

# Multipolarization or Cosmopolitanization? Moving Towards an Indeterminate World\*

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In academic and public policy discourses, there is an increasing discussion about the emergence of a multipolar world order. This discussion is supported by statistical data, historical evidence, and concrete facts that highlight the polarization of the world and the waning influence of American hegemony. These narratives often frame the current state of the world as a transition from one certain and determinate order to another. The purpose of this paper is to critically grapple with the concept of world order, which serves as the foundation for many theories in the fields of globalization and international relations. A critical review of the dominant theories of world order and globalization reveals that many of them presuppose the existence of a regulated entity for the imaginary unity of the world, whether positively or negatively. This presupposition is prominent due to the pervasive influence of the epistemological antinomy of foundationalism/anti(non)-foundationalism. By suspending this antinomy and deconstructing the idea of world order, drawing upon the theory of risk society and cosmopolitanization as a new global differentiation force this paper argues that the contemporary world is not moving towards a new, predetermined order but rather towards a state of indeterminacy, uncertainty, and fluidity. The rise of global risks in recent times has instigated a transformational process that has affected various aspects of different societies. This paper argues that understanding and interpreting the current state of the world requires a revision of our epistemology and a shift towards prioritizing the indeterminate that is risk.

*Keywords:* The World Order, Multipolarity, Cosmopolitanization, World Risk Society, Differentiation, Social Configurations, Indeterminacy, Post-foundationalism

## Introduction

Since the early 20th century, amidst the intense competition between European colonial empires, the notion of world order based on the concept of superpowers has gained significant currency in the field of political analysis. Especially after World War II and the emergence of the bipolar international system during the Cold War era, the notion of polarities and polarization has come to occupy a central position in political science (Cox, 1996). Kenneth Waltz's seminal article in the neorealist school, which investigated the stability of the bipolar system, is a classic example of this trend (Waltz, 1964). Subsequently, a variety of works were published that explored the cartography of the world order focusing on the nature, number, and interrelationships of great powers, with polarization as a key area of inquiry (Bueno de Mesquita, 1975; Cox, 1996; de Mesquita, 1978, 1981; Deutsch & Singer, 1964;

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\* Funding: The research was supported by RUDN University. Project № 100341-0-000

Gilpin, 1981; Haas, 1970; Hoag, 1969; Hopf, 1991; Jackson, 1978; Moul, 1989; Rapkin, Thompson, & Christopherson, 1979; Wallace, 1973; Wayman, 1984). Consequently, the concepts of poles, great powers, and polarization were widely employed in both political circles and the public sphere. In the 1980s, the idea of multipolarity emerged as a crucial element in China's foreign policy discourse (Clegg, 2015; De Keersmaecker, 2017), and it has since gained traction in the academic and political circles of other countries, notably Russia, where it has been extensively discussed and cited in various think tanks (Degterev & Timashev, 2019; Ferguson, 2018). The rise of the global south, along with the emergence of new economies such as Brazil, South Africa, and Turkey, have also contributed to the growing recognition and acceptance of the idea of multipolarity, which has become more pronounced since the first years of the initial decade of the 2000s (Nederveen Pieterse, 2017; Peters, 2022; Rehbein, 2015). At present various global events such as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO's shift to Eastern Europe and Scandinavia, the escalating tensions between China and the United States, the former's growing power, the rise of new centers of capital accumulation, the construction of new economic routes such as the Silk Road, India-Middle East-EU and North-South corridors with the participation of emerging economies in Eurasia and East and Southeast Asia, intense conflicts in the Middle East — coupled with the growing role of emerging powers, alongside the influential roles played by other global players in this region, the increase in conflicts between the great powers or world power blocs, the rise of extra-regional middle-range powers, the emergence of regional and extra-regional agreements and organizations, as well as the proliferation of regional conflicts, are seen as indicators of the emerging new world order (Ashford, 2022; Biscop, 2022; Brooks, Wohlforth, 2023; Cafruny, Fouskas, Mallinson, Voynitsky, 2023; Chausovsky, 2022; Layne, 2009).

Polarization theories and theories of globalization share a common presupposition. They view the world as a regulated and determinate system comprised of well-organized entities, including states, economic institutions, transnational and global organizations. The primary focus of these theories is to understand and make sense of the relationships between these elements or entities, thereby providing a basis for the cartography of the world order. The latter may be considered either on the basis of economic foundations in the form of the world system (Wallerstein, 2004), the dominance of neoliberalism (Barber, 1996; Clawson, 2003) or liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1989, 1993), the rise of emerging economies (Nederveen Pieterse, 2017); or on the basis of power foundations (Buzan, Waeber, 2003; Schmidt, 2005; Tammen, Kugler, Lemke, Stamm, Abdollahian, Alsharabia, 2000; Volgy, Corbetta, Grant, Baird, 2011) — in their various meanings — to conceptualize order in terms of the emergence of a global field (Go, 2008), a world society (Meyer, 2018; Meyer, Boli, Thomas, Ramirez, 1997), or the restoration of empires (Steinmetz, 2014). World order may also be based on the foundation of the power of states identifying global multipolar or unipolar modes (De Keersmaecker, 2017; Deutsch, Singer, 1964; Jackson, 1978; Jervis, 2011; Mansfield, 1993; Monteiro, 2014; Rapkin et al., 1979; Raymond, Kegley, 1990); the revival of civilizational states (Coker, 2019); modernization (Marsh, 2014; Ruggie, 1993; Tiryakian, 1992), in the form of a world composed

of multiple or alternative modernities (Eisenstadt, 2000, 2002). Lastly, it could also be viewed on the basis of the global cultural foundation that is converging or diverging more and more (Appadurai, 1990; Featherstone, 1991; Robertson, 1992); as world civilization (Arjomand, Tiryakian, 2004; Wittrock, 2014), or as the clash of civilizations (Huntington, 1996). In general, many of these theories consider different foundations — solid and given—to make sense of their object of inquiry, i.e., the world—foundations that attempt to deal with contraction or expansion, homogeneity or heterogeneity, convergence or divergence, integration or segregation, identity or differentiation on a global scale (Giddens, 1999; Held, 1999, 2010; Held, McGrew, 2003; Jong, 2022a; Nash, 2010; Robinson, 1998, 2001). Criticism of these foundations has also become the main goal of postmodern, constructivist, and post-structuralist theories of globalization (Appiah, 1997; Bauman, 1998; Giddens, 1991; Harvey, 1998; Jameson, 1991; Portnoi, 2016; Ruggie, 1993; Sassen, 1998; Scholte, 2000). Although some of these approaches aim to construct a more broad and flexible perspective on global dynamics, the end result of many of these anti-(non-)foundationalist theoretical efforts is a step towards unfounded epistemological nihilism and the suspension of scientific knowledge and explanations of global relations (Baudrillard, 1994, 1995, 1998; Bauman, 1998, 2000; Lyotard, 1986). Primarily, these two general categories of theories see global transformations as a movement from one order to another, such as the transition from a unipolar order centered on the United States and neoliberal economy, to a multipolar order characterized by the emergence of new powers such as China and Russia, spatial and economic liberalization, and the rise of new regional and extra-regional powers (Barber, 1996; Buzan, 2004; Hiro, 2010; Huntington, 1996; Rapkin et al., 1979; Tammen et al., 2000).

