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**Adaptation**

Leitmotiv of the Coming Society

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Leitmotiv der nächsten Gesellschaft)

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## **Introduction: Metamorphoses of Adaptation**

“Behind all the objectifications,  
sooner or later the question of *acceptance* arises  
and with it anew the old question:  
*how do we wish to live?*”

Ulrich Beck, 1986<sup>1</sup>

“Och, if I were going there, I wouldn’t start from here...”

Might it be the case that the modern semantics of progress, emancipation and democratisation is simply the wrong starting point for an analysis of the present state of society and its foreseeable future? That an analysis that reifies modernisation may fail to register real changes occurring in society? That we need to define the present and the coming society in defensive – rather than expansive – terms? That society’s true lodestar is not individualisation but adaptation, not progress but survival?

That certainly seems arguable after the first two decades of the twenty-first century. The collapse of the global financial markets in 2008 saw enormous energy poured into analysing and criticising the extractive practices of financial capitalism – only to “rescue” core elements

that were regarded as “systemically important” and “too big to fail”. Rather than striking out on a transformative path, accommodation was regarded as sufficient. Rather than making a conscious fresh start, the response was the same old reactive practices of *structural adjustment* to the requirements of capitalism that have always characterised the policies of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. After another decade of crisis, societies across the world are still proactively seeking alternatives. But wave after wave of disruption – not least the Covid-19 pandemic – has forced them instead to pursue reactive, adaptive measures, from the heights of politics and economics to the nitty-gritty of everyday life and personal affairs. The destruction of the European security order by the Russian invasion of Ukraine has forced Western societies into a defensive stance, from which they will not escape by ramping up arms spending. Their version of internationalism is not to seek global progress and solidarity in the style of the classical modern left of the twentieth century, but to fortify defences as and when dangers appear on their radar. And looming behind these acute crises, the ultimate threat of the climate catastrophe.

It is arguably very difficult to tackle “late modern” risks proactively. Modern subjectivity apparently has a destructive relationship to the world (while massively overestimating its own abilities to control and manage). Even those who still countenance the possibility of influencing the development of capitalism – calling for another “great transformation”<sup>2</sup> to blunt its destructive logic through social re-embedding<sup>3</sup> – are generally less sanguine about the chances of actually realising such a shift. This is especially clear in relation to climate change,<sup>4</sup> where the frame has narrowed to merely *adaptive responses*: mitigation and resilience to quantify and survive the inevitable.

Nevertheless, contemporary social analysis remains dominated by a semantics of modernisation, under which (late) modern society is still characterised by an unbroken ideal of self-realisation. Early modernisation liberated the individual from the repressive ties of blood, soil and church, shattering the “mechanical solidarity”<sup>5</sup> of pre-modern communities, exploding feudal power relations and substituting in their place the free association of individuals, the dynamisation of the social order, and the democratisation of individual “life chances”.<sup>6</sup> Most accounts would see the late modern continuing to hew to this logic, and in fact further radicalising the freedom to individuate, to singularise the self.<sup>7</sup> Modernisation still means liberation in the sense of expanding opportunities for the individual.<sup>8</sup>

Or at least the possibility thereof. The formats of power brought forth by (late) modern society have in fact been thoroughly ambivalent: piling ever more responsibility onto the individual,

requiring subjects to choose and maintain their own lifestyle-affirming horizons of meaning. Contemporary flexibilised capitalism forces us to be us architects of our own fortune – with no-one but ourselves to blame for failure. Like it or not, we must operate in a dynamic order, pursuing our life chances in an illusion of meritocracy.<sup>9</sup>

Emancipation and authenticity tend to be idealised, while adaptation comes in for criticism. Adaptation is treated as a characteristic of traditional societies that shun personal development and demand conformity. Yet escaping such contexts – village, church, family or rigid gender roles – generates its own adaptation pressures: Once the traditional ties have been broken, *there is no alternative* to individual responsibility. Adaptation is unavoidable. If you want to “get on” you must obey rules over which you have no meaningful influence. The performance indicators of dynamic capitalism are non-negotiable. If the modern worker wanted a house, a car and a fitted kitchen, he or she had to submit to the imperatives of a standardised life course, labour control and the primacy of political stability. For a swanky apartment in a central location, an electric SUV and Instagrammable holidays, the late modern professional must bow to the demands of flexibilisation, exhibit complete self-motivation and even fund their own pension. In other words, adaptation *forces*, adaptation is repression. The (late) modern critique therefore tends to denounce it as the opposite of freedom.

