

Subjectivity and needs: Is Subjektwissenschaft a neo-Cartesian remake or a reasonable groundwork for a relational concept of human existence?

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Abstract

One of the recent reproaches to Critical Psychology interprets its concept of *Subjektwissenschaft* as a neo-Cartesian remake which continues to claim the primordial and dominating position of the self-conscious reflective individual actor: Klaus Holzkamp's *subject* seems to be a "spiritual being, separated from and trapped in a body and whose primordial autonomy is only limited by this bodily constitution and an opposing and refractory world." (See full text)

However, precise reading proves that Holzkamp's passionate insisting in the crucial role of the subject results from the aim of identifying a basic subject matter of psychological reasoning and reconstructing an appropriate category for it. This point of view allows (and an extensive reception advises) to consider Holzkamp's outline of subjectivity to be a rigorously conceptualized contribution to a relational view on human existence and I am going to legitimate this reading by the example of the concept of human needs.

Referring to crucial evidences of evolution theory, Holzkamp argues that human beings take any action based on a dialectic polarity of individual *and* social motivation and this polarity is due to human's phylogenetic heritage. Firstly, he states a 'consuming' type of impulsion, which he names *sensuous-vital* needs. They secure what it takes to sustain our mere organismic survival and, thus, are aligned *individually*. Secondly, Holzkamp supposes a 'providing' type, which he refers to as *productive* needs. They motivate to perform all activities causing preventive effects in the individual, social and cultural sphere. So, productive needs lead to what it takes to organize human life-activity collectively and to go *beyond* the individual horizon of life reproduction. In view of this

double determination humans cannot be seen as primordially self-centered egocentric monads but dedicated *by nature* to long for common good and welfare.

If a humane, enlightening, critical theory of human existence is missing a horizon like this it moves into troubles. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the 'economy of practice' for example, refers to human interests as defined by the necessity of accumulating social, cultural and economic 'capital' in order to barter it against means to satisfy any kind of personally felt needs. Although the concept is remarkably elucidating human motivations under capitalist circumstances, it implies that human activity generally traces back to *egocentric concerns* promoted by activities of *economic rationality*. Strictly following an approach like this we had to construe any considerate, collective, altruistic activity as an exchange of actions beyond individual advantage for some *individual remuneration*. We had to abandon the idea that care, work, love or belief can be treated as *genuine human needs* and to conceive them as *investments* expected to be profitable over time. So Bourdieu's concept of 'interests' the horizon of which ends up with an individual strive for 'capital' cannot be adequate to a social science that has to take a look beyond recent societal circumstances. And it is a concept of needs as elaborated by Critical Psychology that prevents from the traps of a reductive neoliberal anthropology and provides a necessary completion to the arguments of Bourdieu's 'economy'.

Keywords

subjectivity, human needs, interests, societal nature of humans

The reception of Critical Psychology (hereafter referred to as CP in short) is accompanied by certain misunderstandings. The architectural complexity and stylistic bulkiness of Klaus Holzkamp's theoretical outlines invite enthusiastic as well as critical truncations. Additionally, Holzkamp strictly refuses to accept any thinking taboos and this leads to disconcertment in different frontlines. To give some examples: Holzkamp's concept of the societal nature of human beings is, *inter alia*, based on ethological arguments by Konrad Lorenz and insists on the genetic endowments of societal acting, in view of which Holzkamp was accused of being a biologist. He also tries to connect his concept to the tradition of Leontjew and other Soviet psychologists, thus being suspected of being a dogmatic Marxist. Last but not least, he sharply criticizes every attempt to impugn the theoretical significance of the subject and, therefore, he became criticized for being obsessed with an obsolete bourgeois subject-philosophy.

Remarks of this kind could not dissuade Holzkamp from cutting his own path and giving an impressive example of what Hannah Arendt meant by her dictum of thinking without a banister. Yet in his opus magnum, *Grundlegung der Psychologie*, Holzkamp himself reports critics who state that "Critical Psychology actually was no psychology but rather sociology, a variant of Marxist

ideology, ... nothing more than a ‘lefty dressed’ version of traditional bourgeois psychology, ... a variant of cognitivism, ... a late revenge of geisteswissenschaftliche Psychologie” (Holzkamp, 1985, p. 24).¹ Unfortunately, Holzkamp departed from life too early, so that he was not able to comment on the reception of his work and to answer to critics by clarifying or modifying his positions elaborately enough.

In his subsequent voluminous *Lernen - Subjektwissenschaftliche Grundlegung*, Holzkamp illuminates the role of the mental activities of the individual human actor in developing capacities of acting in the world and contributing to its creation. However, the concept provides various substantial barriers and traps for appropriate understanding because crucial arguments that could prevent dualistic and substantialistic misunderstandings are not outlined explicitly, but mentioned only in references to the preceding *Grundlegung*. This may be seen as respectable, but in view of the voluminous corpus at stake (*Lernen* and *Grundlegung* together comprise about 1200 pages of high density content) has to be considered as an unrealistic strategy – at least one of providing a quick overview and preventing premature conclusions.

