

Abstracts

Ulrich Beck und Christoph Lau

Theory of Reflexive Modernization: Empirical Findings

All around the world, society is undergoing radical change – radical in the sense that it poses a challenge to Enlightenment-based modernity and opens up a space in which people choose new and unexpected forms of the social and the political. Sociological debates since the 1990s have sought to grasp and conceptualize this reconfiguration. Some authors, who lay great stress on the openness of the human project amid new contingencies, complexities and uncertainties, operate with the term ›post-modernity‹ (Bauman, Lyotard, Harvey, Haraway). However, we reject the idea that this is so far a move from the modern to the post-modern. On theoretical as well as on empirical grounds our conclusion is that all Western societies are still ›modern‹ societies: there has been no movement beyond the realm of the modern to its opposite, because there has been no clear break with the basic principles of modernity but a transformation of basic institutions of modernity (for example the nation-state and the nuclear family). We would suggest, therefore, that what we are witnessing is a second modernity.

Michael Heinlein, Daniel Levy und Natan Sznaider

Cosmopolitan Memory and Reflexive Modernization. The Political Discourse about Forced Labor Restitution

This article analyzes how current processes of Globalization and Europeanization are changing the parameters of how states remember their pasts. The conventional concept of »collective memory« is firmly embedded within the »Container of the Nation-State«. Reflexive Modernization, we argue, is reconfiguring the implied connection between memory and nationhood. Analyzing the political discourse about the restitution for Nazi victims of forced labor practices, we discover two processes: there is a cosmopolitanization of memory that is cracking the national container and is characterized by a reflexive attempt to incorporate the history and memory of the »other«; in reaction to this de-coupling of nation-state and memory, a re-nationalization of memories can be observed. It is marked by attempts to refocus attention to national victims counter-acting the cosmopolitan focus on victims of the national project. In this contested process, the nation-state is being re-valued in an emerging transnational European memoryscape. These developments carry significant theoretical implications for the theory of reflexive modernization. Most notably, it complements the notion of reflexivity (with its emphasis on reflex) with the growing significance of reflection (stressing the self-conscious deployment of new memory cultures).

Peter Wehling, Willy Viehöver und Reiner Keller

Where does nature end, where does society begin? Doping, GM food, climate change and beginning of human life: the emergence of cosmopolitical hybrids

In an increasing number of areas the clear-cut and science-based distinction between »nature« and »society« which has been essential for modern societies can no longer be drawn in an unambiguous and collectively binding way. The resulting problems are being exacerbated by the simultaneous erosion of the sovereignty of nation states. Both processes end in what could be coined the emergence of »cosmopolitical hybrids«, situated between nature and so-

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ciety, science and politics, the nation state and the world society. The paper starts with a reconstruction of how the boundaries between the realms of the »social« and the »natural« erode, based on four empirical cases. As a response, rather fragile, reflexive modern practices of boundary work emerge which can no longer rely on the resources of conflict resolution hitherto available in modernity: the socially believed fictions of scientific objectivity, political consent and national sovereignty. Thus, the transnationalisation of boundary work will gain increasing importance; for the time being, however, it remains an open question whether and how the distinction between nature and society can be reframed and re-established under conditions of reflexive modernisation.

Nick Kratzer

»Marketilisation« and »Individualisation«. Towards the production of social inequality in the second modernity

The article discusses the interaction of current developments of work on the one hand and an obviously increasing social inequality on the other hand. A certain answer to this question is delivered by the concept of »Reflexive Modernisation«: Based on a highly standardised worksphere there is a relative continuity of social inequality and an increasing differentiation and pluralisation especially of the »private life« outside the worksphere. Based on empirical findings about the development of work the central interpretation of the article is, that there might be a new quality within the ongoing process of individualisation due to the »internalisation of markets« as a main tendency of reorganisation and rationalisation of work. The result is a more »market-driven« process of individualisation within the worksphere – and a worsening of individual social inequality.

Werner Schneider, Andreas Hirsland, Wolfgang Ludwig-Mayerhofer und Jutta Allmendinger

Power and faint of private money – The dynamics of individualisation of intimate relationships

Advancing modernisation not only renders fragile, ambivalent and hybrid the categorical order of »first modernity« together with its fundamental social and cultural semantics. Rather, modernity's basic institutions and principles governing the social are changed as well. With these central assumptions of the theory of reflexive modernity as a background, this paper discusses the effects of money in modern dual-career couples on power, inequality and individualisation. The money arrangements observed in such couples exhibit peculiar patterns of ascription of »mine, yours, our« that refer to an increasing reflexivity of intimate relationships of men and women through which first modernity's »either-or« of money and love is transformed into an »as well as through couples« characteristic constructions of »relationship money«. These observations point to first signs of a transformation of the relationship between the private and the public as a (gender) specific figuration of power and domination in first modernity into a privatised »self-domination«, internalised by individuals, that takes hold of both genders, albeit with different preconditions and consequences concerning inequality. Overall, this contribution aims at establishing an empirically grounded, »reflexive-modern« sociology of money in intimate relationships that at the same time is sensitive to questions of inequality, power and domination.

