

Abstracts (Englisch)

Harald Wolf

The network as signature of the epoch?

Comments on several new contributions to sociological contemporary diagnosis

The article deals with some aspects of the network debate which are important for a sociological interpretation of contemporary society, both in an empirical and in a theoretical sense. It begins with a discussion of Castells' concept of „network society“ as an example for the promotion of the net to the signature of the epoch. Subsequently it outlines the social dynamics of the Internet to use the resulting insights for an evaluation of problems and perspectives of network research in the social sciences. In combination with a „relational“ approach of sociology, is the conclusion, that network research can be a valuable contribution to the analysis of contemporary society. The concept of the network, on the other hand, does not signify the signature of the epoch.

key words: network research, network society, networks, sociological theory, sociology of organizations

Christel Kumbruck

Digital Signatures and trust

The following contribution deals with a special aspect of electronically intertwined organizations, the immateriality of their cooperation, and the central question attached to it: How can you guarantee reciprocal obligations in organizations, when the electronic media used for communication and cooperation are able to grasp the mutual information in an immaterial and fleeting manner only. For the purposes of legally binding cooperation people so far use handwritten signatures. It is about a psychosocial mechanism, that is based on personal trust and that is morally engaging the cooperating partners. In the world of electronic information technical and organizational resources are needed, especially the digital signature, that differs in many aspects from the personal signature. The author discusses the changes in building up trust, that accompany the digital signature, especially the replacement of personal trust through trust in the system. With reference to empirical results from simulation studies she presents irritations shown by users as well as corresponding technical and organizational conditions that make it possible to reconnect technical media used for reembedding trust in the system with the social and personal process of developing trust.

key words: digital signature, disembedding mechanism, network organization, trust

Lei Delsen

The Dutch job alliance and its effects

'Jobs, jobs, and more jobs' is the political motto in the Netherlands. The background of the Dutch "employment miracle" is explained in this article. The central question answered is whether it is possible and desirable to import and implement the 'poldermodel' in Germany. It is concluded that the transferability of the poldermodel is limited. There are considerable cultural and structural differences between the two countries. The reverse of the job miracle is a strong growth of insecure jobs with undesirable social and economic consequences. Germany plays a central role in the European Union. A policy of wage moderation in Germany may result in a downward spiral because of a partial drop in possible the internal demand. A European wide recession is.

key words: employment miracle, Poldermodel, segmentation, social security, wage moderation

Michael Lacher

Teamwork in the automotive industry - between partial autonomy and reorientation

A provisional appraisal

This article deals with the newest debate on team concepts in the production of the automotive industry. By means of two practice examples of part production and the assembly of automotive gears the author emphasizes the opportunity of various approaches to teamwork in the production. In fact it depends on structure of production what kind of team concept we are able to implement. Looking back on the change of work organization in the last ten years we can show the adaption of team concept to requirements of production. We actually see two approaches of team concept: first more partially autonomous team concepts implemented in part production areas and second team concepts based on standardized work in the assemblies.

key words: automotive industry, organizational change, partizipation, team work