It may have been this fact that provoked manifold reproaches. To name a recent example: The German educational scientist Tobias Künkler explicitly takes the theoretical core of *Lernen* as a neo-Cartesian concept which continues to claim the primordial and dominating position of the (conscious decisions of the) individual actor, thereby ignoring basic insights in the situatedness, relational nature and implicitness of human acting, thinking and learning: Holzkamp’s subject seems to be a “spiritual being, separated from and trapped in a body and whose primordial autonomy is only limited by this bodily constitution and an opposing and refractory world” (2011, p. 274). I am going to show that, instead, CP presents a very sophisticated, dialectical and relational concept and I will also try to shed some light on the inestimable value of its pivotal findings by confronting it with another very famous and sophisticated concept: Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of capitals.

I. Subjectivity: Evolutionary heritage and first-person perspective

It is CP’s main goal to overcome mainstream psychology. According to Holzkamp’s diagnosis, ‘bourgeois’ sciences of human beings strive to make these beings strategically calculable, predictable or even manageable from an outside position and so they scientifically obscure the specific problems, ambitions and personal perspectives of humans onto the world. For this reason,

¹ Quotations of German sources: own translations.

mainstream psychology – characterized by Holzkamp as control science – strictly concentrates on surveying objective effects of interventions into feelings, thoughts and acts, systematically ignoring their authors as affected and concerned subjects and, thus, violating their human dignity. This attitude is exactly what the logic of strategic acting requires (regarding a social vis-à-vis some “competing opponent” as Jürgen Habermas puts it 1989, p. 277). Holzkamp calls it the scientific discourse of determination.

It is this critical intent (and no obsession with some ‘absolute autonomy’) that can be taken as Holzkamp’s crucial reason for rooting his theory in what he calls the perspective of the subject. Holzkamp leaves no doubt that scientific thought has to be performed by scientists in terms of methodologically acquired and revisable propositions and not by ‘normal people’ in terms of some ‘everyday discourse’. However, he considers the reconstruction of topics in the line of our commonly shared everyday experience and the comprehension of the world as it appears in our concrete being and acting in the world as a reliable scientific approach.

From this point of view, there is a humane alternative to the discourse of determination: the discourse of reasonability. In Holzkamp’s view phenomenological reasoning (and that means: doing science from a first person perspective) seems to be the only proper strategy to avoid the control-perspective. In *Sinnliche Erkenntnis*, published in 1973, Holzkamp already thoroughly introduces the argumentative strategy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* and in a voluminous essay from 1984, he explicitly claims that CP treats phenomenological conclusions about structures of human acting as a “conditio sine qua non”, because otherwise the specific quality of human subjectivity would be neglected (1984, p. 48).

In this very line, CP elaborates the interconnections between the individual life of human beings and the societal conditions in which it is embedded and by which it is supported as well as limited. CP makes these inter-connections explicit, neither insinuating an arbitrarily oriented, completely autonomously acting individual nor restricting this individual to a mere dependent variable quasi to a side-effect of the societal process. This position is not just a postulate but the result of an elaborate reconstruction based on a historical analysis in the broadest sense possible. In view of the evolutionary phase of hominization, Holzkamp recognizes a shift “from the merely evolutionary-phylogenetic to societal-historical development” (1991, p. 53) which implies many changing principles in the life process of the highest primates. In the first stage of the animal-human-transition, a “supraindividual, collective coordination of life production, in which single individuals assume partial functions subordinated to a general goal” (ibid.) emerges co-evolving with the “development of the use and

production of tools” (ibid.). The manifold details of this transition are reported in the initial chapters of *Grundlegung*, starting with the transition from preceding forms of life to animal life and culminating in human society.

One crucial implication – and, therefore, a part of coevolutionary developments as a whole – of the shift to supra-individual practices in connection with tools is the inversion of the relation between goals and means: From the moment on when the first tools are generated, the individual does not have to search for means matching a current goal anymore but instead has to identify goals for available means. “Whereas the instrument was earlier brought into play in the presence of a concrete, needed object, such as a stick that serves to reach a banana and is then discarded, a functional change in the instrument gradually comes about in which it is produced not just in immediate connection with actual activity, but for generalized purposes, such as obtaining fruit, and is therefore retained, improved and so forth” (Holzkamp, 1991, p. 54).

Undoubtedly, there will still be situations in which we search for means but what we actually find are components of the cultural inventory mankind has acquired, materially bearing all the goals that have led to its shape and that guide us in lines drawn by others in view of their interest in controlling and steering their life processes. And even if we are not satisfied by these means and begin to invent and develop new ones, we can only be successful in doing so on the basis of the accomplished cultural state of affairs.

This concept of the relation between the outcome of productive activities and the limited options of its use on the one hand indicates a clear distance to the idea of an ‘autonomous individuality’. On the other hand, the concept might also give the impression of being a closing down of human freedom, but its real effect is quite the opposite: It is the tools, instruments, equipment, later pictures, visible and auditory signs and, finally, language which allow for thinking selectively, making choices and practicing alternatives. The materialization of experience in the form of artifacts, icons and symbols, enables individual actors to terminate their immediate connection to the world and facilitate the realization of possibilities instead of blind obedience to coercive conditions.