It can be argued that the current state of the world is not entering a determinate order with specific relationships between certain elements, nor is it moving toward a more pluralistic or polarized order (in liberal or realist conceptions of polarization) or toward a groundless and pure anarchy. Instead, the world is experiencing a state of uncertainty and indeterminacy, driven primarily by the collective actions of contemporary humans and communities, and increasingly expanding on a global scale. This indeterminacy cannot be explained solely by positive foundations or pure groundlessness alone. Drawing on the idea of the world risk society (Beck, 1992, 1999, 2007b, 2009; Jong, 2022b) and also on the post-foundationalist approach, this paper attempts to consider the analytical implications of grounding risk and the process of cosmopolitanization of the world (Beck, 1997, 2006, 2007a, 2008, 2011; Jong, 2022a) in comprehending global relations and the world order. How can placing risk — as a representation of indeterminacy — as the basis or foundation for understanding make the transition of the contemporary world into the realm of indeterminacy comprehensible? How is the cosmopolitanization of the world or the globalization of risk and uncertainty reconfiguring the contemporary world, and how will this reconfiguration be understood? This paper aims to show how a certain understanding of the world requires above all the revision and suspension of many dominant analytical categories and approaches in global studies and social sciences.

This suspension will reveal that, although the contemporary world, especially in the first wave of modernization in Western Europe, was supposed to be conceived, reconstructed, and determined on the basis of modern immanent reason, rational institutions, and then science and technology—a modernization that subjected Europe and then the entire world to a fundamental reconfiguration—on another level, this restructuring was accompanied by the emergence of widespread risks and crises, that were themselves triggered by the unintended consequences and side effects of this modernization and its related policies (Beck, 1992, 1997, 1999). Now, under global trends and forces, these risks have become the basis of a kind of cosmopolitanization, a process that has deepened and spread these risks on a global scale (Beck, 2007b). This process has manifested itself in the return, expansion, and deepening of the uncertainty and indeterminacy that were supposed to be suspended, controlled, and structured under rational entities, institutions, and orders such as nation-states, citizenship, mass democracies, technology, secularism, modern economy and education, etc. Now, in the process of the cosmopolitanization of the world and the indeterminacy of these modern structures and their foundations, and especially as a result of their unintended consequences and side effects, these institutions and constructs themselves have become not only a source of risks and uncertainty preventing new solutions or alternative configurations (Beck, 1997, 2002, 2006, 2007a, 2016a; Beck, Levy, 2013). It is also argued that many global phenomena and configurations, which are also labeled and subsumed under categories such as pluralism or multi-polarization, should be considered in relation to the current world risk society. Numerous treaties, alliances, new initiatives, ideologies, regional or global conflicts, or new global and transnational actors, states, powers, and organizations have basically emerged out of the cosmopolitanization of the world. To this end, the paper will briefly review some dominant approaches in globalization studies, elaborate the idea of the world risk society, and finally consider the consequences of making risk the foundation of the cosmopolitanization of the world in both its analytical and concrete dimensions.

### **Globalization and Approaches of Polarization**

The literature on globalization can be divided into two primary paradigms: one views globalization as the spread of neoliberalism with economic homogenization, while the other emphasizes multi-centrism and heterogenization, highlighting new political, cultural, and economic poles like China, Russia, India, Brazil, and others (Held, McGrew, 2007; Hiro, 2010; Hirst, Thompson, 1999; Nederveen Pieterse, 2017; Robertson, 1992; Sassen, 2014). These paradigms interpret globalization as either integration and homogenization or as divergence, fragmentation, and polarization. Moderate theories depict both integration and divergence elements (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1996; Robertson, 1992), often based on external factors like economy, power, culture, religion, capital, labor, civilization, city, modernization, diasporas, state, migration, etc. These approaches are foundationalist responses to global issues, interpreting the global in relation to external, fixed foundations (Jong, 2023b).

The widespread capitalist expansion and its impact on diverse societies worldwide, along with its various local and national manifestations, are considered indicative of universal neoliberalism (Brenner, Peck, Theodore, 2010; Peck, Theodore, 2015; Woodley, 2017). This paradigm centers on large capitals and their circulations, global capitalist production, and labor division. The world systems theory proposed by Immanuel Wallerstein (2004), for instance, provides a cartography of the current world order based on the center, periphery, and semi-periphery. These theories focus on economy and wealth, with conflict over capital determining dynamics. Radical neoliberalism critiques local, national, religious, or regional entities as false and opposes them to cosmopolitan and universal capital freedom (Keohane, 1984, 1988).

In contrast to the homogenous and materialistic image of the world order, there are also cultural and immaterial theories grounded on foundations such as civilizations, mobilities, soft power, conflicts, and cultural dynamisms. Here, civilization, formulated on the basis of enduring cultural or religious foundations, serves as a ground for understanding different societies throughout history (Arjomand, Tiryakian, 2004; Huntington, 1996; Wittrock, 2014). Modernity in its various manifestations along with the emergence of multiple modernities and diverse modernization patterns, has laid another foundation for comprehending world's transformations, especially in the social sciences after World War II (Eisenstadt, 2002; Giddens, 2013). Power/Resistance dichotomy is another foundation for addressing global order (Chakrabarty, 2000; Cox, 1993, 1996). By making the concept of power plural and multidimensional, some scholars aim to comprehend the reconfiguration of the world through the concept of empire (Cox, 1993; Negri, Hardt, 2000). The field of colonial/post-colonial studies analyzes the history of Western colonization, the struggles of colonized societies, and post-colonial trends in various contexts, drawing on the relations of domination and resistance (Hall, 1992; Nederveen Pieterse, 2017; Said, 1994). In this context, dependency theories emphasize the role of power dynamics such as dominance and subordination in determining the nature of global relationships. These theories prioritize the analysis of these variables to reveal existing power imbalances (Frank, 1966). The concept of development constitutes another foundation that numerous theories aim to employ for outlining a blueprint of globalization (Rist, 2007).