This criticism makes a string of assumptions that appear increasingly implausible today. As a guiding principle, “self-realisation” is highly contingent. The possibilities of individualisation only open up to the broader population once the fundamental issues of *survival and self-preservation* have been resolved. The fulfilment of basic needs like food, shelter and a modicum of social security is, as Ronald Inglehart demonstrates, a necessary condition for the cultural primacy of individualisation (self-actualisation).<sup>10</sup> From a materialist perspective that is precisely why the ideal of self-realisation is so closely bound up with the modernisation of society. By driving economic growth and relativising the question of naked survival, modernisation not only creates adaptive pressure. It also enables the unfolding individual subjectivity which is the very base for a critique of adaptation.

The decisive point here is the following: The modern belief that the questions of survival have essentially been resolved is no longer an implicit consensus. Indeed, the systematic *return of questions of survival* – itself an effect of the modern self-realisation programme – must form the linchpin of any investigation of the present and in particular the forthcoming society.

In itself, that insight is nothing new. By the mid-1980s Ulrich Beck was already discussing the questions of survival generated by modernisation in terms of *individualisation and risk*.<sup>11</sup> Beck argues that the negative side-effects of modernisation become lodged in the public consciousness, creating ever-increasing demand for new forms of risk-compensation. The outcomes of mankind's supposed domination of nature – environmental degradation, chemical spills and the latent threat of nuclear war – formed the backdrop to this reproblematisation of fundamental questions of security.<sup>12</sup> Beck shows how the modern programme of self-realisation brings forth its own crises of self-preservation. The adaptive response to these is both an effect and a precondition of the possibilities of individualisation. If we take this observation seriously, we can no longer simply denounce adaptation as the opposite of freedom. Instead adaptation turns out to be its precondition – and a fundamental paradigm of a society confronted with systemic (modernisation-related) threats to its own survival.

This is especially pertinent given that risks, as Beck indicates, are rarely really resolved but at best managed, while ongoing modernisation generates new and cascading risks. Questions of self-preservation are potentiated, further heightening the sense of a loss of control. This is especially obvious in the public discussion of climate change, where we can now enumerate the repercussions in great detail: the loss of biodiversity (species extinction), the specific health risks, the rise in sea levels, and the dramatic shifts when particular *tipping points* are crossed. In other words, we are dealing with a proliferation of secondary dangers.

The pressure of adaptation manifested here must, it would appear, be factored in, even in the case of relatively successful risk management. Even where effective action still appears calculable and plausible, the capacity to address adjustment problems remains conspicuously limited. In the political mainstream, “manageable climate change” still means a world whose average temperature is 1.5 to 2 °C higher than it was in the pre-industrial age – while the current warming of about 1 °C is already causing catastrophes of growing magnitude, from extinction and disease to devastating forest fires and the climate-driven depopulation of entire regions. The question is not *whether* threats to survival will arise but *how grave* they will be and *who* they will affect.

Comparable problems are also very obvious in the economic and geopolitical spheres. Hopes of economic recovery must contend with a chronically crisis-prone global capitalism that requires increasingly frequent state intervention to save it from collapse, sets a handful of extremely wealthy winners against a growing multitude of losers, and depends absolutely on economic practices that have brought the ecosphere to the brink of disaster. At the same time

over-exploitation of the natural environment has itself become a crucial source of economic instability, while alternative political economies are nowhere to be seen. The swansong of US hegemony puts questions of geopolitical self-preservation back on the table. Europe's fear of nuclear annihilation persisted throughout the post-war era and is now potentiated by anxieties over waning US interest (and perhaps even a loss of interest-led rationality in Washington). It is increasingly obvious that we are generating incalculable dangers that we can at best temporarily "externalise",<sup>13</sup> but that we certainly do not have "under control".

