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Article

Different reproduction codes as a cause of institutional discrimination against certain milieus of migrant children

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Abstract

Racism is often attributed to prejudice. Pedagogical approaches thus seek to tackle such prejudices or stereotypes. In contrast, the concept of institutional discrimination relies on the thesis that racism is not limited to prejudices and cannot therefore be overcome by concepts of interculturality and diversity. The objective is to show that the concept and its systems-theoretical and empirically substantiated further development by Gomolla and Radtke (2009), which has significantly influenced the discussion in Germany, does not take different modes of learning related to specific ways of life into consideration to a sufficient extent. To this end, the theory of reproduction codes, which is considered to offer a wider range of explanations than prominent habitus theories, but is as yet little known, are used to discuss an alternative interpretation of Gomolla and Radtke's (2009) empirical findings, also due to the fact that, in contrast to Luhmann's theory, it

develops a dialectical-materialistic concept of code. This then enables the development of perspectives with regard to a non-exclusionary community.

Keywords racism; prejudice; institutional discrimination; reproduction codes

This article is based on the thesis that racism is not limited to prejudices and cannot therefore be overcome by concepts of interculturality and diversity. In the context of this assumption, it critically examines the concept of institutional discrimination, especially its systems-theoretical and empirically substantiated further development by Gomolla and Radtke (2009), which has significantly influenced the discussion in Germany. The objective is to show that the concept does not take different modes of learning related to specific ways of life into consideration to a sufficient extent. To this end, the theory of reproduction codes, which is considered to offer a wider range of explanations than prominent habitus theories, but is as yet little known, are used to discuss an alternative interpretation of Gomolla and Radtke's (2009) empirical findings, also due to the fact that, in contrast to Luhmann's theory, it develops a dialectical-materialistic concept of code. This then enables the development of perspectives with regard to a non-exclusionary community.

Problems of pedagogical approaches to 'otherness'

Racism is often attributed to prejudice (see, for example, Winton, Singh and Kristen, 1998). Pedagogical approaches then seek to tackle such prejudices or stereotypes. In line with Marx's third 'thesis on Feuerbach', according to which 'the educator himself must be educated' (Marx, 1990, p. 533), a great deal of attention is thus paid during the training of professional educators and pedagogical staff to overcoming those prejudices – even their own. Concepts of intercultural pedagogy and diversity are more popular than ever. However, their attempts to understand 'foreign cultures' can all too easily turn into 'seeing things unreflectedly, through ready-made thought models', as Horkheimer and Adorno (1986, p. 227) criticise in their concept of 'ticket thinking' (May, 2007, pp. 44ff.). Not only the individual, but also culture is robbed of its subjectivity by these 'thought models' regarding the membership of an ethnicity or culture and is arrested in its development (May, 2005, p. 246). If the children of immigrants or the immigrants themselves are addressed as members of the culture of their country of origin, it is not only the assumption that this country has one uniform culture that proves to be problematic: what makes us think that they (still) regard themselves as members or to what extent were they even shaped by it in their socialisation?

In this respect, based on Spivak's (1985) differentiated concept of *othering*, it is possible to examine how, for example, children of immigrants who are addressed as members of a 'different culture' are turned into these 'others' and how a collective self-image of one's 'own culture' is simultaneously created. However, those who engage in this process of *othering* – also within pedagogical concepts of interculturality and diversity – are not aware of it. For, as Horkheimer and Adorno have already noted in the course of their critical analysis of ticket thinking, within this mindset the 'perceiver ... is no longer present in the process of perception' (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1986, p. 227). In the context of racism, this is referenced in particular in *Critical Whiteness Studies* (cf. Delgado and Stefancic, 1997; May, 2007, pp. 43ff.), which focus their attention specifically on those who engage in *othering*.

