



Summary for Blätter 06/2009

Theory and practice

Essays on occasion of Jürgen Habermas' 80th birthday

On June 18, Jürgen Habermas, Germany's most important intellectual and co-editor of "Blätter", will turn 80. On this occasion, Habermas' former university assistants — Oskar Negt, Claus Offe, Ulrich Oevermann, Albrecht Wellmer and Axel Honneth — as well as some of his closest colleagues from Frankfurt — Ingeborg Maus, Klaus Günther and Rainer Forst — outline Habermas' theory and practice from various perspectives.

Seyla Benhabib

Cosmopolitanism and democracy — from Kant to Habermas

How does the cosmopolitical vision of justice go together with the national organisation of democracy? Seyla Benhabib, Professor of Political Science and Philosophy at Yale University, reconstructs the notion of "democratic cosmopolitanism" from the ancient Greek tradition to Kant and Habermas. Her thesis: In times of global migration, the constitution of the *demos* can no longer be confined to the nation-state. Thus, Habermas' postulation for the "inclusion of the other" becomes a cosmopolitan obligation.

Kenichi Mishima

Japanese post-war enlightenment and the role of Jürgen Habermas

How does European intellectual thought and tradition influence Japan? Kenichi Mishima, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Osaka, discusses Japan's "big intellectual debates" — from Marxist hegemony of the 1950s and 60s to Postmodernism of the 1980s to the recent rise of a new cultural nationalism. Mishima points out why Habermas' work is an important weapon for Japanese enlightenment's fight against cultural nationalism.

Wolfgang Lieb

Humboldt's funeral: Ten years Bologna process

On June 19, 1999, the so-called Bologna declaration was formally adopted. Ten years later, Journalist Wolfgang Lieb examines how the German universities, by implementing Bachelor and Master, have changed to the worse. Lieb's conclusion: The reforms mark a renunciation of Humboldt's comprehensive educational ideal and a radical shift to neo-liberal economism.

Joachim Becker

Eastern Europe in the financial crisis: The new Argentina?

The impact of the financial and economic crisis on Eastern Europe is dramatic; some states (like Hungary and Ukraine) were already facing bankruptcy. Joachim Becker, Professor at the University of Economy in Vienna, analyses the differences between various Eastern European economies. He demonstrates

that particularly those states where economic growth was primarily financed by external debt are now economically endangered — and why they may be confronted with a situation akin to the Argentinian crisis scenario.

Lars Normann**Pakistan's multiple war**

Pakistan is in a deep crisis — the country is already regarded as a "failing state". Political Scientist Lars Normann analyses the complex problems that the weak civil government in Islamabad is facing: In the country's west, islamists controll large territories; in the East, the Kashmir conflict with India has still not been settled; and within the country itself, the military and its intelligence service continue to act as a "state within the state". Normann argues that only resolute action based on the secular forces may stabilize the country and fight islamistic terrorism effectively.

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