

## **Unavoidable Uncertainty - uncertainty production by solving uncertainty problems. Introductory speech - session „Management of Uncertainty“**

For ages humanity saw uncertainty as an unavoidable constant in human life. Uncertainty was seen as a mere normality of being, while immanently bearing the potential of dreadful and unheralded fate. Uncertainty as fate is something to be feared or to be accepted, something one could pray to be spared and bargain over with god. Uncertainty as fate is only fought by faith. Individual and societal coping strategies in real life therefore aimed not on the occurrence or nature of uncertainty but on its effects and consequences.

In contrast, the idea of uncertainty as something that could be mastered and tamed is modern to the core. To diminish if not annihilate uncertainty by science and rationality was the express promise of modernity. Enlightenment sparked the idea of humanity mastering its fate based on reason, industrialisation spread the logic of scientific methods into the production process and its organisations, and democratisation provided institutions following the idea of rational bureaucracy. The faith in god was replaced by the belief that uncertainty could be mastered by applying modern logic: the more scientific rationality, elaborate technology and reasonable planning, the better.

While first modernity as Beck calls this period never really fulfilled its promise, today global society faces not only more, but more substantial uncertainties than ever. It seems to get increasingly evident that modernity comes with side-effects not only underestimated, but misunderstood. Uncertainties tend not to persist and even increase although applied modern methods, but partly because of them. Current scientific methods of planning and management promise not to master uncertainties but to make them calculable and manageable. One could interpret that as a shift from controlling uncertainty to coping with its immanent logic, or as a step from neglecting to acknowledging the fuzzy quality of uncertain dynamics. We find this kind of approach especially in fields where uncertainties are acknowledged as immanent phenomenon: the management of risk, of disaster and of innovation, topics and fields that will be addressed by the contributors in the session „Management of Uncertainty“ on different levels. While Mark Mölder's presentation focusses on the role of investigative journalism as an institutional actor producing and fostering uncertainty, Shuhei Kimura provides an insight into intercultural differences in coping with the outcomes of disaster management after earthquakes in Japan and Turkey. The introductory speech will concentrate on the management of risk and of innovation inside of economic organisations, where new forms of organisational standards try to make the risks and uncertainties of innovation manageable. This empirical insight provides the stepping stone for some conceptual reflexions on whether the side-effects typical for first modernity described above are addressed by these new approaches of innovation management that claim to overcome the weaknesses of simplistic ideas of mastering and controlling uncertainties. It will be discussed whether old paradoxes dissolve or if and why new ones may occur.

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