It is only possible to overcome the desubjectification and fixation of culture if those who find certain social and cultural manifestations of life or habits 'foreign' ask themselves what this has to do with themselves. For only by thematically relating that which is perceived as foreign to the limitations of one's own everyday cultural routines and by discovering new possibilities for action in that which is 'foreign' can productive impulses for both subjective and cultural further development be discovered and realised (cf. May, 2005, p. 248). Only in this way – and not by means of well-intentioned 'enlightenment' about 'foreign' cultures and their idiosyncrasies – can racist prejudices be overcome. Nor can the majority society's feelings that immigrants are 'alien' be countered by the fact that the latter try to adapt to their *dominant culture* (cf. Rommelspacher, 1998). The Jews in Germany were not protected from anti-Semitism and the concentration camps by adapting to the dominant 'German' culture.

This also clearly indicates that racism is not limited to prejudices and stereotypes. This is particularly well illustrated in the concept of institutional discrimination, which goes back to Carmichael and Hamilton's (1992) concept, in which they elaborated how the interests and attitudes of the 'white' majority

are inscribed in the institutions of American life. It was mainly the effects of this institutional discrimination that interested them. Only later did the causal mechanisms begin to be examined. The concept was further developed into a general model that sheds light on the causes of discrimination in the organisational activities of key social institutions. In this context, the educational sector is particularly significant for the children of immigrants. In order to counteract racism in educational contexts, it is not enough to overcome prejudices among professional educators and pedagogical staff, because this does not eliminate these *institutional* forms of *discrimination* which take place within and via the organisations of the educational system.

Reference was made above to the third 'thesis on Feuerbach', in which Marx (1990) emphasises this with regard to 'changed people ...the circumstances must be changed by people themselves' (p. 533). In terms of the 'circumstances' which accompany institutional *discrimination*, this is central insofar as a process is repeated in the corresponding forms of organization:

which can be seen as the basic pattern of all forms of discrimination with a discriminatory or exclusive effect: first, people are discriminated against/treated unjustly/excluded, then the reasons for the discrimination/unjust treatment/exclusion are sought among the victims and their traits, thereby ignoring and obscuring the motives of the perpetrators and the advantages/benefits they gain.

(Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 276)

Differentiation within the concept of institutional discrimination

In their further development of the concept of *institutional discrimination*, Feagin and Feagin (1986) introduced the distinction between *direct* and *indirect institutional discrimination*. As *direct institutional discrimination* they define both such practices which are entrenched in legal and/or administrative regulations as well as routine informal practices in the organisational culture. In the school context, these are, for example, formal decrees. Paradoxically, however, explicit policies that are actually designed to support migrant children – and which specifically differentiate between them and others in this respect – can also result in discriminatory side effects for them.

The concept of indirect institutional discrimination is then defined as the whole range of institutional mechanisms and membership conditions that disproportionately adversely affect or tend to exclude members of certain groups, such as ethnic minorities. These often result from the fact that the same rules are applied to all, which leads to different groups having fundamentally unequal chances of complying with them. Gomolla and Radtke, for example, were able to determine such *indirect institutional forms of discrimination* against children of immigrants with regard to school enrolment and the introduction of an admissions procedure for special needs schools in Germany, as well as in the transition from primary to secondary schools. They show how the regulations on which the relevant decisions are based, which 'are rooted in the pragmatic expectation of a class that is as homogeneous as possible, ... represent a structural discrimination against pupils for whom German is a second language and ... do not take into account the specific learning requirements and circumstances of children from foreign families of origin' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 281).

Schools are thus explicitly concerned 'not with nationality but with normality, i.e. deviations from the norms that are expected in addition to good academic performance: social integration, parental participation, a motivating home environment and above all: no additional deficits and needs that could cause difficulties' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 274). Nevertheless, migrant children are discriminated against in that:

(a) it is less likely that these children/pupils will be able to meet the generally applicable requirements for primary (and secondary) school membership. This discrimination is made possible (b) because most of the persons involved, both inside and outside the organization, consider special treatment of migrants plausible or even insist on it. Discrimination thus results as a result both of forms of equal treatment of migrant children on the basis of supposedly neutral performance and assessment criteria and of forms of unequal treatment, in each case based on a comparison with their fellow pupils.

(Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, pp. 274–5)

In this context, Gomolla and Radtke (2009) then refer to:

mechanisms of institutional discrimination against migrant children at school ...,

- when (selection) decisions made by the school organization, which are made according to its own logic and pragmatics, regularly have unequal effects on pupils, and
- when these differences, produced within the organization itself, are justified on the grounds of traits attributed to the disadvantaged group, and
- when these are a collective characteristic of 'national origin'/'culture'.

