

Corona – A New Grand Narrative?

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The starting point of the lecture is the theorem of functional differentiation as a relatively reasonable division of society into competences or responsibilities, which are realized in the form of systems. At present, the health care system, supported by politics and the mass media, has taken the lead worldwide. Thus, what the Chinese philosopher and politician Kang Yuwei had written about the age of the 'Great Community' has come true: "In the whole world, health policy will be in the first place." The question that arises for the systems theorist is: how is this possible - when society consists of a multitude of equal systems? The presentation attempts to provide explanations for this 'state of emergency', and to answer the question to what extent the current regressive structural transformations - first and foremost the national modes of coping, but also other segmentary reconstructions - might be permanent. It is followed by a historical review summarizing the evolutionary stages of development into a global society (within which the health care system plays a crucial role) and a brief review of the virus/communication analogy. The presentation ends with a look at two distinctions that essentially shape the discourse on the pandemic. The twofold thesis is: 1) the 'Corona crisis' does not change the unity of the context that realizes functional and segmental differentiation in a world-unifying way; 2) world society does not depend on the transport of viruses and high infection rates for its self-description.