are grounded in revelation. Both ways of thinking can involve highly developed processes of inference and argumentation—and both have starting points that must be posited—the social contract, the moment of revelation. Once we shift focus from the starting points to shared horizons, we may start to see signs of social progress where before we saw civilizational incompatibilities.

154 9. Conclusion

155 Throughout this chapter we have approached from several different angles the basic challenge of how to assess social progress while taking full account of the particularities that characterize cultures (and religions, ethnicities, national belonging). Modernization theory failed to do so because it saw the goal of history in terms of the disembedding of individuals from their traditions. Against that

approach we argue that (1) individuals by their very nature draw on social ties and cultural orientations in order to create fulfilling lives, however individualistic they may see themselves; (2) individualization or disembedding takes on multiple forms, and (3) processes of individualization are not a priori good for achieving social progress, any more than are strong community identities. Thus, we can make no general claims about how particular processes of cultural change facilitate or impede social progress. Ethnic-based cohesion may provide the basis for improving education or health, or for taking part in national politics, or it may promote separatism and exclusion.

156 We also argue that modernization theory's core assumptions, about the decline of traditions and the rise of new, rationalized forms of sociability, can serve to exclude segments of humanity from categories of modern, reflexive, or cosmopolitan social actors. And conversely, emancipatory individualism can facilitate new forms of horizontal solidarity as in the cases from Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East cited above. These can transcend ties to particular places, and provide ways for non-elite actors to form new, transnational solidarities. We also argue that to assess social progress we must take our analyses well before surface-level rhetoric, and examine the ways in which religious actors reinterpret textual traditions so as to favor more gender-equal forms of practice, as in the case of Islamic jurisprudence. Cultural resources may be particularly important when they draw on deep-seated senses of obligation and orientation to garner support for change; the challenge is to bring about convergences on broadly-recognized desiderata of bettering human welfare.

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- 443 [2] Affiliations : Instituto de Humanidades, Universidad Diego Portales, Chile ; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Ethiopia ; Center for African Studies, University of Oxford, UK
- 444 [3] Affiliations : University of Cape Town, South Africa ; University of Amsterdam, Holland
- 445 [4] For example, see Alazmeh 1994; Ahmad 1992; Mamdani 2000; Appiah 2005; Sen 2007
- 446 [5] On cultural representations as the means to articulate visions of social engagement, see the foundational works of Georg Simmel, Pierre Bourdieu or Raymond Williams.
- 447 [6] For an overview, see Delanty 2007.
- 448 [7] See Latham (2000) and Gilman (2003) for these dense interconnections between academia, governments and philanthropic foundations. Modernization theory was in many ways a precursor to the IPSP in its attempt to offer policy-makers an international model of social progress based on the findings of social science.
- 449 [8] See, for example, McClelland's (1961) account of "the achievement motive", which he contrasted with the passivity and fatalism of traditional cultures, and which he attempted to formalize and measure cross-culturally as "n Ach."
- 450 [9] This was central to the Almond/Verba (1963) and Lipset (1959) accounts of "civic culture", conceptualized as the transcending and displacing of ethnic/tribal/sectarian loyalties.
- 451 [10] In Gilman's (2003) words, it was exposed as "hopelessly reductionist in its conception of change abroad, fundamentally conservative in its politics, and blindly reflective of the political and social prejudices of the mid-century American Establishment" (3).
- 452 [11] "Within modernization theory, cultural factors such as ethnicity typically represented obstacles to development that were rooted in traditional societies and that were destined to disappear in the course of development. The neglect of culture and 'ethnodevelopment' is not merely an oversight of mainstream theories, but should be seen as a paradigmatic blind spot" (Brohman 1995). A similar blind spot can be found in the Anthropology of

Poverty tradition which developed in the late fifties and early sixties in Latin America, with its analysis of the half-modern-half-anomic culture of poor populations in the urban-marginal periphery (e.g., Lewis 1961).