(p. 275)

In this context, however, they emphasise that the *institutionalisation* of discrimination against migrant children at school is not caused 'by its culturalizing content' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 277). Instead, they show how, in the justification of the decisions they examined, such aspects can be 'pragmatically interpreted and even twisted or ignored. What is, however, integral to the organization is the deterministic logic with which the ascribed traits/collective characteristics of those who have been disadvantaged are made responsible for the decision and all its consequences' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 277).

They are correspondingly critical of the fact that rarely is 'so much thought given to "culture", "cultural conflict", "cultural identity" etc. as is seen in schools (and their educational sciences) when it comes to justifying negative selection decisions and looking for the causes in migrant children and their families' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 288). They particularly criticise that schools thus attempt to eliminate the 'distinction between the operative level, on which the interests of the organization are dealt with, and ... the subsequent justifications which seek to render the decisions reached plausible' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 288), which they observed, 'by means of an undeclared change of reference' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 288). At the same time, 'causality and congruity are thereby implied where in fact context-related rationality, pragmatics and contingency govern the organization's actions' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 288).

In light of this, Gomolla and Radtke are rather sceptical about the likelihood that educational approaches such as interculturality and diversity – both in schools and in teacher training and continuing education – will be successful. For, according to their analysis, differences between children are 'primarily seen by professional educators and pedagogical staff as a classroom problem of language proficiency rather than as one of moral recognition of cultural difference' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 287).

Critical analysis and further development of the concept of institutional discrimination

However, Gomolla and Radtke's analysis outlined above does not go far enough. With regard to the native language of migrant children, for example, there are clear differences in the extent of *institutional discrimination* depending on whether this language then becomes relevant at school. In many places in Germany, English is already taught at primary school – and French in the German states bordering on France. Throughout Europe, these two languages are held in higher esteem than others due to the economic and political significance of the countries in which they are spoken.

But the main reason why Gomolla and Radtke's analysis is insufficient is that, due to its theoretical orientation following Luhmann's systems theory and its concept of organisation, it focuses on decisions made by professional educators and pedagogical staff with regard to the membership of migrant children in certain types of schools. Similarly, as with regard to the aspect of language, the problems that they identify the professional educators and pedagogical staff as anticipating in these decisions regarding the 'practical aspects of teaching children with heterogeneous learning requirements' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 288) are by no means the same for all migrant children. As outlined above, they themselves refer to the fact that these are 'not about nationality, but about normality, i.e. deviations from the norms' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 274), which they assume to be more likely to be found in certain 'milieus' (Gomolla and Radtke, 2009, p. 274).

The implicit inference is that the mode of learning in certain socio-cultural milieus does not correspond with the mode of teaching in school. Luhmann's systems theory is also interested in how certain systems reproduce themselves and what code they follow. But it has no concept of socio-cultural

milieus or classes. This can hardly be justified by the fact that Luhmann (1987) considers 'presentation to unusually high levels of abstraction' (p. 13) necessary for the development of his theory. He uses aeronautical imagery when he writes: 'Our flight must take place above the clouds, and we must reckon with a rather thick cloud cover. We must rely on our instruments' (Luhmann, 1987, p. 13).

These 'instruments' are, in terms of his theory of the codes according to which social systems reproduce themselves, of a binary logic. There is no doubt that this theory – to use a distinction made by Marx (1978b, p. 216) – is thus a matter of *logic*: precisely this binary logic. Computers may indeed function on this basis. Even if, following Horkheimer and Adorno (1986), it can be stated that, at least in the case of Luhmann and those who further his theory, 'thought ... is reified as an autonomous, automatic process, aping the machine it has itself produced, so that it can finally be replaced by the machine' (p. 42) – the *logic of the matter* according to which people (re)produce those 'circumstances' (Marx, 1990, p. 533) that Luhmann theorises as *social systems* are likely to be far more complex.