(Neo-)realist international relations theorists highlight the nation-state as an analysis unit, identifying poles, great powers, and their relations (Mearsheimer, 2001; Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979). This school, along with (neo)liberal approaches (Baldwin, 1993, 2016; Keohane, 1984, 1988), is dominant in globalization studies and international relations. By examining power distribution, these theories define world order based on state dominance and relative power positions (De Keersmaeker, 2017). The world is seen as naturally anarchic, with states as primary actors in ongoing domination conflicts. Global order results from this power struggle, identified through power accumulation, balance, and interstate ratios (Bull, 2002; Mansfield, 1993; Mearsheimer, 2001; Moul, 1989). Stability and durability are key variables for predicting global order (de Mesquita, 1978, 1981; Deutsch, Singer, 1964; Gilpin, 1981; Haas, 1970; Hopf, 1991; Ikenberry, Mastanduno, Wohlforth, 2009; Levy, 1984;

Moul, 1993; Waltz, 1964; Wohlforth, 1999, 2009). Terms like polarization, multipolarity, unipolarity, bipolarity, tripolarity, and polarity configuration describe various constellations, analyzed in cluster polarity and power polarity modes (Stephen G. Brooks, Wohlforth, 2023; Etzioni, 2012; Jackson, 1978; Jervis, 2011; Kopalyan, 2017; Krauthammer, 1990; Monteiro, 2014; Peters, 2022; Rapkin et al., 1979; Raymond, Kegley, 1990).

Cluster polarity mode considers world order branching through power blocs relationships (Buono de Mesquita, 1975; Moul, 1989, 1993; Raymond, Kegley, 1990; Wallace, 1973). 'Polarization' refers to alliance bonds within systems. A highly polarized system has tightly bound states, while a less polarized system lacks such ties or has cross-cutting ties (Wayman and Morgan, 1993). Cluster multipolarity features evenly dispersed states with cross-cutting loyalties (Wayman, 1984). Cluster polarity is based on bonds, transactions, and conflictual or cooperative interactions (Rapkin et al., 1979). Analyses often cover military alliances, diplomatic relations, international organizations, intergovernmental cooperation, and trade.

In power polarity mode, analysis identifies superpowers or poles and their relationships to other states (Huntington, 1999; Layne, 1993; Mansfield, 1993; Mearsheimer, 2001; Waltz, 1979, 1993; Wohlforth, 2009). Variables like GDP, military expenditures, regional power, and soft power identify superpowers, defining polarity configurations based on their relationships (Brooks, Wohlforth, 2008; Gilpin, 1981; Ikenberry et al., 2009; Ikenberry, Mastanduno, Wohlforth, 2011; Modelski, 1987; Tammen et al., 2000; Thompson, 1986; Wohlforth, 2009). De Keersmaecker (2017) distinguishes numerical and hierarchical power polarity. Numerical polarity is based on the number of great powers (Hopf, 1991; Monteiro, 2014). Hierarchical power polarity differentiates great powers and polar powers, defining unipolar, bipolar, and multipolar orders (Ikenberry et al., 2011; Pape, 2005; Paul, 2005).

In the field of international relations, scholars often use the concept of polarity configurations to analyze and categorize historical periods (Buzan, 2004; Hopf, 1991; Levy, 1984; Rosecrance, 1963; Wagner, 1993). After providing definitions and explanations of these terms, researchers often revisit various historical periods through this analytical lens. For example, the pre-World War II era is widely considered to be multipolar, consisting of several colonial empires. Meanwhile, the period after World War II until the collapse of the Soviet Union is defined as the era of bipolarity, with the United States and the Soviet Union serving as the two superpowers. The period from 1991 to 2009 is mainly referred to as the era of unipolarity, with the centrality of the United States of America and neoliberal capitalism. However, the emergence of China and Russia as major global players, as well as the formation of new international organizations, such as BRICS and the Shanghai Pact, mark the beginning of a new multipolar era in international relations (Haass, 2017; Keohane, 1984; Walt, 2018).

These approaches often prioritize a state-centered perspective with Eurocentric and colonial biases. They emphasize material aspects of power and are defined by methodological nationalism and different kinds of centralism (Jong, 2023a). These theories are limited as they focus on early modernity in Western Europe and North America, ignore cultural differences, and oversimplify global relationships as cooperative or conflictual.

In opposition to the aforementioned schools of thought, postmodern or post-structuralist approaches seek to deconstruct dominant power/knowledge structures to reveal a fluid and pluralistic reality that lies beneath them. Such analyses often argue that grasping transnational and global phenomena on a macro level is epistemologically unattainable. Instead, they prioritize understanding micro, singular, and local phenomena. Additionally, they may suggest to explore the dynamic interplay between local and global factors (Appadurai, 1996; Bauman, 1998; Hannerz, 1996).

The contemporary world, however, is characterized by the growing importance of indeterminacy and the role played by global and transnational phenomena and relations, which necessitate a more nuanced and realistic understanding of their fluidity and unevenness. Despite this, many theories of globalization that rely on fixed and theoretical categories fail to capture the complexity of these phenomena, leading to distorted and biased conceptions in academic and political spheres. Complicating the conceptual and theoretical models of global entities and relations, while maintaining dominant cognitive categories, presuppositions, theories and constructs in the field of international relations and social sciences, may indeed yield certain cognitive benefits. However, understanding the dynamics and profound transformations in the global context requires not merely the alteration or sophistication of models or the addition of new variables. Instead, it necessitates a cognitive transformation and an examination of the actual condition on a global scale — a situation entangled in perpetual and intense interplay, where a regional variable scale can bring about extensive transformations. These indeterminacy, interconnectedness and fluidity often lead to the suspension of many established cognitive constructs and categories. After the construction of a specific category (such as a nation), this concept quickly loses its connection to the corresponding reality — which itself is uncertain and fluid— after the passage of time or with a change in space. Ulrich Beck refers to these as “zombie categories” (Beck, 2002). On the other hand, the basis of this global condition implies no definite postulates of a world order, but rather the transformation of the world and an intimately connected profound change. Consequently, many social entities and institutions amidst a highly dynamic and uncertain environment ground their actions and existence on fluid and partial foundations. As a result, many of these entities and institutions also transform into “zombie categories” (Beck, 2001, 2002). However, the fundamental question raised in this context is, firstly, how one can highlight the perpetual global indeterminacy at the ontological level. Secondly, how, through suspending established categories and prevailing assumptions, can social phenomena and relations be conceptualized according to their inherently indeterminate nature?