Taking all these evolutionary features into account together, CP is talking about the societal nature of human beings and, thereby, softens the strict opposition between nature and culture which is usually assumed in traditional sciences. The new approach to humanization shows culture as a late result of the evolutionary development of nature and both, nature and culture, as fundamentally interwoven and mutually determining each other.

This first sketch of CP’s theoretical concept already gives an impression of the direction in which the interconnection between the subject and its societal environment is dialectically composed: definitely not as ‘primordial autonomy’

which is just ‘limited’ by the body and the material world. Instead, it is a relational autonomy, genetically fixed in origin and shaped by the circumstances, supplied and kept alive as well as limited and torn down by its conditions, emerging as a new feature but still resting upon all of its phylogenetic roots. However indeed, there is something ‘primordial’ about human subjectivity as CP construes it, and it lies in CP’s answer to the question, why human subjects actually do what the historical analysis shows to be done ‘necessarily’ – as soon as any strict coercion by conditions has become evolutionary transcended. Still here, again, CP draws a dialectical picture presenting a subjective and, at the same time, limited control over individual life processes, and this picture introduces the crucial function of human emotions.

Why that? Don’t humans always decide rationally in view of reasons? And doesn’t that imply being independent from pleasant or unpleasant feelings? As CP claims, it is definitely impossible to uncouple our behavior from our emotions felt in the here and now of a specific situation. Holzkamp calls it the “only material a priori of Individualwissenschaft [which is synonymous with Subjektwissenschaft – B.H.] (1983, p. 350) that as a human being I can stand “in contradiction to my objective life interests” but not “in contradiction to my human needs and interests I experience as my situation” (ibid.). According to this argument, we do not carry out actions we consider to generate later satisfaction, but actions that are triggered by our emotions here and now. And indeed: Isn’t it a fact that so many times we already know for sure that we are acting in a way that will make us end up badly and yet we do not change the way we act?

But how is it possible that we can feel a concern at the present moment that we can expect not to arise until the future? In CP the essential meaning of emotions becomes inaugurated in an evolutionary context: In this perspective it cannot be – initially and mainly – any cognitive notice of the necessities of acting in a certain manner (alone) upon which the actor acts, because this ‘manner’ can only be derived subsequently from the experienced effects of already performed activities. So, we have to presume another mediation between necessities and activities, another reliable trigger for action and we can find it in specific emotional impulses being provided by the genetic endowment that guarantee that humans match the implications of their survival: They do not only have a spontaneous impulse to eat, drink, care for a beneficial temperature and to reproduce themselves by copulation, but also to practice all the necessary activities of human life, such as supra-individual coordination activities, the use of tools and language and all the learning activities required to become capable of doing so in particular: “Humans are not satisfied when they merely reduce particular momentary need tensions, such as hunger or sex; rather, they achieve a fulfilled, satisfied state only when they can anticipate the possibility of

satisfaction of their needs within the prospect of a provisioned and secure individual existence, that is, when they can develop their action potency in the process of participation in control over societal life conditions” (Holzkamp, 1991, p. 60). How can we imagine the genesis of such an emotional apparatus as a feature of our genetic program?

II. Human needs between sensuous-vital and productive necessities

It is already in pre-human evolution that a double structure of emotions emerges. Animals are (and, lacking any rational reasoning, have to be) driven by emotions leading them to activities that are necessary for survival. They don't feed because they know that, otherwise, they would die from shortage of energy, but because they feel hunger and, likewise (and additionally), they don't hunt or collect food because they know they would get hungry later on, but because it brings them satisfaction doing so. The first type of emotions keeps animals alive in a direct way by making them receive energy from their environment and stabilizing their indispensable inner balances (feeding, drinking, keeping a beneficial temperature, sleeping etc.). Another set of emotions keeps them alive in an indirect way by making them expend energy in activities that have the effect of precaution (learning, grouping, hunting, collecting, building abodes and appliances etc.). It is crucial for survival that the second type of emotions (leading to 'generating' motivations/activities) is at least as strong as the first one (leading to 'consuming' motivations/activities). If animals became what we could call 'lazy hedonists', squandering what surrounds them arbitrarily and waiting for more to come without their active contribution, they would soon become extinct.

During the animal-human-transition phase emotions undergo a specific transformation, but there is no evolutionary need to quit the double structure that has had emerged previously. Rather, it is deepened, mainly by the necessity that the 'generating' part of motivations has to be completed by motivations leading to activities which are specific to the new form of human life-activity. The most important change that emerges in protohuman life reproduction activities leads from consuming natural stuff to producing means of subsistence. It is obvious that humans do not live in the land of milk and honey just skimming what grows around them but actively create the conditions of their life by rationally planned, collectively organized and technically mediated processes. But how could they become motivated to do what it takes to perform those activities (on a phylogenetic as well as on an ontogenetic level) before having experienced their

effects? There is only one convincing answer to this question: by feeling emotions that lead to the necessary activities.

Ute Osterkamp discusses the characteristics of human emotions in detail. She shows how the evolutionary development of the human species has to be reconstructed as the process of co-evolution of genetic programs that provide capabilities of mental and motor actions on the one hand, and emotions that impel the subjects to practice those on the other hand. Through this evolution, the permanent and cumulative expansion of species-specific activities from animal to human forms becomes secured and the typical structure of human needs established.