In this respect – and above all to explain the discrepancy between the logic of school teaching and the way children from certain immigrant socio-cultural milieus learn – I consider the theory of reproduction codes that goes back to Edward P. Thompson (1979) to be more helpful. This theory makes it possible to grasp the logic according to which – to remain in Luhmann's terminology – the educational system reproduces itself – or more precisely, according to which code it is reproduced – with all its differentiations, not only in schools but also on an institutional level. However, it furthermore explains according to which code socio-cultural milieus are reproduced as sociality by their members and how these simultaneously develop and learn within them as individuals. Kunstreich and May (1999) have tried to define this as the formation of the social, with is dialectically linked to social education. Not only as a play on words, we use the double meaning of the German term 'Bildung' as formatting or constructing on the one hand and a specific form of learning in the active appropriation of the world on the other.

It thus deals with a context similar to Bourdieu's (2010) currently much more prominent habitus theory. However, this theory seems to offer a far more functionalist, or even causal-genetic interpretation. The main difference to Bourdieu's habitus theory from the perspective of the analyses of reproduction codes is therefore that lifestyles that appear to be identical from the outside may very well be interpreted and organised by the actors themselves according to different forms of reasoning (cf. May, 2019). While Bourdieu's habitus theory emphasises the homology of the schemes of perception, judgement and action, the theory of reproduction codes is additionally particularly interested in how such conflicting codes interfere with one other through the predominance of different reproduction codes in various areas of reproduction and in the diverse agencies of socialisation. This is precisely why this theory is so significant for the mechanisms of institutional discrimination highlighted in this article. In the following, the reproduction codes differentiated according to ideal-typical characteristics in this theory will be briefly outlined and then applied to develop a reinterpretation of Gomolla and Radtke's findings.

On the theory of reproduction codes

One of the oldest social reproduction codes is that of *inheritance*. Thus, in feudal estate-based or caste-based societies, positions in the social structure were/are 'inherited'. As a reproduction code, however, 'inheritance' also refers, irrespective of this position in society, to the fact that even certain aspects of one's own personality are regarded as 'inherited' or as being pre-ordained. The reproduction code of *apprenticeship* then developed together with the manual mode of production and is still widespread today in the corresponding socio-cultural milieus. Accordingly, the first step is to complete a period of apprenticeship in order to be able to fulfil not only a certain professional but also other adult roles in society. The successful completion of this apprenticeship is then the prerequisite to take on the corresponding social position.

Many migrant children come from socio-cultural milieus that were still very strongly influenced by the experience of a subsistence economy in their country of origin. This is reproduced according to a code that develops between these two poles of *inheritance* and apprenticeship as *the patrimony of skill* (Cohen, 2016, pp. 179–249). Here, all the skills – which are not yet specialised but nonetheless span the entire scope of everyday life – are acquired outside formal educational institutions, quasi incidentally, in community (re)production practice.

In connection with the institutionalisation and professionalisation of an increasingly differentiated *education system* – as well as the introduction of new performance measurements along a scale of

age-specific competences as a result of standardisation processes in developmental psychology – the code of *career* then developed. Besides the institutionalised *educational system*, this reproduction code is particularly widespread in upwardly mobile milieus, which is clearly reflected in the other meaning of *career*. This also applies to certain groups of immigrants who have enjoyed higher formal education in urban contexts in their countries of origin and who are looking for career opportunities in the countries to which they emigrated which they consider to be unattainable in their countries of origin. This code has become much more widespread in society in connection with the increasing *institutionalisation of the life course* (Kohli, 2003), in which specific institutions for special age-specific needs have developed. Young adolescents are required to learn how to adjust and schedule the satisfaction of their needs in accordance with these institutions.

The diverse approaches of social work are also implicitly based on such reproduction codes. A wide range of approaches, which seek to address and compensate for alleged developmental deficits of adolescents in the context of early childhood education, child-care facilities in primary schools, school social work and so on, are in line with the code of *career*. As Gomolla and Radtke (2009) have shown, these are particularly frequently diagnosed among migrant children. A closer analysis of their findings, however, shows that these are children who, due to their parents' background shaped by subsistence economy, were still very much socialised in the code of the patrimony of skill.