Manfred Deiß und Klaus Schmierl

Shifted Boundaries within Industrial Relations: Variety and Opening as a New Potential of Co-Determination?

Current processes of shifting the boundaries and of a fundamental erosion both involve new boundaries and a new institutional setting within the system of industrial relations. The article shows contradictory effects regarding the simultaneous shifting of boundaries and institutionalisation in the German system of industrial relations. By contrasting examples of an elimination of old and an emergence of new boundaries which concern the basic principles and structures of co-determination and collective bargaining processes, the following questions should be answered: How far is the well-known system of industrial relations going to become less important because of changes in the establishment of boundaries merely between traditional and stable modes on the one hand, but also going to be expended because of new and different types in the institutional structuring of workers' representation on the other hand? Is this loss of traditional structures going to transform industrial relations into an intransparent variety which causes considerable losses of efficacy or are there new stabilising elements going to be generated which can serve as a (re-)vitalisation of employees' interest representation?

Manfred Moldaschl

Audit-Explosion and Controlling-Revolution – About the institutionalization of reflexive practices in the economy

The theory of reflexive modernization assumes that reflexive, i.e. non-traditional and knowledge-based activity is the core characteristic of contemporary societies, and thus, that we are already living in the reflexive modernity. Even if the latter should be the case, we have to proof empirically in different fields of praxis if and how reflexive daily practices and institutions actually are in politics, economy and society. If they aren't, a theory of reflexive modernization has to explain that case too. In this paper I start with a problematization of the category reflexivity, which remained to be an epochal category within the theory of reflexive modernization, not really elaborated and operationalized for empirical purposes. A further problem is that the category is defined or at least still used in different ways by the representants of the theory. Starting with a proposal for an integrative definition of reflexivity, I present an analytical conception of *institutional reflexivity*. It is designed to evaluate how organizations institutionalize the observation of side-effects of their activities as well as the critique of their cognitive and value-premises. In the last step, I apply this conception to a practice of audits within firms and between firms and other actors.

Jens Zinn und Wolfgang Bonß

Predictability, Luck and Trust – the Change of Certainty in Biographical Expectations during Modernity

With the shift from first to second modernity, biographical constructions have changed. Against the background of fundamental processes of individualization careers are ever less explainable by class and social strata. Rather biographies have become fluid and therefore less and less clear and expectable; they can develop in quite different ways. How can one under such conditions decide and develop expectations regarding the life course? Even though traditional and rational patterns are under pressure we do not expect that conventional certainty constructions will be supplanted by non-rational constructions as luck, trust or affect.

Indeed, when stability is improbable and rational explanations meet their limit, such constructions are appropriate and are used to manage greater contingencies. But they are used in a rationalised form. Therefore it is rather observable that rational and non-rational constructions mingle to produce biographical certainty and this is shown by examples.

Cordula Kropp und Jost Wagner

»Agrarwende«: about the institutional handling of side-effects of non-intended consequences and its reflection in the agricultural domain

In 2000/01, the risk-crises of mad cow disease (BSE) and foot and mouth disease (FMD), shocked the agricultural sector and questioned the modern, industrial routines and self-conceptions within it. The German red-green government used this crises as a »window of opportunity« to proclaim the »Agrarwende« (turnaround in agriculture), a policy change, which should open up the very closed sector for the need of ecological modernisation. On basis of the »Theory of Reflexive Modernisation« and its special attention to the »effects of side-effects«, this article discusses the »Agrarwende« in its relation to a more fundamental meta-change caused by the self-referential modernisation of industrial modernity. It reflects the consequences of this combination of intended change and unintended transformation for the institutions of the agricultural sector, especially in agricultural policy and science, and asks for the chances and obstacles for a deeper institutional change which could meet the challenges of a reflexive Modernity.

Boris Holzer und Stefan May

Authority through ignorance? Political and legal consequences of the regulation of new risks

The regulation of technological and other kinds of »new« risks may be regarded as the latest stage in the historical development of the fields and instruments of state regulation. The areas of state regulation have evolved from the requirements of the rule of law over provisions for individual predicaments to the management of collective risk situations. Accordingly, the primary focus of state regulation has changed from legal predictability over social welfare to the prevention of risk. In the course of this development from the »legal« over the »social« to the »preventive state«, there have also been notable shifts in the instruments of state regulation. While the legal and the social state are based on coercive power and monetary redistribution, the preventive state's medium of steering is knowledge. Yet knowledge about risk is always imperfect and uncertain knowledge. Therefore, we argue that the capacity to cope with ignorance and uncertainty – rather than superior knowledge per se – is the critical resource of political decision-making in risk society. Uncertainty about risks cannot be eliminated once and for all. Instead, state and non-state actors who are deemed capable of dealing with the ineluctable uncertainties assume critical positions in decision-making processes. The emerging regime of risk regulation therefore transcends the framework of a Weberian state apparatus based upon »authority through knowledge« by granting a rather prominent role to forms of authority based upon ignorance and uncertainty.