Now, almost forty years after Beck's *Risk Society*, the hopes associated with such perspectives have been largely disappointed. In the 1980s and 1990s it was still possible to believe that Beck's brand of individualisation would enable us to contain the associated risks: that consumer boycotts, recycling, lifestyle choices and political pressure could rein in the excesses of risk capitalism, that peace activism could bring belligerents to their senses. Those hopes of a better, or what Beck calls a "reflexive modernisation" now appear absurdly overoptimistic.<sup>14</sup> Neither subpolitical risk containment, which has certainly occurred to an extent, nor reflexive management of the consequences of modernisation have been able to avert snowballing threats to survival. Instead, the reflexive-modern programme of absorbing insecurity by converting unpredictable dangers into calculable risks has apparently exhausted its possibilities. Nuclear power stations (and increasingly also weather events) are uninsurable because the magnitude of potential claims would plunge even the largest insurer into bankruptcy. The likelihood of devastating forest fires and the pace of rising sea levels may be calculable, but their predictability is scant consolation. Individualisation gains have systematically exacerbated survival risks, generating increasingly tangible pressure of adaptation.

But how should one describe a society that is characterised more by the problems of self-preservation than the benefits of self-realisation? Whose guiding lights are not progress, emancipation or individual liberty, but adjustment and adaptation? Intellectual interventions building on the perspective of adaptation have gradually begun sketching the outlines of societies moving beyond the ruthless prioritisation of self. In place of the classical metaphors of body and machine, the emblem of today's social analysis is the fungus. What the modern reflex perceived as a nuisance to be eliminated or a resource to be harvested, consumed or sold at market now becomes the symbol of a paradigmatic after-modern way of life.

Eva von Redecker proposes fungi as a counter-model to the isolating individualism of the modern. Many fungi form extensive underground root-like structures (mycelia) that supply nutrients to trees, receiving in return sugars generated by photosynthesis.<sup>15</sup> Von Redecker

conceptualises this as a way of life based on symbiosis, reciprocity and solidarity, upon which we could draw in our relationships with one another and with our natural environment. We need only decide to do so, she asserts.

While von Redecker's romantic take still revolves around the heroic, emancipation-seeking and thus fundamentally modern subject, other fungal theories already go a good deal further. In her economic and social analysis of the matsutake mushroom, US-based anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing describes a fundamentally adaptive society that has abandoned any hope of modern progress.<sup>16</sup> Like the late modern risks themselves, matsutake are an unintentional side-effect of modernisation, as they grow only in industrially managed forests. After Japan shifted to more natural forestry methods towards the end of the twentieth century (and the fall-out from Chernobyl made fungi from European forests unsafe to eat) a new centre of matsutake-gathering emerged on the US West Coast. Tsing observes a specific arboreal ecology, and with it a specific social ecology, emerging around the matsutake mushroom in forests ruined by capitalist exploitation. Matsutake sustain the wounded forest without healing it. They are aides of adaptation in multiple respects. Quite aside from the woodland ecology, they also form the basis of niche economies for the precarised groups that gather them in the forests of Oregon. Here Tsing found outsiders and outlaws, and above all Asian immigrants whose sense of community remains foreign to modern America. They form a community of adaptive precarity encompassing trees, fungi and humans, which Tsing interprets as reflecting the condition of a globally networked but fragmented world.

What we are starting to see here is a different, non-modern conception of adaptation. This is not a heroic choice of symbiosis as the vision for a society after the modern. Instead the social ecology of society itself is imagined as an effect of capitalist destruction and comprehensive loss, while adaptation is a condition of the capacity *to live* in a world where there can be no return to progress and modernity. Tsing sets out to explore the possibilities of "life in capitalist ruins",<sup>17</sup> where the relationship between power and personal meaning is thrown into sharp relief. Here we begin to discern the contours of a subjectivity after modernity, where visible and invisible networks and solidarity make it possible not only to survive biologically but to live socially. Tsing finds the corresponding sense of meaning in the interactions of survival, in niches occupied by unlikely alliances of precarised human and non-human life forms. These provide a glimpse of a possible future, where accidental ecologies and non-modern communities create the possibility of a "successful way of life".