Firstly, there is the 'consuming' type of needs, labeled as sensuous-vital needs by CP, motivating for the same activities as it was the case with those performed by their subhuman ancestors: receiving digestible substances and water, the regulation of temperature, etc. The characteristic of their course is homeostatic, which means that they lead to the decline of tensions which emerged from cumulative changes of inner organismic relations or organism-environment-relations. They run "back into themselves" and "repeat themselves on the same level" (Osterkamp, 1982, p. 39). Sensuous-vital needs arise cyclically and their quality is repetitive, being once satisfied they dissolve but perpetually emerge again and proceed as they did before. They lead to what it takes to sustain our mere physical life-activity and, thus, are aligned individually.

Secondly, there is the 'providing' type of needs, which, according to the new species-specific activity, are referred to as productive needs by CP and motivate to perform all activities causing preventive effects. For human existence this means the following: The already highly differentiated features of the highest animal species become enhanced by the activities that are required for the new societal-cultural organization of the reproduction of life, such as the "conscious exploration and analysis of reality" and the "coping with problems in connection with participation in societal forms of reality control and the improvement of common life conditions" (Osterkamp, 1982, p. 42). So, productive needs lead to what it takes to organize our physical life-activity collectively and to go beyond an individual horizon.

The course of productive needs is characterized by continuity. They do not lead to the decline of their inherent tensions, their satisfaction does not cause an effect of saturation but might even strengthen their potential. So, their dynamics can be characterized as expansive. If we successfully communicate, learn, organize or act collectively, create or adopt science, arts, techniques or spirituality, we will be more and more motivated and increasingly absorbed emotionally by our activity. So, as a consequence, experiencing satisfaction will boost and not decline the need.

The outlined anchorage of the double structure of needs in the genetic endowment of humans does in no way imply genetically fixed needs. It is only the double structure that is unmodifiable, but it is an open structure, open to manifold varieties of situational circumstances, open to manifold variations of objects being connected with it. “Before its first satisfaction the need does not ‘know’ its object, the object still has to be detected”, as the Russian psychologist Alexej Leontjew puts it (1987, p. 181). The animal-human-transition phase is stretched over a long period of evolutionary development of homo sapiens, in which early cultural achievements function as a selective advantage. So, cultural achievements are continuously changing and replacing established features by new ones and, therefore, the needs provoking the individual's activities cannot remain unmodified and the double structure of emotionality has to become and keep open to changing references. Only the capability of connecting to any cultural evolution of social and artificial environments human history would create remains genetically fixed.

On the basis of this double structure of needs we can feel the consequences of our activities – and this means, emotionally evaluate – in the present. We are not free to uncouple from our emotions but, through symbolic means (language, pictures...), we are capable of imagining alternative scenarios including the alternative consequences they would bring about. So, our human freedom depends on the capability of imagining extensively, precisely and vividly, including a spontaneous emotional reaction to its results. Doing what will be best for us does not mean doing what we think it would be but what we feel to be according to our needs. By this we are able not only to find the best alternative but also to actually realize it.

The double emotional concept is also crucial for our understanding of social anthropology. If any human activity just went back to some egocentric motive, every altruistic, collective, considerate activity would have to be construed as an exchange: We only would get active beyond individual advantage in view of some individual remuneration and we would only ‘give’ (away from our personal consume) in exchange for an aspired ‘take’ (back into our personal consume). But can effort lead to nothing more than yield? If we accepted no motivation that transcends our self-centered ambitions as contoured by the term sensuous-vital needs, we had to abandon the idea that care, work, love or belief can be treated as genuine human needs. Instead, we would have to conceive them as investments expected to be profitable over time and any empiric intrinsic commitment would have to be theoretically unmasked as a myth. This is exactly what happens in Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the ‘economy of practice’. So, subsequently, I will take a critical look at this theory and demonstrate the serious theoretical impact

of CP's idea of the double structure of human needs by showing that it provides a missing link to arguments in the line of Bourdieu's 'economy'.

III. Can the ownership of capital be the horizon of human needs?

It is typical for the social fields Bourdieu investigates to have established some intrinsic ideal of contributing to human life and culture as a whole and their proponents are striving for truth, morality and authenticity. Yet, one of the main assumptions of Bourdieu's theoretical work is to consider it scientifically inappropriate to construe a social field in terms of its own self-description and to explain the activities of its actors as a result of the norms and values explicitly postulated. So, aspiring to a sustainable alternative, he tries to show that crucial aspects of the actors' practices can be traced back to particular interests that are covered by performing the internal normative discourse. He conceptualises these interests by the terms of social and cultural in addition to economic capital.

The point of this theoretical maneuver lies in achieving a system of universal categories by which very different individual, social and societal activities should become relatable to each other. Based on this intent, Bourdieu tries to establish a "general science of the economy of practice" (2005a, p. 51) of which the main core lies in the view that any "accumulated labour, either in form of material or in internalized, 'incorporated' form" (ibid., p. 49) constitutes some specific efficacy to a social actor which he generalizes as an economic means. Social capital (useful ties and affiliations), cultural capital (skills, knowledge, certificates, cultural objects) and economic capital (monetary and real property) are three forms it can take and they are increasable and convertible into each other. Their exchange rate is defined by the amount of effort that initiate them: "The universal basis of value, the quantity of all equivalences, is nothing else than the working time in the broadest sense of this term" (ibid., p. 71).

