

Thomas Schwinn

Soziale Ungleichheit in differenzierten Ordnungen

Zur Wechselwirkung zweier Strukturprinzipien

[Social Inequality in Differentiated Orders. On the Interaction of Two Structural Principles.]

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Although theories of inequality and differentiation belong in the portfolios of both classical and contemporary sociology, they are streams of thought that have so far run parallel to one another. Thomas Schwinn finds this situation unsatisfactory and rectifies it by linking the two theories and tracing how the structures of inequality and institutional differentiations influence one another. The analytical gain this brings is demonstrated by diverse phenomena: the transition from a feudal to a modern class society; the dissolution of social milieus by tendencies towards individualization; the reproduction of structures of inequality across institutional differentiations and the interaction of several dimensions of inequality, such as class, ethnicity, and gender. The author also tackles the ambivalent meaning of the meritocratic principle and the normative framework for inequality structures set until now by the state, but is missing in global context.

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