Zeitschrift: Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie = Revue suisse de sociologie = Swiss journal of sociology

Band: 32 (2006)

Heft: 1

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7 In Memoriam Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) [G] | Albert Salomon

Editorial Remarks [G] | Claudius Härpfer

A strange loneliness characterizes the work of Tönnies, the fore-runner of German sociology. Tönnies, whose writings have been perceived by critics rather late, managed to unite elements of natural justice, historical materialism and of Bachofen's mysticism, and to bring about a genuinely sociological way of thinking. Even though he did not succeed in establishing his own school, he developed a complex concept of reason by referring to transrational elements. Moreover, he discovered the two transhistorical sociological categories of "community" and "society", based on the notions of "natural will" (Wesenswille) and "arbitrary will" (Kürwille), which have been used for numerous critical approaches and studies later on.

Keywords: Community, society, natural justice, historical materialism.

27 Beyond Individualism, the Theorem of Community and Society – Ferdinand Tönnies and Communitarianism [G] | Peter-Ulrich Merz-Benz

The rational and the pre-rational spheres of the social world are constitutionally as well as historically connected. Towards the end of the 19th century, Ferdinand Tönnies tried to bring this state of being to the point with his theorem of *community and society*. Sociology has always been aware of this, be it not overtly. Only with the attempts of communitarianism to overcome individualism and reestablish a communitarian way of living did the thinking around the theorem of community and society reemerge in sociological consciousness after a long time of neglect. The opportunity was however not seized to deepen the potential of communitarian thinking and to reflect its concepts and representations with reference to Toennies' work. The present contribution is a first step towards catching up with this opportunity. The debate around communitarianism is reopened by showing the unclear theoretical bases of the "me and us" paradigm of Amitai Etzioni as well as of the theorem of "memory communities" of Robert N. Bellah and his group. And it is pursued with the help of Toennies' notions.

Keywords: community, society, individualism, communitarism.

53 Social Foams: Between Community and Society [G] | Gerhard Wagner

Metaphors affect sociology from the beginning. Based on structural intuitions which Plato already had sociologists conceive of the social order as of a contract or an organism. Considering recent research in natural sciences, Peter Sloterdijk suggests another metaphor. He conceives social reality as a foam. The bubbles of this foam constitute a special structure of co-isolated neighborhoods which cannot be grasped with basic sociological concepts much as community or society and which opens up to an interesting heuristic perspective on 21st century's world society. The article reconstructs Sloterdijk's theory and discusses its sociological implications.

Keywords: metaphors, structural intuition, community, society.

75 Tönnies and Gated Communities: "Romanticism" or Neoliberal Present? [G] | Stefan Bertschi

This paper aimes at a new understanding the link between a rapidly growing form of suburban living and its implications for the dichotomy of neoliberalism and communitarianism, as well as for the proposition of "community and society". Through an analysis of closed and guarded housing developments, so-called gated communities, their particular character comes to the fore. The main question is: What has Tönnies' term of community to offer and how can it be made fruitful in order to explain a neoliberal phenomenon? As will become clear, highly artificial communities with a rationalized structure lead to a new understanding of conventional dichotomies and illustrate a contemporary application of a known proposition in sociological theory.

Keywords: community, society, neoliberalism, communitarianism, Ferdinand Tönnies, gated communities.

91 The Nomologic Approach in Sociology (Are there Sociological Laws ?) [F] | Charles-Henry Cuin

In sociology, the concept of law has no good reputation today, also among strongly positivism-related authors. Thus we propose here a position completely in counter-current the prevalent trends. Indeed, we will support that sociology is not founded to refute the nomologic ambition of some of its most famous founders and that it must and can, on the contrary, fully assume this ambition in order to preserve, even to acquire, the degree of scientificity which it legitimately claims. After having shown the weakness of the anti-nomologic position in its various forms, we will present a general defense of the nomologic ambition, and we will finish with an attempt to demonstrate that authentic sociological laws do exist – even if they are not, for several of them, "ordinary" laws.

Keywords: Epistemology, nomologic approach, sociological laws, explanation.

119 Fragile Identities: Computer Sciences between Market Forces and Autonomy [G] | Brigitte Liebig

Increasingly research at universities is determined by the logic of markets. Some consequences of these developments for academic self-understanding are investigated here by looking at computer science and information management. Theoretically framed by perspectives of academic culture research and the sociology of knowledge, the study is based on interviews and group discussions with scientists at Swiss universities and elaborates typical perspectives on professionalism and expertise in basic and applied fields

of these disciplines. The study illustrates that traditional constructs of computer science as a „scientific profession" is often in contradiction to the actual practical research. One can make our the beginning of a new understanding of professionalism, locating computer science beyond the opposition scientific autonomy vs market.

Keywords: Computer science, information management, academic culture, economisation, professionalism, group discussion.

141 **The Effect of Disciplinary Cultures on the Choice of a Technical or Scientific Subject in Higher Education: a Gender Approach** [F] | Anne-Françoise Gilbert, Fabienne Crettaz von Roten and Elvita Alvarez

The present paper is based on a survey among first year students of technical and scientific disciplines at Swiss universities. It adresses the question of subject choices in this area by focusing its attention on the normative and cognitive dispositions of students. The hypotheses put forward in the paper are twofold: the specific caracteristics of disciplinary cultures have a strong impact on the choice of a subject by students and the cognitive styles institutionalized in the disciplines contribute to a large extent to the reproduction of segregation by sex in this area. Our results confirm the importance of disciplinary cultures prior to other factors; nevertheless they also suggest differing strategies among women and men in specific groups of disciplines.

Keywords: disciplinary cultures, gender studies, choice of field of study, sociology of science.

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