The primary source of cultural capital – which I am going to discuss here in greater detail – are educational contexts, especially as given by families and schools and it emerges through the incorporation of the capability to interact with cultural objects and actors. To acquire cultural capital thus means to learn, it "requires a process of internalization that costs time to the extent that is necessary for schooling and learning. This time has to be invested personally by the investor" (ibid., p. 55). Cultural capital, however, is not just a matter of conscious or even systematically planned acquirement, it is also realized by implicit forms of socialization: Any intellectual, verbal, aesthetical, corporal or moral challenge and stimulation experienced from early childhood onwards

contributes to the accumulation of cultural value that can become operative in any later capital exchange activities.

The overall bias of this argument may be surprising: Why does Bourdieu ground the criticism of capitalism to which all his lifelong work is dedicated on a generalized concept of human pursuit as of acquiring capital? Isn't it just one of the proto-religious beliefs of modern neoliberalism that every human being resembles a miniature company competing on an ubiquitous market, maximizing its private property and wellbeing, strictly following utilitarian motives and isn't it exactly this anthropological myth which radically undermines equity, solidarity and a life in freedom and dignity for all in our contemporary world?

Before trying to elucidate this curiosity I want to emphasize that there are two considerable merits the concept undoubtedly owns: Firstly, it goes beyond any naive, moralistic resistance against capitalism. It can help us to keep in mind that, under the conditions of today's hegemonic capitalism, we all are trained to follow the laws of market, to apply them to our everyday strategies and to act in view of our personal individual advantages. This may give the concept some realistic impact. Secondly, Bourdieu's approach also goes beyond the traditional forms of structuralist and functionalist theories that used to construe humans as, more or less, naturally adapting to given circumstances and following historically preset demands without being aware of doing so and without being able to map any alternatives. Bourdieu's actor, in contrast, follows his or her own interests, is willing to act intractably, generates alternatives and, therefore, is not fatefully dependent on passive acceptance of given social and societal settings. This gives the concept a certain dynamic impact.

In investigating a social field, Bourdieu is nothing less than ignorant about its innate discourse of norms and values. So, he discovers the fact that human actors deliberate different types of reasons. Cultural achievements, such as scientific findings, moral judgements, artistic creations, efforts of public services or accomplishments of religious communities, can, on the one hand, be motivated by vocation, by responsibility or by aspiring truth, morality and authenticity but, on the other hand, also by income, yield and increasing wealth that derives from bartering the products of activities for economic values. Bourdieu therefore describes social fields as referring to two poles of attraction: to an autonomous one, committed to intrinsic motives and an "intellectual order" that stands "in opposition to economic, political and religious power" (1974, p. 77), where the actors do not aim at economic success and to a heteronomous success, where this "success as such is a seal of quality" (2014, p. 238).

Up to this point, Bourdieu's concept seems to show a contradictory double determination of the actor's activities, and indeed, sometimes he talks about a "double awareness" (1998, p. 187), "two truths" (1998, p. 188), or a "double

habit" (ibid., p. 193). Still, at last the "double" solution seems to leave him unsatisfied and makes him undertake a significant turn by identifying an enigmatic process of "transformation" of the internally appreciated values into yield and wealth: In this view, it is just the pureness of the "intrinsic" quality that, in the long run, can transform itself into economic capital. Some sort of magic metamorphosis, a "symbolic alchemy" (1974, p. 92) realizes the transformation of non-economic into economic value.

The point of this conceptual shift of emphasis aims at the 'real' relation between field-specific and utilitarian reasoning: Investigating the Kabyle society, for instance, Bourdieu calls the intrinsic attitude of economic indifferentism a "self-deception" (1998, p. 165), "euphemism" (ibid., p. 168) and "structural hypocrisy" (ibid., p. 169). So, for the enlightened social scientist it is not just a (by whatsoever motivated) decision between two different principles anymore - e.g. if an artist produces valueless 'art' or profitable 'trash' - but a decision between two forms of one basic economic endeavor. So, this version of Bourdieu's concept culminates in the question if an actor is aware of the fact that he/she is acting as a participant of the market or he/she is deceiving him-/herself by an illusion of some moralistic ideology.

At first glance, Bourdieu's approach reminds of Karl Marx's *Capital*. In its first volume, Marx distinguishes between the use value and the exchange value of commodities and it is not only the use of the term 'capital' that bears a conspicuous resemblance to Bourdieu's distinction between intrinsic and economic forms of value: "A commodity is, first of all ... a thing that through its qualities satisfies human needs of whatever kind. ... A thing's usability makes it a use value. ... The exchange value initially appears as a quantitative relation, the proportion by which use values of a certain kind can be bartered for values of another kind" (Marx, 1867, p. 49ff). However, as this definition already reveals, it is impossible to exchange one with the other. Marx unmistakably states a total incompatibility of the two phenomena: "Being use values commodities are of different quality, being exchange values they can only be of different quantity and, therefore, do not contain an atom of use value" (ibid.). This implies that none of both is a misconception as well as none of them is the 'real truth'. Both represent a genuine feature which becomes apparent from a certain view on the commodity.

