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Processes of Sacralisation in Late Modernity

The sociology of processes of sacralisation, established by Émile Durkheim (1981) and his disciples (Mauss 2012), is to be applied and tested regarding (late) modern phenomena in this dissertation.

In this context processes of sacralisation will be seen as the central elements for relations with the world that are experienced as extremely attractive. In the process a present oriented sociology of the sacred will not only focus on the sacralisation of communities, whose counterpart can be seen in the current sacralisation of national and religious fundamentalist groups, but also on the sacralisation of persons. The sacred and processes of sacralisation are not limited to a certain area, but everything can potentially become the object of sacralisation (Joas 2012). Starting from this rather rudimentary outline of a sociology of the sacred, the sacralisation of communities as well as of individuals (hero cults, genius cults or genius-religions – one might want to think about the adoration Stefan George, Wagner or Goethe receive –, the pope, football ‘gods’ or the celebration of the own self in the late capitalist economy of attention) shift into focus. Those sacralisations take place against the backdrop of certain world views and guiding principles that are perceived as attractive and therefore need to be taken into consideration as well. At the same time sacred places, spaces and object also play a significant role.

Goal: The dissertation analyses processes of sacralisation in the modern era and their changes. The focus will be on sacralisations of the person (like heros, so-called geniuses, religious leaders, homo oeconomicus) and of communities (like nations, fundamentalist communities, aesthetic movements).

Methods and disciplinary background: The methods will be methods of qualitative social research, especially discourse analysis and content analysis of different media (books, texts, films, websites).

References

- Durkheim, Émile (1981 [1912]). *Die elementaren Formen des religiösen Lebens*. Frankfurt a.M.
- Joas, Hans 2011. *Die Sakralität der Person. Eine neue Genealogie der Menschenrechte*. Berlin.
- Mauss, Marcel 2012. *Schriften zur Religionssoziologie*, ed. by Stephan Moebius et al. with a postface by Stephan Moebius. Berlin.

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