Therefore, a more nuanced approach is required to overcome these limitations and achieve a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of contemporary transnational dynamics. As noted earlier, in almost all of the aforementioned approaches, foundations such as economy, wealth, capital, modernity, power, etc., are considered grounds for identifying world order. The foundations are depicted as central elements which global actors and forces are in constant struggle to attain, a struggle over the goods that serve as the foundations of world order. In the existing literature, states and interna-

tional organizations are commonly portrayed as the primary entities or actors, whereas transnational, contingent, indeterminate, fluid or unknown elements or events are often overlooked or dismissed as secondary or disruptive forces. Given the indeterminate and uncertain nature of these phenomena and relations, comprehending global occurrences necessitates the use of a distinct conceptual framework that can contextualize them on a global scale and in relation to other phenomena. Therefore, these theories require some sort of ontological shift in the way we understand the current state of the world. Subsequently, this study will examine the world risk society and the cosmopolitanization of the world as the foundation and crucial force of the current global structure. Finally, the construction of global realities in the contemporary world risk society will be outlined, and the implications of this repositioning will be discussed.

### **World Risk Society and Cosmopolitanization as a New Global Differentiation Force**

The current state of the world, which has undergone profound communication and cyber revolutions after comprehensive modernization, implies neither convergence nor divergence. What is increasingly evident is the deepening of cosmopolitanization. This phenomenon is not the result of either homogenization or the expansion of heterogeneity based on conflicts over the distribution of goods such as capital, power, or hegemony. Rather, cosmopolitanization is a response to various threats and risks that affect the entire world. According to Ulrich Beck, this situation marks the emergence of the “world risk society” (Beck, 1992, 1999, 2009), in which social relations and structures are shaped not only by interests and conflicts over goods, but also by reactions to adversity and risks. In this society, risks and uncertainties have arisen not from nature itself but as a result of the collective actions of modern humans in their efforts to rationalize and scientifically reconstruct the order of nature. Now, after experiencing different kinds of modernization, threats and risks have returned from the unintended consequences and side effects of human actions (Beck, 1992, 2007b; Jong, 2022b).

Contemporary society faces a plethora of global challenges, including severe environmental crises, the neo-colonial exploitation of indigenous communities, financial crises, the re-emergence of destructive modern ideologies such as Islamism and neo-Fascisms, food crises, terrorism, profound global inequalities, regional wars, the unintended consequences of the globalization of cyberspace, transnational criminal networks, massive migration flows, and more. These issues are the unintended consequences and side effects of modern societies’ collective actions on a global scale (Beck, 1999).

Contemporary society faces a plethora of global challenges, including severe environmental crises and degradation, the new global regime of neo-liberalism (which, like the post-Cold War era, seeks to present itself as the sole force for progress and democracy, positioning itself against other parts of the world and establishing a new divide between the democratic and non-democratic worlds through a regime of foundationalist differentiation), financial crises spreading rapidly across borders, the re-emergence of destructive



modern ideologies such as Islamism, neo-Fascisms, etc., food crises, terrorism, profound global inequalities, regional wars and conflicts, the unintended consequences of the globalization of cyberspace, the rise of transnational criminal networks and cartels, massive migration flows, and much more. All of these issues are the unintended consequences and side effects of the collective actions of modern societies that now extend on a global scale (Beck, 1999).

The important point about these crises is that their effects and consequences do not remain confined to a local or national geography; they are immediately unbound and take on a transnational and global character (Beck, Sznaider, 2006). A virus outbreak in one city in China can quickly affect the rest of the world. Environmental crises in one country can restructure the political geography of the region. The spread of global mass cultures and communication technologies is changing the configuration of nation-states worldwide. Regional tensions have significant global implications. Financial turmoil in the United States could send ripples through the global financial system. Political strife in Germany can affect European Union and NATO policies. Regional conflicts shape global migration patterns. This is not an exhaustive list, and many more examples could be cited. The world is on the verge of a new reconfiguration due to the globalization of risks and uncertainties. This novelty implies a new order of things where indeterminacy and uncertainty are its main pillars (Beck, 2016a). Despite its diversity, modern civilization has been strongly influenced by global risks (Beck, 2007b). As a result, societies are currently undergoing reconfiguration based on their national and local settings (Jong, 2022b). This reconfiguration can be understood on the basis of a negative foundation (as opposed to positive foundations or groundlessness), which is risk or indeterminacy. Consequently, newly constructed social relations experience considerable fluidity, constant metamorphosis, and fundamental uncertainty. This indeterminacy is difficult to grasp in both social sciences and policy-making.

Understanding contemporary societal transformations requires grasping global developments over the past three centuries. Modernity and its subsequent globalization have been divided by social theorists into two stages: First modernity and Second Modernity in Western Europe and then globally (Beck, 1992, 2016b; Beck, Grande, 2010; Giddens, 2013). The First Modernity emerged from the European Enlightenment, bringing significant social and political transformations such as industrial revolutions, urbanization, nation-states, and colonialism. This modernity was based on the idea of self-determined and immanent reason, where modern man, in the era of secularism, perceived himself as a God-like figure. He believed that with modern science, technology, and reason, he could conquer and control nature, directing it towards progress. Thus, European man's relationship with nature underwent a significant transformation during the Enlightenment, forming the basis for the new age. Science and technology gradually became the primary tools of human will, leading to modern societies and institutions. The first wave of modernization was nation-state-oriented, aimed at reconstructing human societies based on national units. These units deeply restored local, ethnic, and religious entities, while many European nation-states exhibited colonial characteristics, occupying many regions of the world. Thus,

the two oppressive forces—one for resocialization and building national structures and institutions, and the other for exploiting other societies—were the driving forces behind modernity's path towards progress and welfare (Beck, 1992, 1999).

Despite considerable progress, the world in the 20th century, especially after the two great wars, has undergone significant changes leading to a new age of global transformation. Many scholars refer to this era as liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000), late modernity (Giddens, 1991), late capitalism (Jameson, 1991), and similar terms. In the Second Modernity (Beck, 1992, 2016b), modern men face the consequences and side effects of their actions, shaped by the dominance of immanent reason, modern science and technology, and the construction of rational institutions. The second wave of modernity is characterized by a transition from formal rationality to an indeterminate realm, where everything is subject to metamorphosis and fluidity. The current crisis can be seen as an intellectual crisis, specifically a crisis of modern rationality. In this new era, the secure foundations of modernity have been challenged and threatened.

Ulrich Beck argues that the emergence of the risk society is the most significant consequence of the Second Modernity. This society has three fundamental characteristics (Beck, 1992). First, it is formed around the distribution of negative elements and their avoidance, rather than competing over positive factors. Second, individualization, resulting in fluidity and permanent indeterminacy, is considered the most dominant force instead of socialization. Third, labor and economic relations have undergone a significant transformation, entering a state of indeterminacy. In the risk society, risks and threats gradually dominate capital, wealth, and power, particularly in their material sense. Consequently, as argued by Beck, power and capital are reconstructed and relocated in response to risks (Beck, 1992, 1999, 2007b).

