

Curriculum Vitae

Renate Mayntz was born in Berlin on April 28, 1929. After her graduation (Abitur) in Berlin in 1947 she took up studies at Wellesley College (USA) and received her B.A. in 1950. In 1953 she concluded her graduate work at the Free University of Berlin with a doctorate in sociology (Dr. phil.). Her first research appointment was at the UNESCO Institute of Social Research in Cologne (1953-1957). In 1957 she qualified for lecturing in sociology at the Free University of Berlin (Habilitation).

Following a year as Rockefeller Fellow in the U.S., where she studied developments in the sociology of organization, Renate Mayntz taught at Columbia University as Visiting Assistant Professor in the academic year 1959/60. On her return, she started teaching at the Free University of Berlin, where she was offered a chair in 1965. In this period, she became increasingly interested in public administration and questions of administrative reform and served on a number of advisory commissions to the West German government. From 1966 to 1970 she was a member of the German Council for Educational Reform and between 1970 and 1973 of the Commission for the Reform of Public Administration (Studienkommission für die Reform des öffentlichen Rechts). In 1971 she left Berlin, accepting a chair at the School of Public Administration (Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften) in Speyer. Two years later she moved once more, accepting a chair at the University of Cologne, where she also became director of the Institute for Applied Social Research (Institut für Angewandte Sozialforschung). Twelve years later she vacated this position in order to become, in 1985, the founding director of the Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung in Cologne. She retired in 1997.

In the course of her academic career, Renate Mayntz has repeatedly had foreign teaching assignments: at the University of Edinburgh in 1964, at the Facultad Latino-Americana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) in Santiago de Chile in 1965, at the New School for Social Research in New York in 1968, and at Stanford University in 1983/84. From 1974 to 1980 she served in the Senate of the German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft). In 1977 and again in 1979 she received honorary doctorates from the Universities of Uppsala/Sweden and Paris X-Nanterre.

Renate Mayntz is the author, co-author or editor of 43 books and more than 100 scientific articles.

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From government to governance: Political steering in modern societies.

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Governance is a word and a concept that has recently become very popular. For a long time, the word „governance“ simply meant „governing“, government seen as a process. Today, however, the term governance refers to a basically non-hierarchical mode of governing, where non-state actors participate in the formulation and implementation of public policy. In Western Europe, where the shift from a more interventionist state and hierarchical control to

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modern governance has first been studied closely, the crucial experience that triggered the change was the failure of ambitious reform policies that had been pursued after the end of the Second World War and the immediate post-war reconstruction period. The disappointment of the belief in the state as an effective political steering center of society gave rise to the search for alternative modes of guiding socio-economic development. One of these roads was the turn from the state to the market. The second alternative was the move from government to governance.

The cooperation of state and civil society in public policy making takes place in different forms. Most attention has been given to the direct collaboration of public authorities and private corporate actors in policy development. Collaboration can occur in the form of so-called neo-corporatist arrangements, the institutionalized negotiation between the state, organized business, and organized labor about issues of macro-economic policy, and in other kinds of policy-networks existing in more narrowly defined policy sectors. The emergence and growing importance of policy-networks is a particularly important feature of modern governance. In addition to the direct cooperation of public and private actors in policy networks, different forms of societal self-regulation are also part of modern governance. Self-regulation means that private organizations fulfill regulatory functions that are ultimately in the public interest. Social self-regulation is often established by the express delegation of functions from the state to private organizations.

Modern governance can only emerge in societies that meet certain institutional and structural preconditions, both on the side of the political regime and on the side of civil society. Political authorities must be in a general way acceptable as guardians of public welfare. The second essential precondition is the existence of a strong, functionally differentiated, and well-organized civil society. Among the social groups and organizations making up civil society there must exist at least a minimal sense of identification with, and responsibility for, the greater whole. For modern governance to emerge, public authorities and private corporate actors must be effective in their respective spheres, and they must cooperate in public policy making instead of simply fighting each other.

It has often been said that the negotiation of political with societal actors in mixed policy networks or in neo-corporatist structures, and the delegation of regulatory functions to private organizations indicate a loss of political steering capacity, a weakening of the state. But what we are dealing with in modern governance is not so much the loss of state control, as a change in its form. In modern governance, hierarchical control and civic self-determination are not opposed, but are combined with each other, and this combination can be more effective than either of the „pure“ forms. Such superior effectiveness, however, is only a chance, a highly contingent outcome. Sometimes cooperation between political and societal actors is clandestine and serves private rather than public interests. But problems also arise in joint decision-processes aiming at the solution of public problems. All forms of modern governance are beset by conflicts of interest and achieve at best what Bernd Marin has called „antagonistic cooperation“. Such antagonistic cooperation runs the risk of ending in a complete blockade, or of producing solutions on the level of the lowest common denominator - cheap compromises that cannot solve the problems at hand. Effective collaborative problem-solving depends on a set of specific conditions that are difficult to meet.

It is often argued that the globalization of financial markets and of the economy produces problems that manifest themselves domestically but cannot be coped with by domestic actors alone. The potential effectiveness of modern governance within a given nation-state is thus limited by developments on the international level. The international problem solving

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capacity is also quite limited. It may be highest within the European Union. At the global level, there is no international institution that could play the role of a world government. The typical international organization is not much more than an arena for intergovernmental negotiation. International civil society, too, is only weakly developed. At the international (or global) level, the preconditions of modern governance are met only very insufficiently. We are still very far from effective international “governance without government”.

For the time being, therefore, individual countries are thrown back upon their own resources in dealing with problems whose causes they cannot effectively control. There is the danger, of course, to make use of this situation to shift the burden of blame for an ineffective national public policy to these outside forces. The wide-spread conviction that economic globalization does not only undermine the effectiveness of national economic policy, but also forces modern welfare states to dismantle their systems of social security can thus easily be used as an excuse by politicians. What is needed instead is an honest and competent analysis of the present situation and the complex interdependencies that characterize it on every level of political action. Reflections on the nature of modern governance, its preconditions and its limits may help in this task.