Our vantage point for this tentative preview of the next society lies on the margins of the present one, where the promises of modernity were abandoned long ago: a ruined forest where uprooted humans are largely left to their own devices, where the ambulance arrives too late.<sup>18</sup> One could say that it is not just modernity, but society itself that has been abandoned here. The social division of labour, as the driving force of capitalist integration naturally still forms the backdrop; ultimately the fungi are destined for the world market. But the positive aspects of the social such as solidarity, liberty and meaning are properties of the micro-communities of the dispossessed. In a very fundamental sense they are fending for themselves at the margins of society. What we are looking at here is adaptive communities, not an adaptive society.

We encounter the latter where societal mobilisations respond to acute threats, as in the context of Covid-19. The pandemic has often been discussed as a preview of the kind of crises that all meaningful forecasts suggest will characterise the twenty-first century. The pandemic was not just an effect of our society's brutal exploitation of the natural environment. It also presaged the present and future climate crisis, in the sense that it presented acute danger to human life, mercilessly exposed deficits of political management, and elicited fundamental – if temporary – reconfigurations of the political economy. It is also a crisis of capitalism, not only because the underlying relationship to nature can be characterised as genuinely capitalist,<sup>19</sup> but also because the associated economic and social repercussions have delivered significant shocks to the capitalist mode of economy itself. The fundamental shifts revealed by this paradigmatic crisis of adaptation tell us a great deal about the character of the adaptive society. The pandemic suddenly turned the neglected problems of a vulnerable and self-destructive society – the questions of reproduction and survival – into the core concerns of everyday life and societal equilibrium and placed them at the very centre of public debate. For a moment, fantasies of individual liberty and self-realisation took a back seat as strategies for protecting life moved to the fore, along with an emphasis on social interdependencies and interconnectedness. That dynamic saw deep changes in modes of societal coordination: the impromptu division of the labour force into essential and implicitly non-essential workers springs to mind immediately, also the temporary mobilisations of volunteers and military personnel. For a time an economy of societal self-protection took precedence, sidelining activities that normally enjoy much greater social status and prestige. For a brief period the spotlight fell on the tasks and professions that are most central to the preservation of society. This time the social praxis of adaptation ensured that the ambulance did arrive after all. Collective adaptation, it transpires, is a specific form of labour directed towards maintaining life and conducted within the foundational parts

of the economy.<sup>20</sup> Adaptation policy, it would appear, is to a significant extent infrastructure policy. It prioritises the general over the specific, collective duty and individual responsibility over competitive self-realisation.

So what else do we see, if we place adaptation at the heart of social analysis? What concepts of emancipation, what ideas about time and history, what promises of a subjectively good life, and what political perspectives characterise an adaptive society? As these *genuinely sociological* questions reveal, there is much more at stake than mere biological survival. The problems of self-preservation that characterise our discussions about society need to be considered as questions concerning the ways people make sense of their lives. For the way of living forms the elementary basis of all complex societal structures, and is in turn sustained and reproduced through them. If we are to grasp adaptation as social praxis, we are dealing first and foremost with the configurations of an *adaptive way of living*. The central point of reference is Max Weber's famous analysis of the social origins of capitalist modernisation. As Weber argues, these lie in specific horizons of meaning that are predicated on the possibility of future salvation.<sup>21</sup> In his treatise on the Protestant ethic, Weber lays out how the Protestant frame of eternity fostered the this-worldly asceticism that spurred capitalist development.

It is not hard to see how such a perspective also raises questions concerning authority in society. The way life is conducted structures the social, from the configurations of inequality to the modes of political power. It makes a difference whether one views liberal democracy from the perspective of a day labourer or a manager. The former sees and despises an exploitative system, the latter affirms the source of her success and recognition. Any critique of society must thus start from the ways of living that shape it.

The decisive point for any contemporary social analysis is that the *possibility* of "a way of living" – in the sense of relatively autonomous individual praxis orientated on collective meaning – can no longer be assumed where the challenges to societal survival become existential. Instead the constitutive knowledge that the modern way of living – and thus the stability of the subject – is fundamentally endangered by its own unintended side-effects is inherent to the adaptive society. The adaptive constellation thus raises the sociologically decisive question: What ways of social life are possible where survival is endangered?