In the past, modern societies aimed to control threats and risks posed by natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, droughts, or forest fires through science and technology. Now science and technology have become primary sources of risks and uncertainties. With each human endeavor aimed at progress, unintended consequences and new risks arise. A sense of pessimism and fear has become ingrained in all actions (Jong, 2022b; Krahnemann, 2011). For example, the construction of a dam to control flooding and water accumulation in one area can cause environmental problems for other residents. The expansion of agricultural land using new technologies has led to various forms of biological and environmental pollution worldwide. Nuclear energy, once envisioned to provide a stable power source, has now emerged as the greatest hazard and threat to human civilization. Consequently, the element of risk significantly impacts the expected outcomes of any policy or action. Contemporary institutions such as the state, universities, global economic relations, and urbanization, instead of facilitating new opportunities and amenities, have posed numerous challenges to diverse societies, thereby deviating from their fundamental character. Social actors are constantly engaged in averting crises rather than competing for capital.

The risk society is also characterized by unbridled individualization, manifesting in various ways (Beck, 1992; Beck, Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). The proliferation of new risks,

crises, and conflicts has exposed many existing social institutions to existential threats, challenging their ability to fulfill their intended functions. In the First Modernity, social institutions were structured around nation-states, which served as the primary structural platforms for social actions and practices. In the Second Modernity, these institutions and entities have faced new challenges. Previously, social actors were integrated by learning their roles in various positions and institutions synonymous with national society. However, in the risk society, the spread of risks on a large scale has challenged these institutions, and social actors are forced to face issues and problems alone (Beck, 1999, 2007a; Beck, Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

In the absence of institutional support, individuals are forced to formulate and carry out their life plans alone, resulting in the kinds of fluidity, temporality, uncertainty, indeterminacy, and ambivalence that dominate social practices. While these fluidity and indeterminacy give social actors a new agency and subjectivity in the world at risk, they have also institutionalized a kind of permanent reflection in their actions (Beck, 1992, 1999). In the risk society, individuality, the individual and individualization take precedence over society, the social, and socialization. In a state of deteriorating dominant institutions, individuals become increasingly isolated, and many identifications and social groupings are suspended. Modes of being and belonging are put into a fluid state, and instead of bounded and homogeneous social entities, we are faced with hybrid and heterogeneous configurations that emerge momentarily based on the goals and interests of particular actors and on specific foundations. These configurations are not only formed in national platforms but can occupy different spaces and times with various degrees of stability and durability (Jong, 2022a).

Fluidity and indeterminacy's impact extends beyond social institutions to labor and economic relations. The traditional labor-capital relationship dominant in early modern economic systems has been disrupted by capital fluidity and work precariousness, fostering instability. Factors like cyberspace expansion, high technology proliferation, transnational corporations' emergence, and labor-oriented industries' relocation to the global South have contributed to work and economic organizations' de-standardization. Expertise and education alone can no longer ensure a secure career in the risk society (Beck, 1992).

In the shadow of globalized modernity, this risk society has also acquired a global condition, and it is not a society that can be immune to the undesirable side effects and destructive consequences of modernization. As Ulrich Beck puts it, the two main outcomes of the global risk society are the emergence of reflexive modernity and the cosmopolitanization of the world (Beck, 1992, 1999, 2006, 2016a). Under conditions of declining authority in institutions such as the state, the family, the economy, religion and culture, individuals are forced to carry out their practices reflexively and in highly fluid situations. Ulrich Beck posits that reflexive modernity involves a dual process of inventive self-deconstruction and reconstruction of industrial, national social forms and formations such as class, occupation, gender, family, and economy (Beck, 1997). The first component of reflexive modernization is the encounter with risks that are incompatible

with the standards of industrial society (Beck, 1994). In the risk society, industrial hazards proliferate, but responsibility and control standards cannot be established due to the incomprehensible nature of risks and threats. The ongoing process of reflexive modernization leads to the emergence of a second dynamic, which involves the reconstruction or re-modernization of society with new forms of subjectivity, individuality, family, capitalism, state, labor, and globalization (Beck, 1994; Beck, Bonss, Lau, 2003; Rossi, 2014). In this context, individuals serve as the creators and agents of categories, boundaries, and risks, and bear their consequences. Society is constructed and reconstructed through self-selecting, self-defining, and self-organizing activities. Accordingly, the distinguishing features of reflexive modernity encompass ambivalence, contradiction, and the internalization of indeterminacy (Beck, 2016a).

Risks and threats are impartial towards ethnicities, nations, states, economies, races, genders, religions, etc. This means that global warming, for example, impacts all societies, irrespective of their local and national characteristics. While the responses of distinct societies to these threats may vary, there is no escape from these crises in the conditions of highly developed global communication and connectivity (Jong, 2022b). The presidential election in the United States or the power struggle in China can significantly affect global and national economies. Risks have the potential to either deconstruct or reconstruct many of these categories and their related social entities creating different meanings of belonging and being, as well as social and political boundaries. Therefore, economic actors have to acknowledge the role of global and transnational risks in their practices. Globalization and the dissemination of risks have provided the groundwork for the cosmopolitanization of the world (Beck, 2008; Jong, 2016b, 2016a, 2022a; Selchow, 2016). This cosmopolitanization implies the increasing influence of worldwide and cross-border factors on national and local entities. There is no social phenomenon that can be immune to these pervasive effects (Beck, 2011). On the other hand, reacting to these transnational trends is beyond the powers of a sole nation-state, a superpower, or an economic or political entity. According to Beck, if the First Modernity was focused on national level, the Second Modernity is essentially cosmopolitan (Beck, 2006, 2007a; Beck, Levy, 2013).

It can be argued that cosmopolitanization is a new differentiation force in the risk society, a process that places separate, scattered, and unrelated global constituents in lasting and mutual relations (Beck, 1992, 1999). However, this is not a simple and ordinary interrelationship, as globalization theories have attempted to address it. Instead, it implies the emergence of a new global trend that takes apart the separate and regulated territories, promotes their close interaction, and puts them in a state of uncertainty and fluidity. While acknowledging and maintaining differences, and by heightening the transnationality, indeterminacy and interconnectivity, the process of cosmopolitanization leads to increased dependencies and connections through various transnational and global configurations. This process often results in widespread confrontations between distinct entities and identities on a global scale. These distinctions now come into conflict with the dominant national or economic categories and boundaries. In general, the cosmopolitanization of reality involves three interdependent aspects: the prevalence of risks,

the diffusion of uncertainty, and the entanglement of lived realities, cultural practices, experiential realms, and anticipated futures (Jong, 2022a; Selchow, 2016). The impact of this new differentiation force, which operates on a global scale, extends beyond the old confines of nation-states, traditional institutions and dominant settings. As a result, there is a perpetual fluidity countering the old categories, actors, and units such as the state, nation, society, culture, etc., on a global scale.