- 453 [12] For this diagnosis of the way modernization theory conceived of culture as either obstacle or outcome, see Gilman 2003: 262.
- 454 [13] In Jeffrey Alexander's words, the "practice-oriented" view of culture "suggests that reflexivity, whether modern, late modern or postmodern, can be understood only within the context of cultural tradition, not outside of it. Typification, invention and strategization are simultaneous moments of every social action they cannot be separated and compartmentalized" into either tradition or modernity (Alexander 1996: 136).
- 455 [14] "The years after 1970 witnessed a steady abatement of the conceptual tension between modernity and tradition" (Gilman 2003: 253).
- 456 [15] "As a formal theory, modernization had been discredited in nearly all quarters by the late 1970s", but "modernist ideas about development are still (inescapably?) with us" (Gilman: 266). For an interesting example, see Aboderin's (2004) discussion of how the assumptions of modernization theory about the nature of "traditional" and "modern" families make it impossible to understand changes in family support for aging parents.
- 457 [16] For a similar analysis in the African context of the dangers of asking women to choose between their culture and their rights, see Tamale 2008.
- 458 [17] Modernization paradigms in Latin America typically assumed that cultural identities would be "resolved" through convergent rationalization (see Hopenhayn 2015; Calderón, Hopenhayn and Ottone 1997; Bartra 1987).
- 459 [18] For example, the repeated iterations of the World Values Survey show a steady and global trend towards 'post-materialist' values. See also studies of the rise of individualism in school textbooks around the world (Lerch et al. 2017)
- 460 [19] See Putnam 2006. As discussed in section 15.6, another possible outcome is that dis-embedded individuals attach themselves, not to civic institutions, but to uncivil forms of extremism.

- 461 [20] For a related diagnosis of how modernization undermines all forms of solidarity, not just traditional forms, see Etzioni 1996: (“after the forces of modernity rolled back the forces of traditionalism, these forces did not come to a halt: instead in the last generation (roughly from 1960 on), they pushed ahead relentlessly, eroding the much weakened foundations of social virtue”). Etzioni is himself a former proponent of modernization theory, but now emphasizes the necessity for a “communitarian” counterweight to the forces of individualization.
- 462 [21] See Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) and Marcuse (1964).
- 463 [22] On self-reflexivity as a key component of late modernity see Giddens (1991), Beck, Giddens and Lash (1994).
- 464 [23] We use the label “postmodern narcissism” to denote a form of individualism that neglects a sense of solidarity, responds exclusively to personal interests, and does not hesitate in manipulating others for self-accomplishments. It is in part produced by cultural changes associated with the full development of a market society and the weakening of social cohesion, but also operates to reproduce and strengthen these trends.
- 465 [24] Indeed, this anxiety about the rise of egoism and consumerism is a long-standing complaint of both conservatives and radicals, although conservatives are more likely to blame the ideology of liberalism or secular humanism, whereas radicals blame the ideology of capitalism.
- 466 [25] An emblematic case is the one posed by the African American civil rights activist Rosa Parks, when on December 1, 1955 refused to give her seat in the bus to a white passenger.
- 467 [26] Instead of a logic of “aggregation through standardization”, of the sort that characterized the rationalization processes of modernization theory, people are pursuing “synergy through diversification”. In doing so, new and unpredictable cultural forms of individualization arise.
- 468 [27] See also Welzel 2010.
- 469 [28] See, for Latin America, paradigmatic publications such as Paz (1950), Martín Barbero (1987) and García Canclini (1990).
- 470 [29] The Preamble to the Ecuador constitution states “*We decided to construct a new form of citizen co-existence, in diversity and harmony with nature, to reach ‘el buen vivir, el sumak kawsay’*”. Related discourses include “[Ecological Swaraj](#)”

(<http://www.greattransition.org/publication/radical-ecological-democracy-a-path-forward-for-india-and-beyond>) in India or “Eco-Ubuntu” (http://www.enviropaedia.com/topic/default.php?topic_id=336) in South Africa. See Salazar 2015.