However, the code of *career* is not followed by the entirety of the education system. Many progressive teaching approaches and alternative schools within the system of formal education, as well as emancipatory approaches in the context of social work, which attempt to support adolescents in the process of actualising their individuality, are geared towards a modern variant of the code of *vocation*. In traditional societies there were already people who saw themselves, as shamans for example, as having a *vocation* to a special purpose. These were then replaced by the classical professions. In the meantime, the code of *vocation* has expanded to become a paradigm of the life course as a development of the ideal, inner self and its search for true purpose. And it is precisely in this way that it also underlies such emancipatory approaches of social work. The same applies to certain migrant milieus, for whom precisely this aspect of self-actualisation is a central motive for migrating.

Reproduction codes, institutional discrimination and how to overcome IT

For migrant children who, due to their parents' background shaped by subsistence economy, were still very much socialised in the code of *the patrimony of skill*, *indirect forms of institutional discrimination* now arise because this code does not harmonise with the educational practices in schools and the *educational system*, which are based on the code of *career* – in emancipatory approaches of social work and out-of-school education also on that of *vocation* (May, 2019). This *indirect form of institutional discrimination* already begins with the fact that migrant children from such socio-cultural milieus have, in the course of their socialisation, not learned to adjust and schedule their needs to corresponding institutionalised offers, which are highly specialised in terms of their content. For in their milieus of origin, which experience their everyday life as preordained, not only due to the dominance of the reproduction code of *inheritance*, but also because of the lack of material resources and objective possibilities for shaping their lives, it is far more economical to use every opportunity that offers itself to satisfy their needs than to postpone them and adapt them to this *institutionalisation of the life course*.

In addition, *reliability* (Kunstreich, 2012) on the basis of a close emotional relationship is, for them, the prerequisite to be able to make use of support services of the *educational system* or social work for themselves in a way that offers them any practical value. The basis of this *reliability* is trust that is never attached to an institution, but always to specific individuals. It develops in relationships 'which do not demand 'tickets' and do not pursue any instrumental objectives' (Kunstreich, 2012, p. 90). In contrast, today the entitlement to many of these services, which are provided in a professionalised and businesslike and impersonal way, is bound to the maxim of the *commitment* of the reciprocal nature of 'rights and responsibilities' (Kunstreich, 2012, p. 90).

This rationale of *reliability* is embedded in the subsistence *production principle of the original household community*, which the parents of these children seek to also carry over into their current everyday life within the framework of the neoliberal, post-Fordist social order of the country to which they immigrated. In the history not only of European thinking, the home and the household represent

archetypes both of private welfare in intergenerational relationships and, beyond that, of the well-being of the community that is by no means reduced to economic facts (Negt, 2002, p. 314). In their historical reconstruction of the 'original household community (family alliance)', Negt and Kluge (1981) elaborated, along the elements of production, distribution, exchange and consumption differentiated by political economy, that there the category of production was thus not only related to tilling the soil and providing themselves with the consumer goods they needed, but also to 'children – sensory organs, community' (p. 977). Production and consumption were thus part of a whole in the *original household community* just as economic and social aspects were. A *formation of the social* occurred in such a way that exchange took place 'completely within the household community' (Negt and Kluge, 1981, p. 977) but was at the same time also largely limited to it.

Negt and Kluge (1981) interpret distribution as a 'fight against the outside, against what is not house' (p. 977), that is, also as a fight 'for the validity of this original mode of production' (p. 977). When they see the 'production principle' of the 'whole house' as being opposed to the 'abstraction principle, e.g. of war, robbery' (Negt and Kluge, 1981, p. 977), this is a painful experience that many of the families – and often also the children – have made in their countries of origin. For many of them, this was precisely the reason why they emigrated. However, as a *family alliance*, they try to re-establish the *production principle of the original household community* in the modern, thoroughly capitalised and bureaucratised countries to which they emigrated, at least within the framework of their communities. The *abstraction principle* against which they try to defend this *production principle* and the logic of *reliability* associated with it is then no longer that of 'war'. 'Robbery', too, also takes place more indirectly here via exploitation.

