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Refigurations of Society. Sociological Perspectives on Modernity in Transition

Midterm Conference of the ESA Research Network 29, Social Theory;
Institute of Sociology, Technical University of Berlin, 5-6 September 2018

Call for Papers

Contemporary societies are subject to a series of fundamental changes. On the one hand, the dissemination of new media, communication technologies and digitalization is rapidly changing the working of society, of the economy, politics, even culture, and quite evidently also our everyday life practices and our social relations. As evident as this process is, sociology still lacks an encompassing analysis that enables it to grasp the dynamics of this process. Moreover, the assumed tendency towards globalization, transnationalization and 'world society' are currently facing a counter-tendency of re-nationalization and regionalization. The transgression of borders is met by the building of new walls, and the rapid process of individualization and singularization is paralleled by new forms of social inequality, precarity and poverty. On the political level, we find new social movements are triggered and transformed by the new media, new territorial wars and a relative, as well as projected, shift of political dominance away from the West. These contradictory developments have inspired images of multiple modernities, global modernity and 'a world sociology of modernity'.

Beyond the quite necessary analysis of specific problems, sociology needs to reflect on the question of how to grasp these changes. 200 years after the birth of Marx, and 100 years after the death of Durkheim and Simmel, we may ask if we are still able to fit current changes into our sociological schemes of modernity, late, reflexive, or postmodernity? Or, are we witnessing a much more radical transformation of the social order, a refiguration of society, affecting social relations, social institutions, social actions and practices.

These are the questions that we want to ask at the 2018 ESA RN 29 Social Theory Mid-Term conference in Berlin. Therefore, *the conference invites papers which discuss the diagnosis of contemporary societies, analyses of general social changes and transformations, (b) conceptually rich empirical analyses addressing these general issues, (c) general discussions on concepts, categories and theoretical models in sociology related to the changes in contemporary society, and (d) assessments of the relevance of classical sociological theory accounts to understanding current expressions of modernity in transition.*

Organizers: ESA Research Network on Social Theory in collaboration with the Chair for Theories of Modern Society at the Technical University of Berlin (Craig Browne, University of Sydney, and Hubert Knoblauch, Technical University of Berlin)

Submissions:

Abstracts (max 250 words) can be submitted until **April 7th, 2018** at



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