### **Cosmopolitanization and Global Configurations**

Taking the cosmopolitanization as the ontology of the contemporary world will entail many epistemological and normative implications for the field of global studies (Jong, 2022b). What manifests itself more than anything in the world risk society is the prevalence of uncertainty, indeterminacy, and fluidity on a global scale—the indeterminacy that was supposed to be suspended and controlled in the form of rational institutions and systems such as nation-states (Beck, 2016a). Now, with the globalization of risks and the re-dominance of uncertainty and indeterminacy, many modern structures are under serious threat, and the world order is on the verge of a new configuration around the new foundation, that is, avoiding new risks. In this new order, many relations, institutions, and actors that had a positive and constructive role in the past have now not only lost their function but have become the source of different kinds of threats and crises. Now, in social theory, with the suspension of foundationalist or anti/non-foundationalist approaches indeterminacy and risk should be placed as central categories in the understanding of the contemporary world.

To ground risks and uncertainty as the bases of the present is to lay a permanent and incomplete foundation in the construction of social phenomena. In addition to a clear understanding of contemporary order and developments, this shift will have many political and historical implications. Through this effort, which is well formulated in the post-foundationalist approach (Jong, 2023b), indeterminacy is incorporated into making sense of social and global phenomena. In post-foundationalism, global phenomena are seen as configurations at the level of particularity, something between singularity and universality, actualized in a constellation of relations under certain conditions of possibility. This approach dissolves the dichotomies of the local versus the global and the singular versus the universal, as social configurations emerge in an ongoing process at different moments, scales, and with different determinations and inclusions, as relatively autonomous entities (Jong, 2022a, 2023b). These configurations are fundamentally determined by the historical and social conditions, a contingency that implies the incompleteness of the foundations that constitute them. This contingency also means that the actualization of one configuration requires the non-realization of other possibilities and configurations. Social theory also only has access to the moment of determination of these temporal and spatial configurations, which display different levels of stability and duration, or, in other words, different determinations. Therefore, we do not have a given transhistorical phenomenon or category.

The most important epistemological outcome of the priority of indeterminacy is that many existing theories of the world order and globalization are seen as temporary analyses formulated about temporal and spatial configurations, analyses that are relationally valid only for some orders of things. When discussing the unipolar world and American supremacy after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the primary questions that arise are: in what areas, in what places, at what times, and in relation to what actors and fields has this supremacy been established? Are we referring to the power of the state, the nation-state, the economy, the hegemony, and the military power of the United States of America? Principally, is the category of power a definite and calculable category? With the predominance of indeterminacy and relationality it can be shown that at the height of U. S. military power and the space occupations that this country carried out around the world, it suffered from very serious environmental, cultural, and economic challenges. To what extent has the power of the United States varied in the regions of the Middle East, East Asia, and Europe? Yes, based on a state-centric, Eurocentric, and essentialist approach to world power, there are different states with different accumulations of power that enjoy diverse abilities to exercise dominance. But can the cultural power of America be basically measured and compared with the cultural power of China and Russia? Why does it seem that the cultural power of an Islamist group like the Taliban still dominates the cultural power of the US after nearly two decades of occupation in Pakistan and Afghanistan? Is China's emergence as a rising power centered on the economy, or should this power be seen as heterogeneous and uneven?

On the other hand, in many homogenous and foundationalist analyses, as mentioned earlier, the materialist conception of power is the basis for making sense of the world order. However, the numbers are deceiving. For example, when many studies refer to Saudi Arabia or Qatar as emerging middle and regional powers, they point to their high GDP, their military expenditure, and their security agreements with great powers (Wastnidge, Mabon, 2022). But these so-called military powers could not achieve the slightest success in any of the regional conflicts in West Asia. Saudi Arabia lost almost all conflicts in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen that were involved in proxy wars as Iran's allies. Meanwhile, Iran, as a country under the most severe international sanctions and the deepest governance and economic crises, has been the winner of all these wars. More than anything, the power of Iran or Saudi Arabia will be relationally comprehensible within a constellation of various relations and factors. Therefore, the IRI can pose a serious challenge in the Middle East and, in certain periods, to the strongest army in the world, that is, the United States, a challenge that can be understood not in terms of military and security conflicts but in a network of religious, economic, technological, environmental, and political relations.

It can be argued that the world has never been unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar (Brooks and Wohlforth, 2023; Calleo, 2009; Etzioni, 2012; Schroeder, 1994). In fact, understanding the world based on the category of polarity is itself a manifestation of modernity's essentialism and foundationalism. Maybe in the minds of emperors, rulers, dignitaries, governors, dictators, soldiers, or philosophers, analysts, politicians, and sociologists, the

world is regulated, but the examination of historical and social facts reveals something else. This systematic and totalitarian modern mentality (and all its material and cultural manifestations) was itself a basis for the destruction of the world that, over the centuries, had generated colorful and rich traditions in multiplicity and fluidity, traditions that arose from different ways of perceiving and relating to nature. Now that this totalitarian mentality has infiltrated the entire contemporary world in various forms, it has become the greatest threat to human civilization. These threats and risks have unmasked this most destructive human creation, and perhaps this serves as a basis for restoring human civilization and reconstructing its relationship with nature.

Many contemporary configurations have come to the fore more directly as a result of the world risk society and the globalization of risk. These configurations are predominantly global and transnational in nature, resulting from the cosmopolitanization of the world (Hannerz, 1996; Jong, 2022a). As noted above, this process is characterized by indeterminacy, fluidity, and uncertainty, rendering inaccurate the notion of a world consisting of precisely bounded, regulated (inter)national units, which is a common feature of dominant political and social science theories. Moreover, such theories have ignored and excluded many active social, political, and economic actors in the local, transnational, and global spheres.

In the process of modernization and the emergence of nation-states, certain forces have been excluded and marginalized, often labeled as non-national, abnormal, local, traditional, transnational, or religious (Calhoun, 1997). However, cosmopolitanization has led to the re-emergence or reconstruction of these groups and forces along with new elements and actors, resulting in the expansion of a world that challenges the stability and determinacy of established entities (Beck and Levy, 2013; Beck and Sznaider, 2006). Replacing the defined and given social categories or entities with the idea of social configurations can be an epistemological solution to overcome the problem of considering and incorporating indeterminacy in social or political theories in the age of cosmopolitanization. Unlike regulated, standardized, fixed, and determined social entities such as state, nation, institution, family, etc., or given and prior categories such as culture, religion, migration, economy, the world, etc., social configurations are indeterminate and posterior units that are formed as a result of the engagement of different actors at different social levels with different goals around certain categories (Jong, 2023b). These actors may enter into interactions and relationships to meet some needs, to pursue certain interests, or in response to structural conditions. The participation of actors in social interactions necessitates their positioning in pre-existing social structures and the acquisition of relevant social roles. This acquisition process involves exposure to, familiarity with, internalization of, and subsequent action in relation to other actors, elements, and institutions (Wimmer, 2002). The culmination of these interactions and practices is the establishment of a network of relations centered on constructive categories that emerge from mutual interactions between actors and persist in a continuous process of grounding. The typologies and orders of categories and their discursive articulations serve as the basis for different regimes of boundaries and the creation of diverse social entities

or configurations. The grammar of these configurations, characterized by their fluidity, relationality, and indeterminacy, ultimately determines their quiddity and characteristics (Jong, 2023b).