The short answer to this question, which I will unravel piece by piece in the following chapters, is that, firstly, an adaptive society generates its own sources of meaning through an adaptive praxis whose basic outlines are: rejection of a modern concept of emancipation, reflexive



renunciation of the ideal of progress, and a post-narcissistic idea of “the right life” based on competence and responsibility. Secondly, the conduct of life in the adaptive society generates a specific political dynamic that I would define as a *technocratic yearning*. In so doing, I treat adaptation as a genuinely *social* phenomenon, rejecting the “critical orthodoxy” of what Ingolfur Blühdorn describes as a “subject-centred programme of emancipation”.<sup>22</sup> My interest is to conduct a neutral examination of adaptation as a central societal praxis, not to praise or denounce it. A sociology that seeks to understand society by observing its adaptations encounters terminological difficulties. We need to get away from the normative connotations acquired in the course of the modern age. In that tradition, “adaptation” and “adjustment” often have a cynical or denunciatory tinge: cynical if adaptation means stabilising a social order that actually needs to change, denunciatory where adaptation is understood as an affront to the individual’s right to self-realisation. In the second chapter I therefore start by discussing the traditional sociological understanding of adaptation and siting it in relation to the current crisis of (late) modern societies and their interpretations of adaptation. It transpires that all the relevant examples of societal adaptation arise, as intimated above, in contexts of a normative primacy of *self-realisation*. Switching the perspective to problems of *self-preservation* introduces a new understanding of adaptation as an integrated praxis of individual and collective transformation and a *precondition* of any expansion of liberty in the adaptive society. At the same time this challenges the modern norm of emancipation, given that adaptation refers primarily to a praxis that serves to enable life in a very foundational sense. An updated understanding of adaptation also bears – for all the inherent contradictions – its own perspective on freedom. If the cultural primacy of individualisation is transcended, the burdens of late modern self-actualisation can also fade away.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, the adaptive society represents a categorical departure from the classic modern understanding of progress as constant optimisation and boundless self-realisation. The rise of the adaptation paradigm, as manifested in concepts like mitigation and resilience, is therefore associated with a crisis of the (late) modern timeframe – the collapse of temporal horizons – as I explain in chapter 3. The adaptive society, it follows, is already further advanced than most of the social science observing it. In its praxis, the way it conducts life, it has abandoned the project of social progress, in the sense of constantly improving living conditions, essentially boundless self-realisation, heroically “conquering the future”. Here again an inherent perspective of liberation shimmers through. Renouncing progress also relieves the late modern subject of responsibility for the discredited project of social optimisation.

Relief from the burdens of self-realisation and from responsibility for a destructive modern project is, of course, a perspective of negative freedom: It will be liberating if we no longer have to make a show of our individuality; if we must no longer emphasise the solitary over the collective; and if we no longer have to pretend that we could solve planetary problems just by putting in a little more effort. Seeking positive perspectives on freedom, I turn in the fourth chapter to a body of sociological literature that provides an affirmative concept of adaptation. Here adaptation is identified as a praxis free of the compulsion to aggrandise and accelerate,<sup>24</sup> a creative and rebellious praxis challenging cultural norms and social rules. Its focus on survival lends the adaptive revolt – as manifested for example in the new climate movement – its own political logic. Its logical conclusion is a rational technocracy of survival.

This technocratic yearning reappears in chapter five, in which I turn to criticisms of the adaptive society. I tackle this question empirically, using qualitative interviews with essential workers during the Covid-19 pandemic. My intention here is to focus attention on the central actors of adaptation, the workers whose activities realised the collective adjustment of society. I understand their experiences during the acute phase of crisis as a natural experiment in adaptive praxis and its interpretation. The interviews reveal this adaptive avant-garde's criticisms concerning their own situation and society at large, and the wishes and perspectives they associate with freedom. The subjects describe experiences of massive overwork and stress, within a social order they perceive to be fundamentally bifurcated – a division they attribute to narcissistic cultural influences and a systemic crisis of political capacity. As the empirical material reveals, they ultimately hope for relief through a depoliticisation of survival risks, implemented by a competent technocracy.