The immigrants – and above all their children – who were shaped by the code of the *patrimony of skill*, are instead confronted with this *abstraction principle*, primarily in the many overwhelming and anonymous forms of institutionalisation and the regulation of everyday aspects of life. They experience them as a 'fragmentation of the external community' (Negt and Kluge, 1981, p. 977), against which they seek to defend their subsistence economy *production principle of the original household community*. The main reason for this is that they force them to adjust their everyday lives, which are holistically organised in the *family alliance of the whole house* (Brunner, 1980), to these highly specialised *forms of institutionalisation of the life course*, which are societally organised based on the division of labor and only unified in abstract terms by means of certain formalisations.

Immigrants shaped by the code of the *patrimony of skill* feel an often initially diffuse sense of unease (May, 2016, p. 142) when confronted with the formulaic demands placed on them in these particularised areas of society to subordinate their motivations, manifestations of life, and practices of everyday life shaped by the *production principle of the whole house* to precisely these functionally significant structures of formalisation. The migrant children socialised in such a context of experience are first faced with such demands when they enter the *educational system*. In contrast to indigenous children, who as a rule have previously attended a kindergarten, this point is reached when they enter primary school or another form of preschool if – see the study by Gomolla and Radtke (2009) – they are diagnosed as not being ready for school. The findings of their study can be interpreted to the effect that this appears to primarily be the case if they were previously integrated into a highly specific community within the framework of the *family alliance*, from which they are now torn, as it were.

For them, then, what Parsons (1959) once identified as the most urgent socialisation requirement associated with entry into primary school applies: that they, too, must meet the expectations levelled at every schoolchild to an equal degree and which can, in theory, be met by all. Parsons still generally regarded family structures as handing down a value system which was typical for traditional societies. This may today appear questionable, just as his ideal typical distinction between the values of traditional and modern societies is problematic in view of the inconsistencies of modern capitalist social orders (cf. May, 2004, pp. 261ff.). Nevertheless, in doing so he implicitly referred to the conflict that arises not only for migrant children but for all adolescents socialised in the code of the *patrimony of skill* when they are then, at the latest when they enter primary school, confronted with the *code of career*.

Opportunities and risks of conflicting contradictory reproduction codes

This confrontation and the initially diffuse sense of unease, which is usually associated with it, can lead to violent reactions on the part of those affected – sometimes of an embittered, sometimes an aggressive

nature. This is then all too readily pathologised by the professionals or sometimes, in the case of adolescents, even criminalised. Much more often, however, this vague unease simply manifests itself in powerless withdrawal. Even rebellious reactions of this kind that are, as it were, a form of self-protection, articulated in a purely defensive way, would, however, according to Negt and Kluge (1981, p. 767), be read as indications of the *obstinacy* of the migrant children's sensory faculties, which were *expropriated* by means of the pedagogical efforts to adjust and assimilate them. Negt and Kluge (1981) point out that the 'motives removed from society' in the course of such an *expropriation* 'do not simply disappear from the overall economy of traits, but continue to act where they are most protected, in the subject' (p. 765).

This unease, which points to a sensory *obstinacy*, can, however, become more pronounced in older adolescents growing up in the context of the *patrimony of skill* when they compare their experiences with others who feel the same way – and these do not necessarily have to come from the same country of origin – and cause them to distance themselves, in line with their reasoning for doing so, from the demands made on them in the *institutionalisation of their life course*. Depending on the reasoning they assign to it, this dissociation is then even capable of securing the cohesive life context of such a group, which has collectively experienced an *expropriation* of its sensory faculties in the context of forced adaptation in this way – one which is relatively independent from the socially hegemonic purposes into which one has sought to socialise them in the *educational system* and other forms of organisation of the *institutionalisation of the life course* through the code of *career*.

This can only succeed, however, if the *form(s) of obstinacy* that creates the connection is integrated by the persons concerned into cohesive forms of practice in accordance with the *production principle of the original household community* and its logic of *reliability*, and thus also go beyond the *family alliance*. For in order for 'individuality ... to attain true generality', all 'social forms of human existence' (Negt and Kluge, 1981, p. 241) must – as Marx (1978a) emphasises – become 'the realization, objectification of his being' (p. 408). The community which begins to realise itself in this *formation of the social*, with is dialectically linked to *social education* (Kunstreich and May, 1999), is thus 'a community whose reality and scope are completely different from the *political community*' (Marx, 1978a, p. 408). It is '*life itself, physical and intellectual life, human morality, human activity, human enjoyment, human nature*' (Marx, 1978a, p. 408). For – as Marx (1978a) points out – '*human nature is the true community of man*' (p. 408). And accordingly, for him, 'even a partial reaction' against the 'wretched isolation from this nature ... is all the more infinite, as *man* is more infinite than *citizen*, and *human life* more infinite than *political life*' (Marx, 1978a, p. 408).