As noted above, these configurations are built on different foundations, but these are incomplete, non-given foundations that have been partially determined in a constant process of grounding under special historical conditions. Therefore, these configurations display different levels of determination. The only thing that the researcher or analyst has access to is the moment when these configurations are determined. Thus, these configurations are fundamentally contingent and were determined under specific conditions of possibility. It is crucial to consider these conditions in order to understand them. The contingency of these configurations and the incompleteness of their foundations indicate that this determination is accompanied by the indeterminacy of several other possibilities. This impossibility should also be included in the analysis of social configurations. This means that when a social configuration finds an economic articulation in terms of categories and their orders, other foundations and characteristics become impossible. This impossibility will have various consequences. These configurations can have different degrees of stability, durability, and scale depending on the categories and relations that dominate them. A configuration may be formed at the national level but have transnational implications (Mosleh and Jong, 2021). A configuration may be economic and transnational. But it immediately becomes globalized on another level and takes on a cultural character. It may be that a configuration that presents itself as a nation because of its size, stability, and longevity, may also present itself at another level as a short-term economic community in cyberspace, involving various actors from around the world. All these features are comprehensible *a posteriori* and by empirical as well as historical study of the configurations, their relations, and grammar, as well as their connection with the structural foundations and other configurations. Examining these relations involves both empirical and historical investigations. Rather than relying on the dominant comparative approaches in the social sciences, these configurations can be compared using non-foundationalist and non-essentialist methods, such as family resemblance. The degree of particularity within these configurations and their components can then be identified in relation to each other (Rehbein, 2015).

Consequently, in socio-political analyses, social configurations can be examined at three levels. The first level involves examining the conditions of possibility of their emergence, which encompasses considering their contingency, historical context, and demonstrating the specific and partial foundations upon which their existence is grounded. The second level involves analyzing the construction of these configurations, encompassing the identification of their cognitive compromises, category constructions, orders of category, and discursive expressions. The third level entails taking into account the concrete determinations and tangible consequences related to the construction of these configurations in the form of generating various collective identities, social groupings, collective actions, and social, political, cultural and economic realities and forces at various scales (Jong, 2024).



Using the idea of social configurations to comprehend the world system in the era of cosmopolitanization reveals that numerous actors and forces that were previously marginalized due to the ontological and epistemological supremacy of the regime of the nation-state, the imperialist episteme, and modern political science are once again brought to the fore (Connell, 2007; Jong, 2023a). An example of this is the element of religion, which has been marginalized as an epiphenomenon by the dominant understanding of secularism in modernity (Hurd, 2008). But in the era of post-secularism, religion has been able to serve as a foundation for the construction of different kinds of social configurations with the presence of various actors, from states and institutions to religious authorities and religious or non-religious actors (Jong, Entezari, 2023; Sheedy, 2021). With the spatial liberation of the Middle East from the occupation of the United States, as a concrete example, especially after 2009, the Shiite religion was able to enter into a new configuration and became the basis for the construction of various realities and sub-configurations that were beyond states, national entities, and even traditional religions. These configurations include various actors, from states, institutions, and organizations, to military forces, pilgrims, merchants, and religious authorities. Despite attempts by some states in the region and even Shiite authorities to appropriate this configuration according to their national, ideological, and local interests and within the framework of their desired power structure, their efforts did not yield concrete results. During the post-colonial period and the emergence of new nation-states in the region, numerous transnational Shiite networks were dismantled. After the fall of Saddam and the withdrawal of the United States from Iraq in 2009, these networks were reconstituted within new coordinates. In one of the new rituals in Shiite Islam, more than 20 million Shia pilgrims from around the world gather each year to participate in the Arbaeen rally at Shiite shrines in Iraq. A somewhat similar pattern can be seen in Buddhism in India (Geary, 2014) and in Sufi orders in Africa. Therefore, in the cosmopolitanization of the world, social configurations are formed around plural categories (not only power), with the presence of different actors (not only states), and with different relations and grammars. These configurations display varied degrees of stability, durability, and determination.

Indeterminacy is a central feature of global configurations, meaning that while they may be rooted in existing institutions and entities, they simultaneously transcend them, suspend many of their categories and reconstruct different entities with different characteristics (Jong, 2022a). The primary characteristic of these entities is their fluidity. On the other hand, highlighting the diversity of relationships among the various actors that make up these configurations emphasizes that, for example, the Chinese government is only one actor among thousands of other actors in China, Asia, or the whole world, and many forces. In principle, China's power also has different implications in different configurations and relationships. Different types of relations exist between the actors in these configurations, ranging from cooperation and competition to conflict and dialectic, in different times and spaces. The American regime of power/truth presents itself as a global pole, while at the same time characterizing its rival and others as dangerous rising

superpowers. This is clearly evident in the Sinophobic, Russophobic, and Islamophobic Anglo-American (NATO) policies (Said, 1997; Tsygankov, 2009; Xiang, 2022).

As a result, the idea of a world order with defined and determinate entities and rational actors, and diverging or converging forces, gives way to a domain composed of limitless configurations of active and inactive actors, simultaneously participating in multiple configurations, playing different roles and occupying different positions. Consequently, many of these actors, forces, relations, and categories are conditioned by the configurations. On the other hand, these configurations are themselves contingent and relational, taking shape and undergoing transformation in different coordinates. Perhaps terms such as unipolar, bipolar, great power, hegemonic, rationality, coloniality, etc., can be employed to understand certain (not all) configurations (in terms of their internal and external order) in specific times and places. It is precisely in the dominance of indeterminacy, both ontologically and epistemologically, that the true nature of the world pulsates.

But it is the case that in a global configuration with an economic foundation, the Chinese state may have a superior position to that of the American government. In different configurations and at different times, they may be in cooperative relationships, while in different instances they may be in competition. For example, in a cultural configuration covering a large geographical area, cultural actors may be even more powerful than the states. On the other hand, these cultural actors may be in a cooperative relationship in many respects, but the states related to them in the same configuration, or in another configuration with a different foundation, may be in conflict. The entity of the European Union is also a good example in this regard. The EU consists of thousands of configurations of different actors and forces that are in a variety of relationships with each other, relationships that leave aside the image of a homogeneous unity of European countries. The salient point is that all these relations and properties are indeterminate and meaningful in relation to a particular configuration and the conditions of possibility. In the context of transnational configurations, it is worth mentioning the configurations that emerge from the interaction of migrants from different backgrounds, along with cultural, political, and economic institutions, and actors in different parts of the world. Despite their presence in particular nation-states, these configurations transcend national borders and form a new entity at another level (Jong, 2022a). This feature is well traceable in cyber configurations where the category of location or place is suspended at a high level. The nature of relations, the type of categories, and their orders, implications, and consequences at different local/global levels all depend on their configurations and specific characteristics. Therefore, no universal concept, category or theory can comprehensively elucidate the order or type of these configurations at different scales.

In the age of cosmopolitanization, the concept of social configuration emphasizes and gives priority to local cultures, recognizing their civilizational potential. This concept has the epistemological capacity to dismantle the totalitarian and Eurocentric conception of modernity. Moreover, by suspending the dominance of the nation-state, it opens up the potential for the emergence of diverse global actors. It is important to note that the U.S. may only be a superpower in a certain worldview. But the idea of social configurations

suggests that the world is made up of numerous actors with different relationships and categories constructed in indeterminate ways across different times and places. Therefore, we can discuss the geography of technology, culture, religion, and knowledge, etc., each indicating a facet of contemporary human civilization. In an era of globalized risks, we also face new global configurations emerging as a result and in response to these risks. Many new societies, economies, technologies or power regimes have emerged due to risk as their foundations, at various levels. These are the new maps of risk in the age of cosmopolitanization. In principle, polarization, which implies the multiplicity of power and sources of power and the emergence of new actors on the global stage, is itself a consequence of world risk society and one of several reactions to or reconfigurations of it.

The establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS came about as a result of the risks posed by the new regime of neoliberalism, which aims to subjugate other societies and homogenize the world in accordance with its own imperialist interests. It employs various sanction regimes to achieve its goals. Cosmopolitan communities have also emerged in response to environmental risks at the transnational level (Beck et al., 2013). Transnational religious networks have been restored to mitigate the risks posed by modern economic systems and state alliances (Clart, Jones 2020). The logic behind the establishment of international institutions is also to address threats on a global scale. Coronavirus can easily cross national becoming the origin of numerous transnational configurations (Mosleh, Jong, 2021). This pandemic has revealed the different but true maps of the contemporary world. Environmental issues in Latin America (Vara, 2015) or in the Middle East region can create new configurations where states act destructively against non-state actors who seek to address these crises in different ways. Similarly, the water crisis and extensive droughts have become the basis for the deconstruction and reconstruction of different configurations. Slums in the Global South, global metropolises, or even refugee camps, and other manifestations of subaltern cosmopolitanism are examples of configurations that have emerged due to the globalization of risk and the suspension of many boundaries and categories of cultural or economic regimes (Zeng, 2014). None of these configurations is a mere juxtaposition or simple hybridization of categories; rather, within these configurations categories take on new meanings and implications that transcend many established norms, categories and boundaries.

## Conclusion

Global crises and risks have shown human beings how their lives, destinies, and survival are intertwined—a survival that is facing a critical challenge. The contemporary world, born of globalization, needs a new reconfiguration. An important first step in reconfiguring the world is to understand its true characteristics. One of the initial efforts to uncover its true nature involves the suspension of many entrenched categories within the political and social sciences. This attempt reveals that certain ideas and institutions commonly regarded as progressive and constructive in the context of modernity actually pose a significant threat to humanity in the present age. This approach makes it clear that, contrary to

the assumptions of social scientists or those in positions of power and wealth, the social world is a complex and multifaceted realm characterized by indeterminacy and fluidity.

Far from being a threat to humanity, indeterminacy and heterogeneity can be used by various actors as a capacity to identify new ways of reconfiguring social life and promoting harmonious coexistence with nature. Although some states are still the most important and powerful actors in the contemporary world, and their presence guarantees many minimums necessary for the survival of societies, cosmopolitanization of the world, globalization of risks, and failure to adapt to a new global environment have turned them into zombie institutions and one of the main sources of risk at the global level. In the face of the severe challenges that states worldwide have encountered due to cosmopolitanization, two types of responses have emerged. Many states have attempted to reconstruct themselves as more centralized and powerful entities, even on a transnational level manifested in various forms of new authoritarianism. Conversely, another response has been a decline in efficiency, increased corruption, and even the collapse of states at local and national levels, which is also evident in contemporary neoliberal, liberal and social democratic states. Human civilization must prioritize long-term survival over imaginary constructs such as nationalism and transhistorical ideologies, as well as individual or collective material interests that favor short-term gains. However, with the increasing cosmopolitanization of the world and the emergence or liberation of new actors and configurations, new opportunities are emerging alongside new risks. Understanding and acknowledging the fundamental transformation and recognizing the current situation as fraught with risks is a progressive step to reduce their impact. The promise is that, this time, the winds of hope are blowing from the South and the East.

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## Мультиполяризация или космополитизация? На пути к неопределенному миру

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В дискурсах политики и академических исследований нарастают дискуссии о возникновении многополярного мирового порядка. Она подкрепляется статистическими данными, историческими свидетельствами и конкретными фактами, подчеркивающими поляризацию мира и ослабление влияния американской гегемонии. Эти нарративы часто описывают

текущее состояние мира как переход от одного определенного порядка к другому. Цель предлагаемой статьи — критическое рассмотрение концепции мирового порядка, лежащей в основе многих теорий глобализации и международных отношений. При подобном рассмотрении доминирующих теорий мирового порядка и глобализации, становится ясно, что многие из них предполагают существование регулируемой сущности воображаемого единства мира, в позитивном либо негативном смысле. Эта предпосылка имеет заметное значение в силу всепроникающего влияния эпистемологической антиномии между фундаментализмом и анти(не)-фундаментализмом. Подвесив данную антиномию и деконструируя идею мирового порядка с опорой на теорию общества риска и космополитизации, данная статья утверждает, что современный мир движется не к новому, предопределенному порядку, а скорее к состоянию неопределенности и текучести. Рост глобальных рисков в последнее время спровоцировал трансформационный процесс, затронувший различные аспекты различных обществ. В этой статье утверждается, что понимание и интерпретация текущего состояния мира требует пересмотра нашей эпистемологии и сдвига к неопределенности, то есть, к рискам.

*Ключевые слова:* мировой порядок, многополярность, космополитизация, мировое общество риска, социальные конфигурации, неопределенность, эпистемологический постфундаментализм.