Call for Papers

The Quest of "European Identity" as a new Challenge for Social Theory

26.–28. November 2014
Münster, Germany

Social Theory Conference
European Sociological Association,
(Research Network 29)

Further information:
http://www.social-theory.eu/

To ask in a new way the question 'what is identity and cultural identity' should be at the very heart of social theoretical reflections and sociological thinking in the global age. This question, with regard to the idea of the "European Identity" is the main subject of the conference. If we can no longer speak of "identity" as a given in itself and with itself, as an identically homogenous fundament, an essence or entity; and of a "cultural identity" as something that is grounded in territory, religion, and ethnicity; but must rather understand these concepts as an open, continuous and heterogeneous process of identification within a plurality of life-forms, embedded in complex social relations and networks, then we should ask ourselves if there is such a thing as "European identity" and what would it mean? Are the "collective representations" (E. Durkheim) and mentalities, the underlying structures of meaning and memories, or the historically grown "cultural narratives" (Ch. Taylor) and shared sense of belonging, or those typical "cross-border practices" emerging out of social interactions (P. Bourdieu), and ultimately the mutual recognition of differences through a dialogue and cultural translations of different symbol systems, building "European-wide public sphere" (J. Habermas), the essential manifestations of European identity? Does European identity still consist of specific kinds of self-understanding and self-interpretations, as well as reinterpretations, in the relations to the other, ensuring respect for the "Otherness of the Other" (J. Derrida)? Or is Europe an "imagined community" (C. Castoriadis – B. Anderson)? Or are there several diverging European identities – "multiple Europes", arising from labour migration, regional policy, multilingualism and citizenship? And what is the role of institutional frames of European identity politics? Or does such a question of "European Identity" only reveal the exclusive hegemony of the European community and is it an expression of the political ideology of the technocratic and elite-driven project of European integration?

How to think in a new way about "European identity" beyond the ontological theories of society is the core task of the conference.

Deadlines

Abstract submission:
15th June 2014

Notification of authors:
30th June 2014

Conference registration

Early bird registration:
30th July 2014, *Conference fees: 60 EUR, for ESA members 40 EUR, students 25 EUR*

Final registration:
15th October 2014, *Conference fees: 80 EUR, for ESA members 60 EUR, students 25 EUR*

Please submit your proposal (max. 250 words) by email to:

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