



Morphogenesis and the Crisis of Normativity (Social Morphogenesis)

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This volume explores the development and consequences of morphogenesis on normative regulation. It starts out by describing the great normative transformations from morphostasis, as the precondition of a harmonious relationship between legal validity and normative consensus in society, to morphogenesis, which tends to strongly undermine existing laws, norms, rules, rights and obligations because of the new variety it introduces. Next, it studies the decline of normative consensus resulting from the changes in the social contexts that made previous forms of normativity, based upon 'habits', 'habitus' and 'routine action', unhelpfully misleading because they no longer constituted relevant guidelines to action. It shows how this led to the 'Reflexive Imperative' with subjects having to work out their own purposeful actions in relation to their objective social circumstances and their personal concerns, if they were to be active rather than passive agents. Finally, the book analyses what makes for chance in normativity, and what will underwrite future social regulation. It discusses whether it is possible to establish a new corpus of laws, norms and rules, given that intense morphogenesis denies the durability of any new stable context.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Margaret Archer heads the project at EPFL 'From Modernity to Morphogenesis'. She was elected as the first woman President of the International Sociological Association at the 12th World Congress of Sociology. She is a founder member of both the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences and the Academy of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences and is a trustee of the Centre for Critical Realism. She studied at the University of London, graduating B.Sc. in 1964 and Ph.D. in 1967 with a thesis on The Educational Aspirations of English Working Class Parents. She was a lecturer at the University of Reading from 1966 to 1973. She is one of the most influential theorists in the critical realist tradition. At the 12th World Congress of Sociology, she was elected as the first woman President of the International Sociological Association, is a founder member of both the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences and the Academy of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences. She is a Trustee of the Centre for Critical Realism.

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