

Politics, Bildung and Social Justice

EDUCATIONAL FUTURES
RETHINKING THEORY AND PRACTICE
Volume 4

Series Editors

Michael A. Peters

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

J. Freeman-Moir

University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Editorial Board

Michael Apple, *University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA*

Miriam David, *Department of Education, Keele University, UK*

Cushla Kapitzke, *The University of Queensland, Australia*

Elizabeth Kelly, *DePaul University, USA*

Simon Marginson, *Monash University, Australia*

Mark Olssen, *University of Surrey, UK*

Fazal Rizvi, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA*

Susan Robertson, *University of Bristol, UK*

Linda Smith, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*

Arun Kumar Tripathi, *Dresden University of Technology, Germany*

Scope

This series maps the emergent field of educational futures. It will commission books on the futures of education in relation to the question of globalisation and knowledge economy. It seeks authors who can demonstrate their understanding of discourses of the knowledge and learning economies. It aspires to build a consistent approach to educational futures in terms of traditional methods, including scenario planning and foresight, as well as imaginative narratives, and it will examine examples of futures research in education, pedagogical experiments, new utopian thinking, and educational policy futures with a strong accent on actual policies and examples.

Politics, Bildung and Social Justice

Perspectives for a Democratic Society

By

Heinz Sünker
Wuppertal University, Germany



SENSE PUBLISHERS
ROTTERDAM / TAIPEI

A C.I.P. record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 90-8790-019-8 (paperback)

ISBN 90-8790-020-1 (hardback)

Published by: Sense Publishers,
P.O. Box 21858, 3001 AW Rotterdam, The Netherlands
<http://www.sensepublishers.com>

Printed on acid-free paper

All rights reserved © 2006 Sense Publishers

No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the Publisher, with the exception of any material supplied specifically for the purpose of being entered and executed on a computer system, for exclusive use by the purchaser of the work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Chapter 1. From Picht to Pisa: Bildung and Social Inequality	1
Chapter 2. Critical Bildung Theory – Beyond the Market and Power	13
Chapter 3. Social Theory: The Theory of Everyday Life and Subject Constitution	25
Chapter 4. Pluralism and the Utopia of Bildung	35
Chapter 5. Pedagogy and Politics: Heydorn’s “Survival through Bildung” and Its Challenge to Contemporary Theories of Bildung	45
Chapter 6. Bildung and Enlightenment, or: Bildung Theory Contra Postmodernism?	55
Chapter 7. Heinz-Joachim Heydorn – Bildung Theory as Critical Social Theory	69
Chapter 8. Work, Technology and Bildung	85
Chapter 9. Political Culture and Institutionalised Bildung in Germany: On the Coercive Form of State Schooling in Historical Perspective	95
Chapter 10. Democratic Bildung – Educating for Democracy	105
References	117

PREFACE

Bildung has no equivalent concept in English nor can it be easily translated in one word. Yet the term, perhaps more than any other provides a point of contact with Heinz Sünker's important work *Politics, Bildung and Social Justice: Perspectives for a democratic society* and one that requires a little intellectual work by English readers. It is a concept that recently received some attention in the English-speaking world of educational philosophy. Walter Bauer edited a special issue of *Educational Philosophy and Theory* in 2003 (Vol. 35 Issue 2) with contributions from a variety of authors dealing with German traditions in this field. As I remarked in that issue 'If there is one term that has come to define the German Enlightenment in its approach to education and philosophy, it is *Bildung*, a term for which there is no satisfactory English substitute.' I also noted that Bauer indicates that the word marries the ancient idea of *self-cultivation* with aspects of Christian theology to suggest the personal formation and transformation of self at the very heart of the culture of humanism and German idealism. The idea of *Bildung* has gone through two tracks. One track is the various interpretations at the hands of Dilthey, Gadamer and others, and in its various guises has exerted a strong influence on the Germanic pedagogical tradition. The concept of *Bildung*, along with *Kultur* and *Geist*, has defined discussions of 'culture' in Germany and contributed greatly to certain influential understandings of individualism. Yet anyone familiar with Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism* could not approach *Bildung* in the same ways as, say, Master Eckhart, Dilthey. Yet within this track and tradition Sünker would argue that there is an early commodification of *Bildung* because it is mainly used in hegemonic struggles by ruling powers to show social differences (later on called by Bourdieu 'la distinction' and analyzed within Anglo-Saxon approaches in the field of sociology and politics of education) The other more radical track – and the one that Sünker is dealing with and is himself embedded in – starts with Humboldt, Schiller, Marx, Adorno, Horkheimer and Heydorn. Within this tradition *Bildung* is strongly mediated with the idea of l'uomo universale, universality in society, emancipation and cultural revolution, i.e. *Bildung* as a means of liberation.

The influence of the term, along with all its cultural baggage, on the English-speaking world has yet to be fully studied in all its philosophical, pedagogical and literary dimensions. As Bauer writes:

The pedagogic reception of the idea of *Bildung* started in the middle of the eighteenth century. Since then, *Bildung* has been a key term in the German-speaking

PREFACE

pedagogic literature. The idea of a human cultivation of the soul (*cultura animi*), found in ancient philosophy, and the concept of imago-dei, of the godlikeness of man, found in Christian theology and mysticism, were adapted and reformulated into terms compatible with enlightenment philosophy . . . The specific content of the term referred increasingly to the inner cultivation of the self which is both a 'formative' process and a 'trans-formative' occurrence.

The term was at its peak in the following phase of humanism and German idealism. Bildung of enlightened 'man' aimed at a free and harmonious unfolding of 'his' potential and powers. In contrast to utilitarian ideas of the early Enlightenment era (within philanthropism), the functionalist reduction of Bildung to what is of use to society was rejected. Rousseau's question if education should aim at forming humans or citizens was answered by humanists in favour of 'man'. This was in accordance with the intention to emphasise man's self-dignity and the right of self-determination. With the realisation of the contingency of dominant social conditions, their imposed pressures and limits, an awareness of the necessity of a critique of these conditions and their modification ensued . . . Bildung gained a decidedly non-affirmative quality.

Especially in Herder's and Hegel's inclusion of the notion of Bildung into the philosophy of history, the ideas of self-determination and the development of individual abilities were aimed at a concept of Bildung that would unite the cultivation of the 'single, individual' human being and that of the 'universal' individual. This claim, to think 'the humanness of humans in front of a horizon of one humanity' epitomises the 'pathos of this classical term of Bildung'. (Peukert 1998, p. 19)

As Bauer goes on to remark the term *Bildung* became *the* concept for human self-development and self-fulfilment and found its literary expression in the genre of the German *Bildungsroman*, dating from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and incorporating Herman Hesse *The Glass Bead Game*. *Bildungsroman* is a distinctive tradition in the history of German letters that distinguishes a narrative of an individual's growth and development. Indeed, it is a novel that traces the spiritual and moral development and growth of the protagonist from childhood to maturity, normally ending with an assessment by the protagonist of himself/herself and his/her new place in society.

What is perhaps most important is the way in which scholars in the field of education have worked to reinterpret *Bildung* and keep it alive so that it might be considered as a creative and emergent process of transformation or alternatively rejected and overcome, or even perhaps restyled in its understanding within the new virtual territory of the information technologies to talk of the future of *Bildung* in the 'knowledge society'. The debate on *Bildung* is highly significant at a time when notions of subjectivity, identity and the philosophy of the subject have come under intense scrutiny, and humanism as an educational project has been forced to concede its ideological character. Sometimes it encompasses similar genres: the *Entwicklungsroman*, a story of general growth rather than self-culture;

PREFACE

the *Erziehungsroman*, which focuses on training and formal education; and the *Künstlerroman*, about the development of an artist.

The emphasis on ‘maturity’ is a useful one from which to examine Heniz Sünker’s excellent contribution to the tradition of democratic education with its narrative of the ascendancy of neoliberalism as a political and economic doctrine and a consequent decline of the public sphere and civil society. For Sünker the concept of *Bildung* stands under new imperatives and descriptions as the requirement to reform the concept of democracy in line with core elements of the concept including autonomy and self-determination. Let’s call this Sünker’s western marxist reading of *Bildung* associated with the need to protect the public democratically interested and engaged tradition in education from the ravages of privatization and given substance through an account that draws on Adorno’s “Education after Auschwitz”.

What is compelling about Sünker’s account is his careful scholarship that reveals the absolute centrality of education for democracy at the heart of social justice in a democratic society. Heinz Sünker provides a clear and strongly argumentative account of *Politics, Bildung and Social Justice* that is ripe for our times.

Michael A. Peters
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

CHAPTER 1

FROM PICT TO PISA: BILDUNG AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY

*The fact that children's school attendance is still the main dividing factor in Germany's social classes indicates an unchanged challenge for Bildung reforms.
(von Friedeburg 1994: 21)*

I

In our country in 1964, after the successful reconstruction of capitalism in West Germany, a debate about the necessity for Bildung reforms and a new Bildung policy began, triggered by Georg Picht's outcry about the "German Bildung catastrophe". He had declared an "Bildung emergency" associated with the "Sputnik shock" and, with that, a presumed "technological gap" linked to the theory about the lack of use of "talent reserves". For Picht, in the centre was the idea of a relationship between national Bildung standards, that is to say, of the qualification standards of the workforce, to economic competitiveness and he depicted a scene according to which "the average Bildung standard and, for a long time, the average qualification achievement of the majority of the population will be below the average of the countries against which we compete economically and politically" (Picht 1964: 24., cf. 66; Cole: 1998). At the same time (and this is mostly skimmed over when Picht's views are received) even back then he drew out as a central theme under the heading "school politics: the social politics of today" (1964: 30 f.) "the injustices connected with social selection through schools" (1964: 32) particularly as a result of the German school system and the accompanying body of authorization.

With this last idea of Picht's one is able to produce a democratically theoretical as well as democratically practical orientated transition to the approach that R. Dahrendorf brought into open discussion only a short time later under the title "Bildung is a civil right" (1966) in the year 1965. He was essentially concerned with understanding Bildung policy as a means "to make the participation in social life at all possible for people" (1966: 25 cf. 71), by strongly opposing an interpretation of civil rights in purely "formal" terms (1966: 27). Thereupon the goal to plan an "active Bildung policy" was set; this was under the motto "more Bildung for more people" (1966: 28).

CHAPTER 1

What is portrayed here, according to von Friedeburg's analysis (1994; cf. 1994a), as an "alliance between the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the modernizers", and which conveys economy and the idea of humanity, did indeed suffer from the very beginning from the contradiction, or at least from the tense relation, between capitalistic rationality (and, with that, economic misuse) on the one hand and the idea of Bildung as a civil or human right on the other. Even if this alliance between philosophers of the Enlightenment and modernizers is very soon broken because the common interest in demythologizing the concept of talent was not enough, as happened in the report of the German Bildung council "ability and learning" (Roth, 1969), this fundamental idea for such an alliance, namely that Bildung represents a deciding factor in many ways for individual as well as social purposes, remains correct. At the same time this leads to the question, which is placed under the relation between Bildung, Bildung policy and social justice, of how it could be prevented in the Federal Republic of Germany up until now that the unbroken continuity of social injustice in the area of Bildung in a society with democratic demands, in which in my mind questions of fundamental rights also enter (cf. Sünker 1996a), has been able to enforce itself almost without contradiction.

An answer to this question, which is based on ideology critique and is socially analytical, can be found with the most important Bildung sociologist of the past century: P. Bourdieu, even if he formulates the deciding result of his Bildung research in varying ways but also identical to the *leitmotif*: "I still believe that the Bildung system contributes to conservation (in social terms, H.S.). I insist on 'contributes to', I say 'contributes to conservation'. It is one of the mechanisms by which social structures are reproduced. There are others: there is the system of succession, there is the economic system, logic, which, according to the old Marxist formula, causes 'capital' to go to 'capital'. But in modern societies the Bildung system contributes more than ever before. An important part of what is passed on through the generations, an important part of the transference of power and privileges happens through the mediation of the school system, which connects other means of transference with each other and especially those which take effect within the family. The family is a very important transference entity that replaces the school system by ratifying the family interposition. The school system will say: 'this child is mathematically gifted' without seeing the five mathematicians in its family tree. Or that it is not gifted in Brazilian or French without seeing that it comes from an immigrant background. So the school system contributes to ratifying, sanctifying and transforming the cultural inheritance, that comes from the family, as scholastic merit" (Bourdieu 2001b: 175; cf. 14 f.; 1973 93).¹

¹In this context it is interesting that 50 years before Bourdieu, who emphasizes the necessity to bring sociology and psychoanalysis together (2001: 212 f.), Siegfried Bernfeld said in his analysis of the relation between the social system and the Bildung system (mediating Marxism and psychoanalysis) and of the importance of the latter for maintaining the existing relations: "The children (of the poor, H.S.) must learn to love the middle-class. And this lesson must be so long-lasting and such a success that an entire life spent in poverty and slavery would not be enough to extinguish this love... they should strive for more but they should like doing so ..." (1967: 97)

Regarding the debate about the social reproduction process and analytical approaches see the extremely instructive thoughts of Lefebvre (1974), Connell (1983) and Giroux (1983).

What Bourdieu is saying here about the importance of the Bildung system in the context of structuring and legitimising social relationships, that are based on inequality and injustice, as well as about the role of familial resources, accentuates essential reference points for the discussion about the German PISA study; at the same time, for those who know the ‘old’ debate, it is obvious that it is essentially about reviving what is already known. In addition the authors refer to Bourdieu’s stance in conceptualisation and discussion and use his categories of “social” and “cultural capital” (2001: 32, 501), without sharing or taking up his radical, to the point evaluations that are based on the class structures of middle-class capitalist social formations, which marks the deciding difference to crucial Bildung research. Instead of following this radical approach the authors try amazingly hard to escape the consequences of their own data and to avoid their interpretations; they qualify, empirically backed up, what, according to Bourdieu, is to be portrayed as reproduction of social inequality in a class society² and which, in addition, does not represent any new results as far as the level of knowledge goes.³

In this way they confirm, for one, that when observing the reading competence, the level and social gradients, Germany belongs to the countries “in which the 15 year olds reach an under average level of competence and in which, at the same time, the closest linking of social background and competence acquisition is able to be seen” (2001: 402; cf. 502; 370; 351 f.; 32); but, on the other hand, they say that one must “not necessarily interpret something as a rough theory of the active discrimination of the socially weak” (2001: 352) or “not necessarily” speak of “conscious discrimination of children from lower social classes” (2001: 353). That corresponds to talk of ‘family background’, with which the reality of a class structure tends to gradually disappear and whose consequences are lost to the awareness of social mediation mechanisms.

Although adjusting to the OECD concept, whose acceptance (cf. Klausenitzer 2002)⁴ makes a priority of the human asset approach clear of what is to be destroyed in a way crucial to ideology and to be analytically taken into account, undoubtedly relevant and interesting reflections to Bildung practice and Bildung policy form a framework for the study: the emphasis is placed on the connection

² Regarding the class-structured social reality in this country see Vester et al. (2001); Widersprüche (1997); regarding international contexts see Marschall et al. (1997); Wright (1997).

³ Regarding the paths of development of this study and its results cf. Hess et al. (1966); Rolf (1967); Széll (1972); Weber (1973); Handl (1985); Kolbe (1990); Böttcher (1991); Köhler (1992); Blossfeld (1993); Sünder et al. (1994); Rodax/Rodax (1996); Hansen/Pfeiffer (1998); this context also includes the “famous” issue 54 of the “Argument” (1969) with the heading “from middle-class Bildung to the working elite”, where, among other things, contributions from Heydorn and Koneffke are found. “Even” Beck maintains in his “Risk Society” (1986: 246): “In the case of secondary school one can recognize that ‘Bildung’ – the classic characteristic for acquirable status – can be turned back into a practically ascribed characteristic: Secondary school spreads the chances of failure and therefore, as an Bildung institution, is threatening to become a ghetto wall behind which the lower status groups are assigned to constant unemployment (or care, social aid). In this sense the imposed Bildung society also produces a new type of paradoxical ‘virtual illiteracy’ of the lowest Bildung qualifications (secondary and special schools)”.

⁴ In this context it is interesting to note that the ‘old’ study by Becker/Jungblut (1972) seems to be more current than ever in its results of the Bildung economy and quality planning in control processes that are subject to the capital utilization movement.

CHAPTER 1

between “basic competence and way of life”, which is seen to be necessary “for active participation in social life” (29); up until showing the life historical consequences of Bildung in ‘early years’, or, the importance of a previously acquired level of Bildung (31). This all ends with the crucial sentence: “Cultural engagement and cultural development, value orientation and political participation co-vary systematically with the achieved level of Bildung over the entire life span” (32).⁵ In plain language: those who have the opportunity for Bildung taken away from them also have taken away from them, when there is a lack of ‘class conscience’, quality of life (from culture to political conscience/interest); this then has consequences for life circumstances and the chances for self realisation. As can be read in the PISA study, Bourdieu has accentuated this mediated connection between personal Bildung opportunities and political Bildung as a problem of participation and democratising before and even more sharply by confirming: “In order to adequately explain the connection between Bildung assets and the tendency to answer political questions, it is not enough to resort to the ability to understand, to reproduce or even to produce political discourse, which is guaranteed by academic titles; it is much more necessary to have the feeling, be it socially scorned or supported, of being entitled to concern oneself with politics; to be empowered to argue for the sake of politics” (1984: 639; see also 686 f., 716 f.; cf. Bourdieu 2000: 89).

In the foreground of the PISA results, in which to a large degree a lack of analytical competence is found in school students as far as reading comprehension and mathematical/scientific competency are concerned, we are presented with at least two essential problems for an Bildung policy that should be taken seriously as a social policy:

- a) What are the consequences of the insight into the reproduction of social inequality with help of the Bildung system (still essentially the “three tiered system”);
- b) What will be the consequences for the future of democracy, particularly for the ‘question of participation’.

II

With this a pressing question for the new millennium is asked, in light of the catastrophic history of the short 20th century (Hobsbawm 1995), particularly in Germany, of how social and political paths of development centred in a participatory designed democratising of as many societies in the world as possible can be supported or advanced and of which Bildung as well as school models are suited to this.

⁵ Regarding the elite reproduction one may say here that “the acquisition of high academic titles indeed causes a social pre-selection for leading positions among the candidates, but the final selection is determined by factors that are directly tied to the social background of the candidates. The dominance of young people from upper classes in the higher levels of leadership in the German economy is accordingly not only a result of the unequally shared Bildung opportunities, rather to a great percentage it is the direct consequence of social background” (Hartmann/Kopp 2001).

In the context of the reproduction of under-privileging the question of ‘migrant children’ could be treated separately once again; above all with reference to the social political consequences; see the ‘underclass’ debate in the USA (Katz 1993).

The PISA study refers to dimensions of an Bildung policy that was neglected in the 1980s and 1990s and whose effects are still present. This worsened the social inequality once again because the “access” to and the participation in society work much more powerfully through Bildung than they used to (cf. for France: Bourdieu et al. 1981: 24, 44). With the approach of seeing Bildung as a question of social distribution (PISA 2001: 323) or recognising the social political quality of Bildung and Bildung politics, the question of how to perceive this distribution as a connection to individual Bildung and the democratising of society is still valid as a response to the PISA authors, even though questions regarding social structure and school reforms are thematically centralised (cf. von Friedeburg 1994; Heid 1988).

The ideologically orientated talk of “equal opportunities” or, which is even more problematic for social analysis, “fair opportunities” more or less consciously conceals these contexts: even if the analysis of social structures is replaced by individual attributes; attitudes towards suspicion etc. The deciding factor is that, particularly in the area of Bildung, hiding the class specific reproduction function behind “the cloak of neutrality” (Bourdieu 1973: 93), there intervenes a socially mediated mechanism that guides this process and is inherent in the middle-class capitalistic system from the very beginning: It concerns the ideology that A. Muschg deciphers in the literature of the most important representative of middle-class realism, Gottfried Keller, because it is clearly found there (Muschg 1977: 296 onwards), according to which the world is open to the competent, so that they may find their fortune in it. This is what is promised by “the liberal credo that puts open competition in the place of God’s judgement and the choice of mercy, and thus, in practice, has made human value dependant on economic proof. If this good fortune does not eventuate, the outcast is no longer able to look for the cause externally. The more profoundly he makes the economic-moral assumption his own, all the more profoundly his misfortune becomes a question of personal fault” (Muschg 1977: 153 cf. Bourdieu 2001b: 20 f.).

From this angle, and, with that, from that of a hegemonic-based assurance of loyalty, the schools in this country “function” perfectly, as those involved and betrayed attribute their failure to themselves – reports are after all supposed to be a report of individual ability for achievement and, casting aside willingness, self-stigmatising processes often extend these attributives. The outcry is not only aimed at the permanent damage of fundamental rights, rather at the lack of competitiveness of the national economy in what is supposed to be seen today as a “knowledgeable society” (cf. Sünker, 2001). This is a continuity of the talk about a “technological gap”, although in a new form.

With this background it is valid to emphasise the reference to Bildung as political in its overall individual as well as social relevance: the understanding that Bildung politics is social politics falls in the same group as the understanding that a democratic society requires citizens who are educated and, with that, capable of acting and intervening in political matters, so that they consider politics, that is to say, the organisation of relationships and public life, to be their own concern.

This perspective includes a social question as well as a political and Bildung problem that A. Siemsen emphasised a good 50 years ago in light of fascist and Stalinist developments and in accordance with *leitmotifs* of the Critical Theory, which was essential for an analysis of European relations in the first half of the past century and also because of its consequences for political socialisation processes:

CHAPTER 1

“I see the cause (for this development, H.S.) to be much more in the fact that our conscience was exclusively technically orientated, it achieved great success in controlling nature and in material technology and, because of that, completely neglected the area of social relationships. The objective consequence of this has been the decline and chaotic confusion of our social relations, which may have emancipated humans politically, but socially it isolated them and exposed them to an insecurity that let great loneliness, fear and hate complexes arise. ...The “battle for existence” becomes for them a competition with their own kind, in which any means is allowed. Until, finally, this unbearable state and demeanour of conscience leads one to escape to any kind of social ties, even if it is the blind submission to a state leadership, a party or a Fuehrer” (Siemsen 1948: 5).

The fact that these findings, with which the lack of social competency is confirmed, are neither outdated nor lose their topicality is referred to by the ideas of M. Castells, who writes in his three volume analysis of the new forming era, which gravely analyses current society, that he defines as informational Capitalism: “Yet, if we make the same mistakes as we made in the twentieth century, using technology and industrialisation to massacre each other in atrocious wars, with our new technological power we may well end life on the planet. It turned out to be relatively easy to stop short of nuclear holocaust because of the centralised control of nuclear energy and weaponry. But new genetic technologies are pervasive, their mutating impacts not fully controllable, and their institutional control much more decentralised. To prevent the evil effects of biological revolution we not only need responsible governments but also a responsible, educated society” (Castells 1998: 353).

The great gap, that Castells emphasised in his analysis and which exists between technological overdevelopment and social underdevelopment refers to the fundamental theoretically orientated question of what sorts of consequences for analyses of the connections between Bildung systems and society, Bildung politics and the reproduction of social relations arise from the “interdependence on social constitution and Bildung institution” (Heydorn 1994/ 1995).

In his fundamental works, in which he connects social history with Bildung history entitled “On the contradiction of Bildung and rule” as well as “On a new definition of the Bildung concept”, Heydorn analysed the requirements and perspectives of these topics (cf. Sünker 1989: chap. V + VII). Here the question of general Bildung, as Bildung for everyone, forms the anchor for its historical and systematic constitutions for its social political as well as individual meaning (Heydorn 1994/95: I, 41 f., cf. also Tenorth 1994). At the same time this question refers to the importance of an Bildung theory that is social theoretical and also proceeds in a social critical way. In this way, at the same time the challenge is presented of determining and deciphering the relations between social structures, the structuring of social relationships between the members of a society and the constitutional conditions of subjectivity, as Heydorn does in his earlier writings when he refers to connections between the priority of Capitalist utilisation logics, the market shaping of social relationships and a reduction of social existence to “bare efficiency” (I., 232). The functionalism, that exists in this social constitution and which is based on inequality and social injustice, leads to the “question of an Bildung that ensures the maximum efficiency of people in a technological society: a society that is based on adaptation, change and mobility in largely determined social borders” (I. 284).

Here, according to him, “Bildung, as always in history, should ensure ideology and power to an existing society; it must omit the reflection by which the demythologising of power takes place. Thereby, it finds itself in an obvious contradiction” (I 285; cf. also Lenhart 1987; Flacks 1999; von Friedeburg 1989; McLaren 1995; Wexler 1996; Barber 1998; Kincheloe 1999; Sünker/Krüger 1999; Widersprüche 2002).⁶ If the production of a socially compliant world view stands in the centre of hegemonic strategies and ideologies that secure power, then the question of resistance and the alternatives to the status quo arises as a question of actors, movements and freedom securing ideas. In all his writings Heydorn draws this out as a central theme as “dialectics of the institutionalisation of Bildung” with the perspective of the generalisation of Bildung, therefore as everybody’s responsibility; beyond its disunity, which historically is founded on class (cf. Sünker 1999, 2001).

III

The progress of the system functionally orientated Bildung sociological analysis was shown in the change from the so called “old” structural functionalistic reasoning paradigm to the “new” reproduction theoretical approach by the fact that this implied the replacement of most of all technologically and modernising theoretically orientated ideas,⁷ thereby emphasising effectiveness and mobility, by the fact that the enforced reproduction of social inequality was withdrawn appropriately with the help of the Bildung system (cf. for example Apple 1982). In the meantime, however, theoretical shortcomings in the reproduction approach manifested themselves and were essentially connected to the problem of the ‘rising’ of participants in structures as well as of the question of the possibilities of the development of resistance (see for example Giroux 1983; Wexler 1990).

A further discussion about these approaches must accordingly include the perspective of Bildung research that exists beyond structuralism and functionalism. This requires a conceptualisation within which from the perspective of the subject, constitution processes of knowledge, meaning and sense are not reduced to the reproductive moment that reproduction yet contains (cf. Schlaffer 1990: 130 f.); it is more about the retaking up of a crucial concept of *praxis*.⁸ A non-reduced

⁶ Cf. here Bernfelds’ opinion, who, in his analysis, lacks Heydorn’s approach as a decipherment of the ‘Dialectics of the institutionalizing of Bildung’ without looking less realistic because of this: “The social function of Bildung is the conservation of the biophysical and social economical as well as culturally minded structure of society... it is therefore not alone the conservation in the sense of preventing something new” (1967: 82 f.).

However, in the foreground of present social scientific analysis Narr reasons (1979: 497), supporting Heydorn when he concludes his Elias portrayal of state monopoly of power and self disciplining with the words: “as much as both poles must be understood to be referring to each other, one must not underestimate the relative autonomy that was created by the ability to discipline itself. Especially as individuals became capable of subjectivity and of action as a result of their socialization, they also become resistant to a certain degree – also resistant to the external monopoly and its demands.

⁷ For the social-scientific debate about and critique of modernization theoretical approaches see the study by Knöbl (2001).

⁸ In this context the systematic place of the Feuerbach Theses of Marx may also be viewed (Marx 1969;

CHAPTER 1

understanding of the constitution of meaning/sense and a concept of mediating subjective appropriation and social structures, by means of the concept of cultural habit (Bourdieu 2001), are to be aimed for here in order to reconstruct the contradictory moments of the appropriation of reality through active subjects in social, institutional as well as individually framed Bildung processes in general and political socialisation processes in particular (cf. Claußen 1996).

To define an overload of “subjectivity”, in the context of Bildung research, that is to say, in an extension of the inter-subjectivity theoretically founded concept of subjectivity (Theunissen 1982), once again sociality as well as institutional reference must be emphasised. Institutions like school, the work place (cf. McLaren 1993; Wexler 1992; Casey 1995) as social places are to be referred to in their fundamental meaning for a democratic practice that is based on possible participation of all in the context of multiculturalism or “new social movements”. S. Bowles and H. Gintis refer to this context when they write: “Because the growth and effectiveness of democratic institutions depend on the strength of democratic capacities, a commitment to democracy entails the advocacy of institutions that promote rather than impede the development of a democratic culture. Further, because learning, or more broadly, human development, is a central and lifelong social activity of people, there is no coherent reason for exempting the structures that regulate learning – whether they be schools, families, neighbourhoods, or workplaces – from the criteria of democratic accountability and liberty” (Bowles/Gintis 1987: 204; cf. 3, 185; Barber 1998).

IV

With this background it seems more than incomprehensible that in the PISA study and in it, following up of the question of the abolition of the three tiered school system, to which an obvious failure in the self image of “school of democracy” due to lacking its own systemic and systematic goals, or qualification, is to be attested, is left out (PISA 2001: 430 f., 454); even though this could still be arranged to function with the system. There are debates about how to prevent this necessary debate due to the fact that the irrelevance of the “school form” is affirmed contradictory to all results; there are debates about the schooling of the elementary area instead of looking at the cognitive reductions of the prevailing Bildung theory and understanding that Bildung means more than just “knowledge” – including intellectuality and sensuality. Here the prevailing status quo from which the problems come is defended,⁹ which means that tradition seems to ‘beat’ legitimisation.

This is only understandable if one acknowledges that comprehensive secondary schools are run by the educated classes, even with their contradictions, still prove to be a stronghold against democratic-theoretical and democratic-practical

Schmied-Korwarzik 1981); for Bildung scientific relevance see Schmied-Korwarzik (1988).

⁹ Here it is also worth looking at Bernfelds’ ‘Sisyphos’, his findings are read as a commentary to today’s debates: “Education is conservative. Its organization is particularly so. It has never been the preparation for a structural change in society” (1967: 90; cf. 17). Heydorn argues here (1994/95: IV, 57): “In the system of the mighty service trade, which society has developed with its Bildung institutions, responsibility remains a goal; people must get hold of themselves”.

necessary generalisation of Bildung (cf. Bourdieu 2001: 301), from the point of view of the educated classes (Bildungsbürgertum), whose historical failure in Germany's history may be treated apart (cf. Bollenbeck 1994, 1999),¹⁰ which means that a certain form of elite reproduction, that tries to sell itself as elite production, appears to be assured.¹¹ For this goal the form of the market and goods of Bildung is accepted even in the context of neo-liberal strategies (cf. Sünker 1996); the talk of the educated classes about Bildung being the "property" of Bildung goods is ultimately put into effect and becomes realistic in this perspective. Thereby Bildung is then turned into its opposite: misuse and exploitation; resistance becomes all the more necessary.

The dominating strategy really concerns processes of "working out" advantages when distributing social positions and places; this is in the framework of a competition for "scarce goods" and for their ideological protection in hegemonic battles – also out of "fear of falling" (Ehrenreich 1992). Here one deals with the scholastically mediated legitimising of allocation through attribution with which, as described in the PISA study (see above), there is not only a tendency to decide over life opportunities and quality of life. Against all scientific (evolution theoretical) knowledge that is appropriate to contemporary knowledge, failure is naturalised as "stupidity" and 'made' genetically hereditary. One may contest such a socially politically interested version with what Gould ascertained: "For my sensual perception of fraternalism of all people harmonises with our most modern biological knowledge. ... This essay can be summarised in one sentence; in one motto, so to speak: Human equality is a historically contingent fact. