

Frank Eckardt

Bauhaus-Universität Weimar
Germany

The Modernisation of Germany: an Unfinished or Radicalised Project?

1. Introduction

The emergence of “modern life” in Germany has been reflected in many ways since the 19th century. It has been argued that modernity reached Germany decoupled from a political, social and economic transformation of society. It is true that the country built up a political entity only after 1990, while the period of unity, in a cultural sense, remains to be defined in an even more difficult process. Culturally, Germany has not had a common ground of self-definition, as is apparently the case when a nation has its common roots in language, cultural or social habits. The diversification of lifestyles was worked out before the nation state was formed and was not primarily motivated by the emergence of the modern economy.

Seen through this lens, there is a strong case to be made for looking for other common determinations of a “German way” to modernity. This was argued for by the very first sociologists in Germany, mainly Max Weber and Georg Simmel (Eckardt 2008). Both emphasised the “not only temporarily falling together” of urban growth and industrial revolution in the (late) 19th century. They also underlined that the synchronic development of the large cities, especially Berlin, was not only happening at the same time that German culture and social stratification were modernised, but also at a point when massive urbanisation was occurring, the socially modern generation with its working class and bourgeois

dualism and the emergence of modern culture which are all linked to each other because of causality.

The city, the main line of argument goes, allows society to develop the necessary diversification of lifestyles while offering the space to build up a common ground of cooperation. The individual becomes overloaded with the intellectual and emotional stress caused by the sheer number of "others" and therefore needs to connect to a selected group of people, so that he or she can socially and psychologically survive. To the present day, this process has been thought to mirror the general logic of modern society and is reviewed as being both a threat to and an opportunity for the individual. To overcome the dangers of isolation and mental overflow remains the main challenge in modern society. If this risk is tamed, the emancipatory effects of modernisation may allow the individual to freely choose his relationships and transform them according to his wishes.

Throughout the 20th century, intellectual debate in Germany mainly agreed with Jürgen Habermas' view that this "project of modernity" remains unfinished. That is to say, the modern self has not been enabled to live a life in a generally self-directed way. Since the 1990s, however, criticism on this view has become acceptable. Critics have pointed out mainly two underlying assumptions from this perspective, which were regarded as insufficient. Firstly, there has been severe criticism of the idea that little or no attention is paid to the view affirming the different forms of "diversification", and that the disintegration caused by the socio-economic status follows another rule than the logic of cultural and/or ethnic disparity. Theories which analyse modern societies primarily from the view of "division of labour" reduce other societal division lines to socio-economic differences. This is an unacceptable reduction, as the dimension of "otherness" remains even within the integration of larger social spheres like the economic system. In this sense, Georg Simmel has been right to point out in his essay on "The Stranger" that the "Other" is never fully integrated into the local community and that otherness remains something that finally disappears (and normatively has to). The total integration of one person into the local society is neither imaginable nor desired as it would take innovative forces which could be generated by interference between "others".

Secondly, criticism has been unleashed on the concept of modernity as it relates otherness to national categories. This, as Martin Albrow (1996) argues, means that categories of internal division like gender and lifestyle diversity are not fully recognisable and that external division lines are only visible if they are put into the conceptualisation of nation state identities. Globalisation in its political and cultural dimensions, however, means that individuals are de-territorialised from their nation state and that their orientation is not limited to the nationally available cultural settings and media. Ulrich Beck observed that this "second modernity"

reproduces the process of diversification of individual lifestyles on a larger scale and in a more profound way than the first phase of modernity. A globalised modernity thus becomes a radicalised manner of modernity in the 21st century.

Viewing Germany in this light, the idea of integration needs to be taken to a global-local scale, where otherness and estrangements are procured not necessarily only by the absence of ties to local communities. In this case “multiple localism” and “re-territorialisation” would be the process for the individual to seek for the bonding which keeps him socially engaged. The idea of integration needs to be taken to a global-local interference where otherness and estrangement are necessarily procured by ties no longer bound to local communities but to a “multiple localism”; “re-territorialisation” would be the process for the individual to seek the selective bounds that keeps him socially embedded.

2. The Disintegration of German Cities

Discussions on the integrative force of modern society have become widespread, especially when the disintegration of German cities is the issue being addressed. Since the middle of the 1990s, political and academic discussions and research have taken up the question of whether German cities would follow an American or even French path of development with a larger degree of violence motivated by ethnic diversity, which leads to an increasing division in social terms. With the political programme of the “Social City”, Germany has invested in neighbourhoods (see *Die Zukunft...* 2010) that have an above-average unemployment rate and are inhabited by a high proportion of migrants. Large-scale surveys (*Die Krise...* 1998) among inhabitants of these quarters have shown that there is a remarkable overlapping of different social problems and that especially the ethnicisation of social problems is at stake. This means that researchers feared that social problems were related to the ethnic identity of those individuals who “bear” the problems. This process of ethnicisation works from both sides and includes self-identification by the affected persons and stigmatisation by the unaffected majority. It is assumed that the progress of ethnicisation in these quarters creates a problem in itself.

These research findings have underpinned a widespread fear of ghettoisation in Germany. In public debate the term “parallel societies” has become a leading term to describe the situation in German cities, while the idea of a “failing integration” remains a much discussed phenomenon. There are those who ask for a more detailed description since understanding of the real world in the socially depressed areas has become so rare. It is apparent that the opinion on this subject is partially motivated by the well-grounded research found in studies done by Wilhelm Heitmeyer at the Bielefeld Center for Conflict Studies (*Bedrohte...* 2000).

When it comes to non-academic debate, there are various motives for disregarding the integrative aspects of city life in Germany. The public debate can be easily understood as highly affected by media conjuncture. This is especially true when it comes to framing the evidence on "hot subjects" like forced marriage among migrants, "honour murders", Islamic fundamentalism and the general view that migrants are more criminal. Misperceptions can be corrected by a mere look at the statistical figures, which show that the life of migrants and also their way of living in 21st-century Germany have little to do with these media constructs.

3. The Case of Bremen

Surprisingly, few empirical studies have researched the state of integration in those areas in the big cities which are often represented in the media as ghettos. Apart from Andreas Farwick's long-term study of a neighbourhood called Gröpelingen in the city of Bremen, there is a paucity of empirical cases to shed light on the recent state of integration. In Farwick's research on segregation he first of all shows that there are important aspects to be considered with regard to the scale of local segregation. He corrects the general view backed by official statistics that the segregation of ethnic minorities in Germany is relatively low. For example, the research of the German Office for Spatial Research (BBR) on the situation in 18 different cities suggests (see Figure 1) that the level of neighbourhood is not the level we need to look at to get a clear understanding of the issue.

Working at the block level in the neighbourhood of Gröpelingen, Farwick determined that the situation differs substantially. As the average level of segregation is comparably low and thus in line with the official reading of segregation, Figures 1 and 2 show clearly that there are division lines within the neighbourhood that have precipitated a great concentration of the migrant population, here Turkish migrants.

In essence, the map shows that there are blocks where nearly half of the inhabitants are of Turkish origin. These may be found next to other blocks with housing estates where very few Turkish inhabitants live. With a survey among the inhabitants of Gröpelingen, Farwick indicates also the quality of relationships that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood have developed. In the data that he presents, 71.5% of the Turkish migrants have no friendships with German people, while 62.7% of the interviewees would like to have. The interpretation of these responses, however, is complicated. Those who actively seek friendship with Germans state that they have been successful. Even those who do not actively seek to have a German friend indicate that some Germans try to be friends with them.

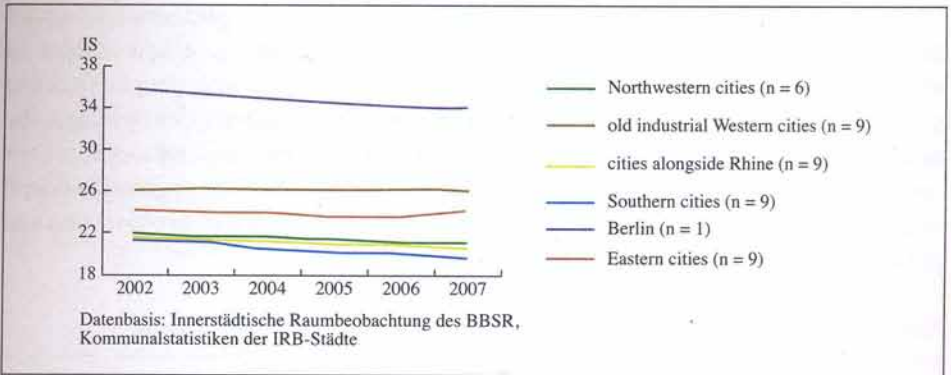


Fig. 1. The Development of Ethnic Segregation in 18 German Cities According to Regional Location

Note: The lower the IS (Index of Segregation), the more people of different ethnic background live together.

Source: Innerstädtische Raumbewachung des BBSR, Kommunalstatistiken der IRB-Städte, BBR Bonn 2009.

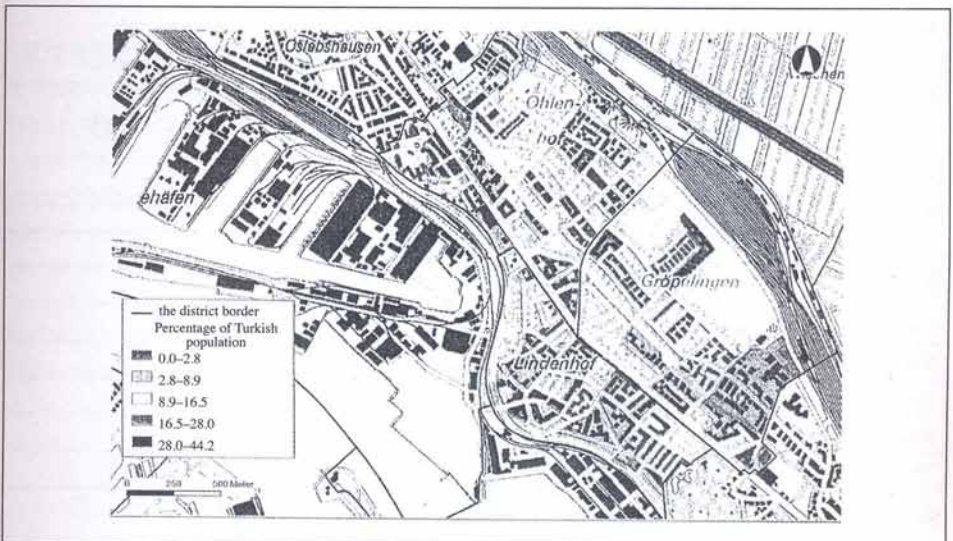


Fig. 2. Concentration of Turkish Migrants in the Neighbourhood of Gröpelingen in Bremen

Source: (Farwick 2009).

It remains a fact, however, that there is a need for social distance from both sides. In this survey, Farwick mainly looked from the German side and came

to the conclusion that counters some public discussions. With the term “social distance”, the author has worked out a category of relationship which enables an alternative answer to the question of “liking or disliking” Turkish people. In doing so, he is in line with Simmel’s approach to urban life, which acknowledges the need to maintain a distance from the mass of people around you and to select your “own kind”. As Simmel argues, this is the only alternative to the aggressive denial of others you may not like. “Social distance” is thus necessary to avoid racism and prevents the development of feelings of hatred.

Table 1. Social Distance of German Inhabitants According to Social Criteria

Social criteria	Percentage of “socially distanced people”
Gender	
Men	44.6
Women	41.3
Age	
Under 25 years	32.4
25–44 years	44.8
45–65 years	49.1
Above 65 years	35.2
Education	
Didn’t successfully finish school	38.1
Lowest school certificate	40.8
Skilled workers	46.9
Higher education	43.9
State of Employment	
Employed	44.1
Unemployed	50.0
Not employable	56.8
In professional education	44.8
Retired	39.1
Total	42.8

Source: (Farwick 2009).

As the table shows, nearly half of the interviewees wish to have a form of social distance to Turkish people. Moreover, it becomes clear that there is no single overarching or primary force from the individual living situations of the people that would make a socially distant attitude more explicable. The employment status seems to be more relevant in explaining why people develop a wish to

distance themselves from migrants. Surprisingly for many observers it will be a clear identification that the level of school education is not that relevant or if it is, then the correlation is negative. That is to say, better school education does not seem to produce positive attitudes. We would not know, on the other hand, how it would work out if school did not work with a more tolerant attitude. The school system in Germany does pay careful attention to tolerance in general.

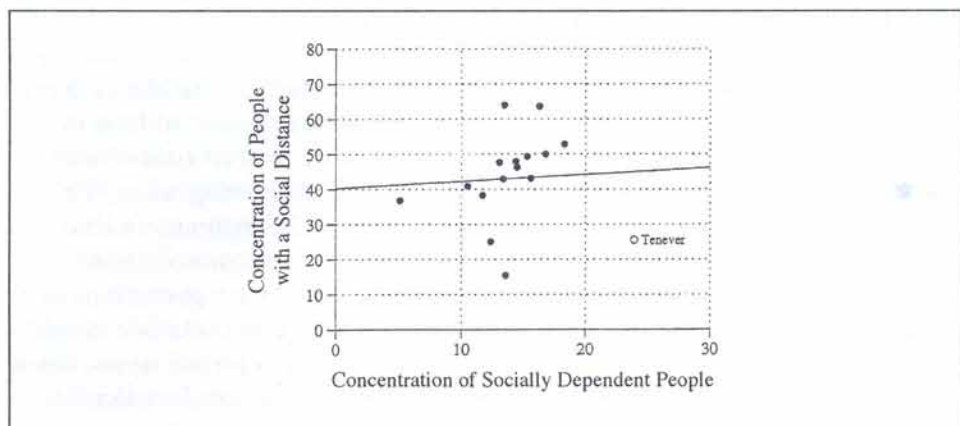


Fig. 3. Relationship between People with a Social Distance (x) and Concentration of People with Social Dependency (y) in Different Neighbourhoods in Bremen, Germany
Source: (Farwick 2009).

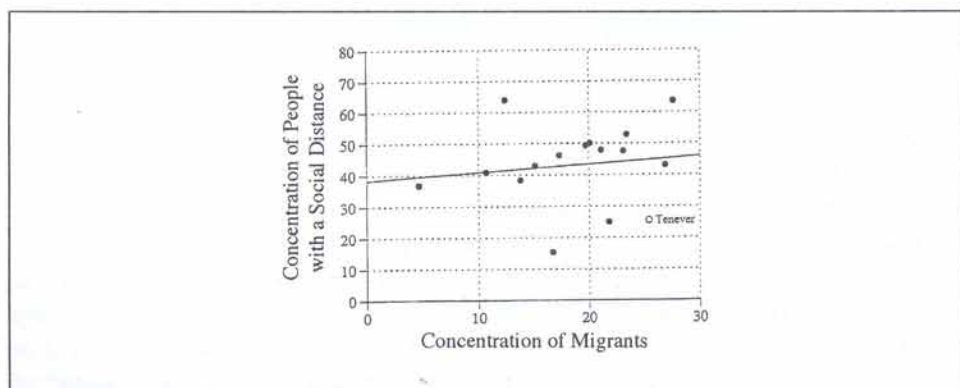


Fig. 4. Relationship between People with a Social Distance (x) and Concentration of Migrants (y) in Different Neighbourhoods in Germany
Source: (Farwick 2009).

I will now return to the point regarding the fear of social disintegration as it is assumed by the Bielefeld studies mentioned earlier on. The study on Bremen also allows a critical review on the general hypothesis that there is a "staple point" of problems. In line with the argument of disintegration, the appearance of social distance would be somehow related to both the emergence of more "strangers" and the concentration of socially disadvantaged people. As Table 1 and Figure 3 show, there is no strict causality between the concentration of unemployed or socially dependent people and/or migrants on the one hand, and the development of the feeling of a need for "social distance" on the other.

Another important lesson we can learn from this study is that the focus on residential segregation might be the wrong aspect of integration to look at. As Farwick found, most migrants consider the whole city to be their field of activity and the neighbourhood thus has a relative value for their integration. This is true in particular concerning the sphere of work and consumption, but the leisure time activities for which migrants develop more and more outside their neighbourhoods are also of increasing importance. In this regard, they have adopted a German attitude that sees sports and cultural events outside of one's immediate environment to often be more important than in former times, when the neighbourhood was the main place one lived and built personal relationships.

4. Post-migratory Cities

Farwick still follows the general ideas of migration, which consider the subject of integration to be important and a part of the "human ecology" of cities. That is to say, where citizens understand themselves mainly as place-bound with little mobility, other studies in migration research have moved away from this way of thinking. They argue for a broader and a challenging understanding of the term of the migrant in general. Taking up discussions in the US literature and from international studies, the focus on the Turkish guest workers and their children has been criticised as neglecting the diversity that Germany experiences, considering the background of a rapidly increasing heterogeneity of migrants generated by Germany's opening up to the world in the 1990s. The prevalent concept of the migrants as "guest workers" who came to Germany as the first temporary "guests", then somewhat coincidentally remained, fails to reflect the world of migrants in Germany in many ways. In recent debates, the "flexibilisation" of this concept promoted by important political institutions has been observed and a broader understanding of migration is slowly trickling down to all layers of society. The nomination of appropriate personnel is especially important in juridical and statistical regards. The Federal Bureau of Statistics introduced the

category of “people with migratory background” in the late 1990s. Everyone who has non-German roots, either personally or through family, is included, thus the picture of an increasingly culturally diverse Germany comes to the fore. Every fifth inhabitant of Germany now falls under this category and already a third of children under the age of five have a “migratory background”. In cities like Frankfurt, Berlin, Stuttgart, Munich and Hamburg, children with a migratory background entering school at the age of six are among the majority in many neighbourhoods.

As many observers point out, the identification of a migratory background might not be sufficient to understand the life situation of migrants nor to identify how they are perceived by themselves and others. Nevertheless, research has shown that the momentum of migration remains a “master narrative” in the life of individuals and families (Foroutan 2010). Even when families have not been explicitly identified with some kind of non-German origin or with whatever “cultural roots” may be available, the experience of having left one country to start a new life in another society is psychologically a narrative available to people with a migratory past. Migration in this sense becomes a resource of individual and social identity which can be activated under certain circumstances. The same is not as true for the concept of “German-ness”, which the individual can mostly not refer to with the same intensity as it is not experienced in a course of one’s life.

Germany has had a tradition in defying German identity in a cultural and not in a political sense (Eckardt 2006). With the establishment of a *ius sanguinis* in the German Empire at the beginning of the 19th century, the idea of having blood relationships or not – as in the case of the French understanding of citizenship as *ius soli* – an expression of a republican attitude – has been maintained until today and is an expression of a certain kind of pre-modern understanding of nationality. In political philosophy, integration into German society comes first and citizenship is regarded as the political recognition of a process of cultural assimilation. The consequences of this idea of integration are manifold. First, it assumes that there is something definable migrants can assimilate into. Next, it is a one-way street where the receiving country does not need to change culturally. Third, the modern idea of everybody in one spot having the same rights and chances in the city (as it is the underlying assumption of the idea of “free selection of contacts”, as Simmel puts it) is not given. The distinction between “earlier comer” and “later comer” and thus of two groups of people with different rights is cemented with this concept of “blood” relationships.

One has to say that the idea of “German-ness” in this philosophy has become more and more ridiculous and artificial. Over the course of three decades – only interrupted by the national euphoria of the German reunification – Germany has become an “ironic nation” (Bude 1998), one that knows very well that the reference to something “particularly German” is meant as a joke or is simply stupid. Being

self-aware of the small common basis of any kind of definition on what “German” culture might be has allowed Germany to become more relaxed in its experience of the wide world and global cultures. In this sense, the existing state regulations on citizenship do not reflect the radicalised modern consciousness of many people in Germany. This is especially apparent for the more than eight million citizens who do have a German “Ausweis” (passport) but who also fall into the category of “people with migratory background”. The reality is that the key concept of the “German identity” has become a reflective, flexible, fragmented and even contradictory carpet overlaid with different ideas and attitudes with regard to all parts of society. As has been worked out by many researchers on this subject, the postmodern version of German identity is a patchwork more than a coherent narrative (Keupp 2008).

Paradoxically, the effect of this kind of patchwork identity creates a stronger need for “home” and a feeling of belonging. The answers given to this need are different and the contemporary society offers a variety of concepts to cope with the increasing request for some kind of “feeling at home”. Still, the dominant identity remains a social class-based orientation while the identification with certain lifestyles offers openings for an integration which makes the class distinction flexible to a certain degree. Within the broad spectrum of individually chosen lifestyle elements, the main logic of integration follows generally the observed reemergence of community in all different ways. The increasing need to socially construct your place in society in an active manner requires personal competences that are not available to everyone. This can lead to a more stressful orientation in everyday life. As a consequence, the demonstration of one’s ability to engage oneself actively in one or the other community causes stress in people with weaker social competences, which is made manifest in exhaustion, burn-out and social exclusion (cf. Müller 2012).

Cities have become the major locus of society’s modernisation, but in a contradictory way. The vast majority of inhabitants in all larger cities in Germany are singles. Family life has become increasingly difficult to foster within the central neighbourhoods. As singles often stay for a certain period of time and then move for a better job or off into a housing estate more conducive to raising children, the city center has become a place of great fluctuation. The average time spent in Frankfurt is less than seven years. When neither family life nor occupational integration are functioning as “binding capital” for a city, the request to “bridge social capital” becomes more relevant. That is to say that the inner cities need to have an atmosphere which enables short-term relationships to develop in all spheres of life. This has, however, been put at risk because certain lifestyle groups occupy and dominate the central portions of cities with their economic power and exclusive tastes.

5. Contradictions of Modern Germany

On the surface it thus seems that German cities today have returned to a state more comparable to the Berlin of descriptions at the turn to the 20th century. Cultural and ethnic diversity are at their highest levels ever in the country's metropolitan centers (Eckardt 2006). At the same time, as a result of economic globalisation, the reduction of the welfare state, and high stress levels, the feeling of uncertainty is also more comparable with the epoch of industrial revolution. If one follows this argument, then again the theorem of social disintegration seems to be logical. Following on from this idea, the crucial question then would be whether this necessarily means that the old time of class warfare and social antagonism will also return.

As worked out above, the reappearance of a classical modern division between rich and poor would not be the most expedient concept for understanding the situation in Germany today. There is widespread uncertainty from different sources and it accumulates in a feeling of our having gone too far and being not fully capable of coping with the mental challenges, which require mechanisms for orienting in a globalising world. While it is obvious that those who are highly educated have more intellectual competences to reorient themselves from a "traditional modernity", the nation state frames personal life courses to a "radicalised modernity". While the effect of globalisation comes very near and releases itself into your own life, it is also no longer true that strategies of psychological defense are limited to socially disadvantaged citizens.

A classical understanding of racism links tightly together social status and personal attitude towards society. Acts and articulations of racism, however, occur in different social settings and situations. Racism as part of an insider-outsider dialect has been analysed in many classical studies (Elias & Scotson 1999) and might still be the most powerful explanation of this phenomenon. What is difficult to examine, however, is the transformation of racist attitudes as they exist in Germany. The empirical findings have shown that racism has fallen significantly in the last twenty years (Diehl & Tucci 2011). Based on the so-called ALLBUS data from 1996 and 2006, which were taken from regular surveys (the ALLBUS surveys) with ca. 20,000 participants selected by their representative criteria (age, family status, gender, education), the overall picture leads to an assessment which contrasts with media reports and research done using qualitative methods. While especially murders of foreigners and violent Neo-Nazi attacks call for an evaluation of the societal basis for such xenophobic behaviour, the general acceptance of foreigners is seen to be progressing.

A closer look at the ALLBUS data, however, points at some important nuances that cry out for scrutiny. As Table 2 shows, the overall result regarding xenophobic

attitudes has decreased in East and West Germany, while Table 3 shows that certain stereotypical subjects of xenophobia remain more present than others.

Table 2. Development of Xenophobic Attitudes in East and West Germany from 1996 to 2006

Examples of stereotypes	1996		2006	
	West Germany	East Germany	West Germany	East Germany
Xenophobic attitudes (scale 0–30, 30 highest)	14.8	17.3	13.1	14.2
Strong xenophobic attitudes (in %)	9.4	15.3	3.7	4.1

Source: (Diehl & Tucci 2011).

Table 3. Support for Single Stereotype Subjects of Xenophobia on a 1–7 Scale, with 7 Being the Highest

Example of stereotypes	1996		2006	
	West Germany	East Germany	West Germany	East Germany
“Foreigners are a burden for the social net”	4.0	4.6	4.0	4.7
“Foreigners are causing problems on the housing market”	4.3	4.0	2.7	2.1
“Foreigners take jobs from Germans”	3.6	4.7	3.3	3.9
“Foreigners are more criminal than Germans”	3.9	4.5	3.7	4.1

Source: (Diehl & Tucci 2011).

The interpretation of these data reflects a severe difference between East and West Germany, with the West being more accepting. Only in the case of the assumed housing problems caused by foreigners is the East more tolerant. This is clearly related to the practically non-existent housing shortage in the East. Where there is no problem, nobody can be to blame. Although many factors might contribute to this East–West difference, the most relevant are often assumed to be the little chances that East Germans have to be in contact with foreigners as the percentage of foreigners in the East is nowhere above 7%, and mostly it is even less. So the time that East Germany have had to integrate with and understand people of different cultural origins has been much shorter. It would be worth researching whether there is a simple “time lag” in the cultural encounter process with the “other”. Secondly, there are factors like a higher unemployment rate and

greater dependence on state support and the social security system that leads to a higher degree of uncertainty.

6. Discussion

The picture, however, is even more complex because xenophobia has partly been transformed into a subtler and perhaps even a more intellectual issue. The emergence of a growing Islamophobia and the criticism of certain public figures, especially of Thilo Sarrazin, author of the bestselling non-fiction book in post-war Germany, which criticised “failing integration”, are the signs that a transformation from pure racism to some kind of “social distance” is occurring. This represents the new psychological coping with the uncertainty of a radicalised modernity which sees racism as “not helpful” and is brought about by a lack of consciousness of the “too open” world. This new psychology might be positive in many ways but it should not be believed that this attitude cannot be re-formulated if circumstances become grimmer. The modernisation of Germany, as elsewhere, therefore cannot be regarded as finished in the sense that the emancipation of prejudices and the underlying fear of losing control of one’s personal life have been achieved. If a certain degree of enlightenment could be seen as present in the minds of the majority of people in Germany, then there is no guarantee that the project of modernity will come to an end. The radicalisation of modernity means in this sense a higher degree of challenges on the individual level and a more complex rearrangement of society in a net of different communities, logics of exclusion and a diffusion of power.

Bibliography

- Albrow M. (1996), *The Global Age. State and Society Beyond Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge–Oxford.
- Bedrohte Stadtgesellschaft. Soziale Desintegrationsprozesse und ethnisch-kulturelle Konfliktkonstellationen* (2000), eds W. Heitmeyer, R. Anhut, Juventa, Weinheim.
- Bude H. (1998), *Die ironische Nation*, Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, Hamburg.
- Diehl C., Tucci I. (2011), *Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Einstellungen zur Einbürgerung*, “DIW Wochenbericht”, 31.
- Eckardt F. (2006), *Gestion de la diversité et politique municipale: le cas allemand* (in:) *Les métropoles au défi de la diversité culturelle*, eds B. Jouve, A.-D. Gagnon, Grenoble.
- Eckardt F. (2007), *Multiculturalism in Germany: From Ideology to Pragmatism – and Back?*, “National Identities” 9/3.
- Eckardt F. (2008), *Zagadnienie przestrzeni w socjologii niemieckiej* (in:) *Nowa przestrzeń społeczna w badaniach socjologicznych*, ed. Z. Rykiel, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów.

- Elias N., Scotson J. (1999), *Etablierte und Außenseiter*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt.
- Farwick A. (2009), *Segregation und Eingliederung*, Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.
- Foroutan N. (2010), *Neue Deutsche, Postmigranten und Bindungs-Identitäten. Wer gehört zum neuen Deutschland?*, "Aus Politik und Zeitgeschehen", 46/47.
- Innerstädtische Raumbewertung des BBSR Kommunalstatistiken der IRB-Städte, BBR Bonn 2009.
- Die Krise der Städte* (1998), eds W. Heitmeyer, R. Dollase, O. Backes, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt.
- Keupp H. (2008), *Identitätskonstruktionen: Das Patchwork der Identitäten in der Spätmoderne*, Rowolt, Reinbeck.
- Müller A. (2012), *Soziale Exklusion* (in:) *Handbuch Stadtsoziologie*, ed. F. Eckardt, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden.
- Die Zukunft der Sozialen Stadt: Strategien gegen soziale Spaltung und Armut in den Kommunen* (2010), ed. W. Hanesch, VS Verlag, Wiesbaden.

Modernizacja Niemiec: niedokończony czy zradykalizowany projekt?

Modernizacja Niemiec zbiega się historycznie w czasie z najważniejszą fazą rozwoju urbanistycznego. W toku procesu uprzemysłowienia kształtowanie się nowoczesnych form życia miejskiego opierało się na formowaniu się klas społecznych według statusu zawodowego. Miasto stawało się zatem miejscem integrowania rozmaitych grup społecznych, pozwalającym jednocześnie jednostce na pewien zakres swobody w życiu prywatnym. Obecnie ani obszar pracy, ani stare robotnicze dzielnice nie pełnią już w takim zakresie funkcji integracyjnej. Przedmiotem rozważań w artykule jest proces radykalnej modernizacji i związana z tym kwestia nowego typu integracji „innych” w znaczeniu etnicznym. Pokazano tu, że życie miejskie we współczesnych Niemczech charakteryzuje się współwystępowaniem procesów segregacji na poziomie mikro i adaptacji mentalnej w stosunku do „uogólnionego obcego”.

The Modernisation of Germany: an Unfinished or Radicalised Project?

The modernisation of Germany coincided with with the most important phase of urban development. With the upcoming industrialisation, the emergence of modern urban life was based on a modern class formation rooted in professional and occupational status. The city has thus become the place where different social groups integrate, and it allows the individual some freedom to choose intimate relationships. Today, this logic of integration is under great pressure as neither work nor the traditional neighbourhood currently plays this role. The transformation to a radicalised modernity is worked out in this article with regard to the integration of the ethnic "other". It shows that contemporary urban life in Germany is characterised by a double-edged process: ongoing segregation on a micro-level and adaptation towards a generalised stranger.