Particularly in the case of adolescents from migrant milieus, who were still shaped by a subsistence economy context of experience, there is a great danger that they will reduce their experience of 'being different' in the *institutionalisation of the life course* shaped by the *career* code to traits which they ascribe to themselves as an ethnic group as being quasi 'natural' on the basis of the code of *inheritance*. Their dissociation from these institutions, thus justified, can more or less correspond to the processes of *othering* that also occur there – but does not necessarily do so, which is often overlooked in this and other *labelling* approaches. The realisation of human community, in which the 'individuality' (Negt and Kluge, 1981, p. 242) of its respective *obstinacy* can 'attain true generality' (Negt and Kluge, 1981, p. 242), is therefore bound to fail, if only because this *obstinacy* has been pinned down and thus arrested due to having been turned into (self-)ethnisation. The corresponding cultural adjustment of their sensory faculties by the subjects themselves results in a renewed *expropriation* of the senses in question. The ability to experience, which, as *social education*, is necessary for the realisation of human community powered by such *obstinacy*, is also blocked by the fact that the *formation of the social*, in which *social education* takes place, thus simultaneously runs the risk of becoming a closed-off quasi-institution itself.

In order to counteract this, a pedagogical approach aimed at realising the subjectivity of human community (cf. May, 2017) must bring together the adolescents in such migrant milieus – in all the different situations in which they feel a sense of unease when confronted with the code of *career* in the highly specialised and differentiated *forms of institutionalisation of the life course* – with adolescents from other cultures who may also be shaped by other reproduction codes, but who feel a similar unease about the demands made on them within the context of the code of *career*. A process of what Nancy Fraser (2007) calls the *politics of need interpretation* must then be initiated, in the context of which the persons concerned are also able to ascertain the *obstinacy(ies)*, which were *expropriated* from them in the respective situations. In this form of *social education*, they can also overcome feelings of inadequacy in connection with the corresponding deficits ascribed to them in the code of *career*. As individuals exposed to this, the only option open to them would be to withdraw and endure it, which can – as

outlined above – also occur through a process of closing oneself off in isolated groups of the culture of origin if ethnicising processes of *othering* are internalised. By contrast, in such dialogically participatory processes of a *politics of need interpretation*, they may also develop an awareness of institutional discrimination, which they are then able to fight in such a way that their dissociation, which was thus justified, can then be perceived as political.

Because they are exposed to such *expropriation* or discrimination in the various forms of *institutionalisation of the life course* together with a wide range of adolescents – but also adults – from different backgrounds, they must be brought together with them in a correspondingly diverse variety of ways in such participatory processes of the *politics of need interpretation*. Only if the discrimination exclusively affects them as members of a very specific cultural group should they be organised as such, in order to then bring them together with others as quickly as possible with a view to reflecting more general experiences of racism and institutional discrimination. Otherwise, ethnicisation might be unintentionally encouraged.

Through the creation of correspondingly diverse connections between the people concerned – due to their wide range of experiences of expropriations or discrimination – this kind of a *formation of the social*, which is dialectically linked to *social education* in the form of an overarching *politics of need interpretation* that spans the various levels, can begin to develop an increasingly non-exclusionary community. Through this specific form of *social education*, the modern reproduction code of *vocation* becomes more relevant in this community, even for those who grew up in migrant milieus still strongly influenced by the code of *patrimony of skill*. Thus, it does not have to be introduced to them from the outside in a correspondingly pedagogical form by professionals. Contrary to the intention and given their experiences with the *educational system* and its professionals, they could all too easily perceive this as yet another *expropriation*.

Declarations and conflict of interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest with this work.

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