By drawing this strict distinction, Marx obtains an instrument for analyzing the intricate process of production and circulation of capital and commodities dialectically and of critically decoding the contradictory motivations of human behavior on the individual, social and societal level. We could ascribe the same potential to Bourdieu's concept of explaining the dynamics of a social field dialectically by two poles of contradictory attraction. However, his attempt to

finally unite both of the ‘poles’ under one common category represents a threat to this potential: If moral, artificial, educational or spiritual engagement was nothing more than some self-deceptive myth covering genuine economic motives, any bearing fundament of criticism of market-compliant anthropology could dissolve. Does Bourdieu fall victim to this risk? This question requires a very precise and thoughtful answer.

IV. Duality of motives or self-deception?

Bourdieu’s intensive work in different social fields leads him to more or less radical versions of the shift outlined above. This can be well studied by comparing two elaborated examples. Firstly, Bourdieu’s research on the production of art presents an extensive reconstruction of how the artistic field generates a system of norms that commits its production to an ideal of intrinsic value. In a voluminous study on French literature of the 19th century (2014), he deliberates on what the production of the artwork is about – from the standpoint of the immanent discourse of artistic pureness and quality. He reports meaning, structure and functions of the internal moral standards practiced by the community of artists in a precise manner. He shows how writers emancipate step by step from external obligations and how they work out the ideal of *l’art pour l’art* that only accepts the authority of internal ‘aesthetic’ criteria obligating artists to resist against “any other imperatives than those sedimented in the tradition of the respective artistic discipline”, as he puts it elsewhere (1987, p. 22). The artist promotes “the cult of a self-sufficient form, the enhancement of the esoteric and non-deducible quality of the creative act” and produces an artwork that has to be assessed “by the pureness of its artistic intention” (1974, p. 84).

Further, in spite of this analysis, Bourdieu detects the possibility of a transition of aesthetic value into economic value and marks its pivotal condition as the “interposed time interval” (2014, p. 238): It may take a long intermission until some return on investment will be realized but, finally, the intrinsic value turns into an economic one, whereby the “asceticism in the here and now” functions as a “precondition of salvation in the beyond” (ibid.). It is the interposed interval that “obscures the profit which promised to the most altruistic and disinterested investments” (ibid., p. 239). Bourdieu does not yet predetermine if the artist invests artistic quality in order to receive economic capital later on or if this is just some unintended consequence of the idea of artistic autonomy and quality. Anyway, it is an occurrence that does not just

happen arbitrarily and although it does not happen in every single case, Bourdieu uses the argument to unveil a secret law of societal existence.

In the version of Bourdieu's concept of the arts, however, the innate norms and values still can be understood as a serious and necessary view on the tasks of artistic writers. Bourdieu demonstrates this by working out the artistic idea taking over the discourse of art in a very detailed and sophisticated manner. In his reconstruction he leaves no doubt that he pays every intellectual respect to what he outlines as the historical self-discovery of the artistic field. So, the concept still reflects a serious contradiction between motives that are dedicated to the satisfaction of common human needs and motives that are dedicated to the personal accumulation of means of economic exchange and, thus, follows the 'double' argument.

Bourdieu's capital-theory also claims to shed light on the system of public education (see: 2004' Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1981; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1971, 2007) as well as to provide access to its empirical investigation, and here we come across a significantly different approach. Bourdieu's criticism of school and teachers is devastating. School is considered as nothing more but a means of indoctrination and allocation of cultural capital. To him, it seems obvious that school functions "as a big cognitive machine that reproduces preexistent social classifications by classifications that appear to be totally neutral" (2004, p. 72). Although Bourdieu appreciates that the educator's action is "performed in the illusion of singularity and in conviction of neutrality, as a matter of fact is objectively orchestrated and objectively subordinated to the social structures, because the categories of perception and evaluation they use, are the transformed product of the incorporation of those structure" (2004, p. 73). The contradictory 'double' determination which still kept some dialectic tension in the field of literature, has now turned into a mere instrumental determination decorated by some speech bubbles containing naive pedagogical avowals.

Unlike his approach to the norms and values of arts, Bourdieu ignores the innate discourse of education. He seems to be absolutely uninterested in an accurate reconstruction of what educational philosophers used to outline as the 'nomos' of the educational field. This is remarkable because the discussion about *Bildung* – not least by the arguments of Bourdieu's fellow citizen Jean-Jacques Rousseau – would have provided quite a substantial amount of fundamental self-reflection that – all in line with the discourse of French literature – lead to a system of norms that commits educational action to an ideal of intrinsic educational value, according to which education is obliged to resist against any economical, political or otherwise instrumental training that undermines the development of adolescent's free will, a comprehensive awareness of their self

and world and an overall sense of responsibility to the dignity of all nature and culture.

Bourdieu's crushing criticism of school does not leave any space for a serious 'double determination' of the encouragement of personal autonomy on the one hand and making young people exploitable for economical or political purposes on the other. In Bourdieu's view all their ambitions are directly adjusted to the aim of acquiring cultural capital as an abstract but universal means of exchange for other forms of assets, such being socialized to their subsequent life in the higher or lower classes, depending on the amount of capital they are able to gain by heritage and individual struggle. All the humane impact of educational theory is treated as a mere technique of covering up those instrumental arrangements.

Bourdieu is a scientist of accuracy and discipline and so he does not content himself with a rough outline of a prejudice. He examines the societal system of education in various voluminous studies in which he pursues the processes of educating, schooling and qualifying in detail. Yet, he never gives up the setup of his interpretation. To give an example: The "symbolic effect of imposition" (2004, p. 59) seems striking to him when the attitudes of teachers and pupils are preharmonized by cultural provenance, for instance "when a professor of philosophy, who brings all his social unconscious into his message, talking to bourgeois youngsters who are ready to identify with it, outlines the Platonic distinction between episteme and doxa or Heidegger's argument on the man and the alltägliche Gerede" (ibid.). But, can topics like these only be seen in the context of social selection and the appropriation of capital?

I consider it remarkable that, repeatedly, it occurs that Bourdieu implicitly documents the option of an intrinsic standard, by saying for instance: "Because, being dumbed down to its most simple expression for reasons of classroom communication", topics like Plato's and Heidegger's philosophy would be reduced "to the aristocratic confirmation of the thinker's distance to the 'ordinary' and to 'common sense' – the secret principle of professorial philosophy of philosophy and of the enthusiasm being aroused so easily in young people" (ibid.). Obviously an aspect of 'quality' comes up here: The simplest expression of Plato and Heidegger is definitely not what Plato and Heidegger is about. After all, studying philosophy in a non-simplified manner seems to be about more than mere bourgeois distinction and securing exchangeable capital.

And when it is "quite obvious that pure school education is not just fragmentary education or an excerpt of education but inferior education, because its components do not maintain the meaning they would maintain in an entire context" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2007, p. 31), then it is just as obvious that the pedagogical transmission of our cultural heritage is not only a transmission of

some currency, but also of knowledge, insight, enlightenment, of recognizing what is going on in the world. Unfortunately, the manifold similar implicit acknowledgements remain without theoretical consequences. Bourdieu is not willing to reconstruct educational theories that would make clear what 'inferior education' or an 'entire context' could be from the standpoint of a precise self-reflection of the educational field. What is the background to his indecisive approach to the contradictions of common and particular interests, of intrinsic and utilitarian motivation?

V. Long-term-profitability and subjective needs

The core problem to be solved is the obscure theoretical relation between innate normative discourses of social fields and the economic profitability of matching their claims. At first glance, they are just two distinguishable phenomena, but as the arguments above already show: quality (as approached by innate discourses or by the category of use value) and exchangeability (as approached by economic discourses or the category of exchange value) have something in common and this raises the question if there is a common category that allows for conceptualizing both of them in an integral theoretical concept. In Marx's view we deal with two 'sides' of one thing, two 'readings' of one case, two 'aspects' of one reality, a 'double' identity – both parts of which represent a specific context of being concerned, of reasoning, of acting. Can we construe one as the product of a transformation of the other, as Bourdieu finally suggests? I think I mentioned some serious reasons against this solution. Thereby I do not intend to refuse any categorial connection at all. There is, I think, also a comprehensive theoretical option.

If I am interested in the economic value of an object or my personal activity, I do not aim at the exchange value as such because there is only one reasonable use of it: to barter it for some further use value. To maximize this possibility, my attention of carrying out the barter will be aimed at receiving a maximum of exchange value, representing a maximum of some usability in the future. By this motivation, my position (and that of my vis-à-vis) becomes an individualized one: Both of us are not focused on a certain qualitative endeavor but only on a quantitative outcome and so we do not act as two persons being conjointly engaged in a concerted activity but we calculate in view of our own advantage and, therefore, follow opposing interests. Aiming at a maximum of quantitative output leads my perception to a position segregated from the position of the other(s). Our only commonality in this arrangement is our structural enmity.

A qualitative endeavor, instead, implies in every imaginable case the activation of an element of the repertoire of human efforts to master the challenges of life, the use of human culture and, therefore, be it more explicitly or more implicitly, a shared enterprise, even if individually approached and therefore always connects us with others. To give a simple example: If we like to dance we may invite somebody to join us and if he/she accepts we are going to perform some sensitive cooperation, exiting experience and esthetic expression. This is a paradigmatic case of intrinsic motivation, because we spontaneously aspire to follow some immanent criteria of moving and we will dance as long and intensive as we enjoy it. Dancing for joy means to share the intent of having fun, but also when we read a book, sitting alone for hours and thinking about its contents in solitary contemplation, we share our activity: with the author whom we are willing to follow (or to resist) and with the community that follows or resists (the arguments of which we have adopted and share) as well as the whole human civilization that receives enlightenment by reading and thinking about books.

So, it is the principle of the barter which fundamentally individualizes the position of interacting humans and which, in spontaneous view of activities, is ‘naturally’ integrated in collective practices of satisfying human needs. This is also the core reason why any innate discourse of social fields which addresses others as fellow-subjects being engaged in shared concerns on the basis of common intents and beliefs becomes obsolete by the discourse of profitability. The latter does not refer to needs as such nor does any cultural, social or spiritual service if produced as a commodity: “Use value in the calculation of the producer of commodities only plays a role in relation to the expectations of the buyer, which have to be considered. ... From the standpoint of exchange value, the process has finished and the purpose been realized in the act of selling” (Haug, 1971, p. 16)

Here we reach the point where we can go back to the double needs concept of CP as outlined above. We can assume a pivotal analogy between Bourdieu’s and CP’s concepts: Both Bourdieu and CP try to provide a conceptual framing of the relation of individual reasons and collective activity. Bourdieu’s solution is grounded on a precise analysis of the empirical forms of commitment to collective concerns but fails to discover a genuine emotional basis of it. So, his conclusion is that a variation and recombination of immediate individual concerns and egocentric motives are the basis of ‘strategic’ maneuvers of exchanging forms of potentials which, then, are subsumable under the concept of capital. CP’s solution, on the contrary, enables one to frame empirical collective ambitions by a range of human emotions that are intrinsically directed to them and, therefore, renders it unnecessary to refer to shared agendas as some

necessarily individually aligned effort having a – more or less – unintended effect of collective benefit and being covered by a hypocritical ideology.

Anyway, before we totally refuse Bourdieu's idea of long-term-profitability, we should take another very careful look on it. If we consider technical, cultural, moral, even spiritual human productivity being spent in homo sapiens' previous history, according to CP's argument, in the long run, all of them actually contribute to the overall satisfaction of individual human needs in one or another form. Planning, acting and learning with engagement and responsibility, communicating and interacting constructively, being creative and productive while ignoring sensuous-vital needs at that very moment will yet prevent from hunger, thirst, perishing by cold or heat or suffering from uncontrolled environmental effects in the future. 'Intrinsic' forms of being activated somehow always bear the potential for providing manifold 'instrumental' goods and effects. In view of this, we could at least follow Bourdieu by recognizing some overlapping function of both, intrinsic collective and utilitarian individual motivation: We are satisfied by 'generating' in cooperation with and for the sake of others as well as by 'consuming' individually – as long as both activities do not exclude each other.

At this point we can apply CP's phylogenetic argument (as mentioned above) to Bourdieu's concern: Productive needs did not emerge in evolution to serve some primordial 'moralistic' mission but as a means of leading individual organisms to activities which ensure their survival by acting precautionary collectively. However, productive needs lead to collective action only insofar as our personal sensuous-vital needs are perceivably enclosed and respected in its overall trace. Not every collective demand – as we all know from experience – has the potential to incite our commitment. A typical shared activity has to be experienced or considered as an activity that secures (also) our participation in the underlying concerns, developed goals, performed realization and generated effects of it.

Though it was no task of evolution to institute moral systems, CP's argument is now also crucial for a concept of morals. It provides the groundwork for a concept that neither imposes moral rules in a dogmatic nor dissolves them in a utilitarian manner. According to CP's concept of needs, altruistic action does not root in an abstract 'moral law' but in the impression of being concerned by a shared problem and being better off by sharing perception and solution of it. The result of this is that – participating in a mutual relationship of adjustment, assistance and solidarity – the one who gives is, at the same time, one who wins – not as some return of exchange value but as a qualitative surplus of shared human existence: Concepts like donation, hospitality, compassion, solidarity or love as well as intrinsically motivated work for high quality artistic literature or

enlightening education (as well as every other work) are no currency of investment but original sources of happiness about situational conditions that are not just compensating pain and misery but dedicated to a concept and reality of human welfare, security and dignity from which pain and misery are generally banned. So, the logic of moral action transcends the logic of an insurance where all individual contributions are calculated as collected resources for compensating fatal deficits that might occur to partaking contributors. The emotional disposition of an altruistic perspective does not motivate by the idea of getting benefits back but makes us celebrate the common certainty of having established a civilization beyond pain and misery and makes us share the joy about this cultural acquirement of humanity.

Beside this qualitative struggle of creating human life conditions collectively there is, of course, a struggle for achieving means of economic exchange by which the societal access to utility values can be organized and regulated and this also contains a struggle for cultural and social goods. So, there can be no doubt that cultural capital and social capital (in addition to economic capital) actually exist and permanently become distributed and interchanged. Many of the widespread analyses of Bourdieu and his staff bear witness to the pivotal advantage of orientation being provided by a theory of capital and its various forms. However, it confuses more than it elucidates human behavior to say that cultural or social capital is to be achieved by transformation of the outcome of intrinsically motivated, shared efforts. The logic of economy has to be traced back to the solitary, self-centered rationale of a very specific form of human acting and – quite contrary to all the neoliberal mantras we are exposed to all day long – cannot be taken as its common principle.

So, also in view of CP's concept of needs, we can appreciate some crucial truth in Bourdieu's assumption of an innate connection between individual and collective concerns. However, in view of all the arguments spread above, I propose that it would be a less contradictory solution to talk about personal contributions to the collective organization of human existence implying precaution for individual needs as one form of human motivation and personal accumulation of cultural or social capital which implies some later exchange for economic means as another one. Human endeavor, to turn Marx's words around, does not contain an atom of exchange value and, therefore, is absolutely unexchangeable against any economic goods; the horizon of its 'profitability' is commons not capital. The genuine target of all productive, creative and moral human struggle is the desire for a shared world which secures a life in welfare, security and dignity.

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