- 471 [30] For reflections on this, see Hall and Lamont 2013.
- 472 [31] See Ruggie 1982. The idea that markets need to be continually (re-)embedded in society was central to Karl Polanyi’s (1957) work on the “double movement” of markets and society.
- 473 [32] The relation between ethics, religion and modern economic rationality is examined in the classical study by Max Weber (1952). See also Marx’s analysis of how the pervasiveness of commodity exchange restructures human relations in a fetishist form (Marx 1968); and Simmel’s analysis of the cultural and social influence of money in modern society (1999). It is a suggestive coincidence that the texts by Weber and Simmel were both published for the first time when the 20th-century arrived, in the year 1900.
- 474 [33] On the neoliberal embrace of a (highly selective) form of multiculturalism, see Kymlicka 2013.
- 475 [34] Although elites are united by their class interests, they are also differentiated by race and gender. Non-white members of these classes find themselves at the receiving end of crude racism. Elite women are not necessarily shielded from sexism by their wealth.
- 476 [35] On the links between neoliberalism and racist populism, see Lentin and Tittley 2011. To be fair, some academic defenders of neoliberalism defended open borders, arguing that the free movement of labour would promote efficiency as much as the mobility of capital. However, this was not the sort of neoliberalism adopted by states or international organizations, which celebrated mobile capital while restricting mobile bodies.
- 477 [36] Cross-ref Religion chapter, which notes the need for new research on how religion relates to social progress, coming to “a field that long assumed either that religion would disappear and need not be considered or that religious beliefs and practices represented the vestiges of underdevelopment to be overcome”.
- 478 [37] This focus on the persistence of group boundaries despite changes in substantive norms and practices remains a central feature of the sociological study of race and ethnicity – see, for example, Lamont and Molnár 2002.

- 479 [38] On the rise and fall of “tradition vs modernity” as the master concept of social science, see Jameson 1991.
- 480 [39] See, for example, Terra and Bromley 2012. The authors situate the spread of multicultural education within the ‘world culture’ framework.
- 481 [40] See also Chapter X on the inaccuracy of the “return” metaphor in relation to religion.
- 482 [41] We take the term ‘transformative minority politics’ from Mundy 2010.
- 483 [42] This is a particular concern in the Middle East. See the discussion in Kymlicka and Pföstl 2014.
- 484 [43] For a more general discussion of these international factors, see Boulden and Kymlicka 2015.
- 485 [44] On MENA states as “unanimist”, and the negative implications of this for minorities, see Picard 2012. See also Moncfel Khaddar’s (2012) contrast between “anti-colonial nationalisms” that were broad-based inclusive movements of resistance and “state nationalisms” that (in either their secular or Islamist versions) have been authoritarian and homogenizing. As the MENA context shows, secular/civic nationalisms can be as authoritarian and homogenizing as ‘ethnic’ or religiously-defined nationalisms.
- 486 [45] Ashanti unions are cultural and welfare organizations of Ghanaians of Asante origin, a major ethnic group in Ghana. They are found in many cities across the world where there are a sizable population of people who identify as Asante (see Manuh 1998).
- 487 [46] Pan-Africanism is a global movement whose central objective is the restoration of the humanity of people of African descent wherever they may find themselves. Many of the leaders of the independence struggle in Africa returned to Africa after encountering Pan-Africanism as students in Europe and North America (cf. James 2012; 2006).
- 488 [47] As Sylvia Tamale (2007) argued, culture is an important site of struggle over economic and social resources for women. To advocate the negation of culture talk could potentially amount to denying subordinated groups the resources to assert and affirm themselves. For culture is contested. It is neither inherently oppressive or sans contradiction.
- 489 [48] On similar lines see the critique by Schmidt (2006), drawing on a parallel with the

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'varieties of capitalism' literature.