The concluding chapter explores the implicit political vectors associated with the adaptive society. The central political interest associated with the reproblematisation of survival is neither democratisation nor personal emancipation. Instead we see a longing to address existential threats without political strife; this is true of both protest avant-gardes and technocrats, and of political theories that take questions of survival as their starting point. Under the primacy of self-preservation, depoliticising risk becomes the decisive condition of political legitimacy. In sharp contrast to the age of individualism, prioritising survival points towards a civilisation where freedom is defined in terms of depoliticisation. *Protective technocracy* is the logical social contract of the adaptive society.

- 1 Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage, 1992 [1986]), p. 28.
- 2 Cf. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944]).
- 3 Cf. Klaus Dörre, Hartmut Rosa, Karina Becker, Sophie Bose and Benjamin Seyd, eds, *Große Transformation? Zur Zukunft moderner Gesellschaften*, special issue of *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2019).
- 4 Cf. Heinz Bude, *Das Gefühl der Welt: Über die Macht von Stimmungen* (Munich: Hanser, 2016).
- 5 Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society* (New York: Free Press, 2014 [1893]).
- 6 Ralf Dahrendorf, *Lebenschancen: Anläufe zur sozialen und politischen Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979).
- 7 Cf. Andreas Reckwitz, *Die Gesellschaft der Singularitäten: Zum Strukturwandel der Moderne* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2018).
- 8 Andreas Reckwitz, “Gesellschaftstheorie als Werkzeug”, in Andreas Reckwitz and Hartmut Rosa, *Spätmoderne in der Krise: Was leistet die Gesellschaftstheorie?* pp. 23–150, here pp. 72ff. (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2021).
- 9 For more on the pitfalls of the meritocratic principle, see Michael J. Sandel, *Vom Ende des Gemeinwohls: Wie die Leistungsgesellschaft unsere Demokratien zerreit* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2020); Sighard Neckel, “Die Wirklichkeit des Leistungsprinzips: Ansprüche, Krisen, Kritik”, *Kurswechsel* 3 (2012), pp. 64–70; Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Die Illusion der Chancengleichheit: Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Bildungswesens am Beispiel Frankreichs* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1971).
- 10 Ronald Inglehart, *Kultureller Umbruch: Wertwandel in der westlichen Welt* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus, 1995); Abraham Maslow, “A Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychological Review* 50/4 (1943), pp. 370–96.
- 11 Cf. Beck, *Risk Society*, op cit.
- 12 Ulrich Beck, *Die Erfindung des Politischen: Zu einer Theorie reflexiver Modernisierung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993).
- 13 Cf. Stephan Lessenich, *Neben uns die Sintflut: Die Externalisierungsgesellschaft und ihr Preis* (Munich: Hanser Berlin, 2016).
- 14 Beck, *Die Erfindung des Politischen*, op cit., p. 115.
- 15 Cf. Eva von Redecker, *Revolution für das Leben: Philosophie der neuen Protestformen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2020), p. 183.
- 16 Cf. Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015).
- 17 Cf. Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, op cit.
- 18 Others have developed this thought into widely circulated forecasts of the end of society as we know it. For example, collapsologists suggest that a complete failure of power systems would bring down the entire modern civilisation within just a few days, leading to “starvation, destruction, migration, disease and war” (Jem Bendell); see for example Pablo Servigne and Raphaël Stevens, *How Everything Can Collapse: A Manual for Our Times* (Cambridge: Polity, 2020).

19 Cf. Klaus Dörre, “Risiko Kapitalismus”, in Rosa Dörre, et al., eds, *Große Transformation?* op cit., pp. 3–33.

20 The Foundational Economy Collective, *Foundational Economy: The Infrastructure of Everyday Life* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2018).

21 Cf. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York and Abingdon, UK: Routledge: 2012 [1904/05]).

22 Ingolfur Blühdorn, *Simulative Demokratie: Neue Politik nach der postdemokratischen Wende* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2013).

23 To borrow from Isaiah Berlin, one could call this a negative freedom from problematic aspects of positive freedom. Respite, rather than opportunity, is the central motif here; cf. Isaiah Berlin, “Zwei Freiheitsbegriffe” (1969), in *Freiheit: Vier Versuche*, pp. 197–256 (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2006).

24 Cf. Hartmut Rosa, *Beschleunigung und Entfremdung: Entwurf einer kritischen Theorie spätmoderner Zeitlichkeit* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2013).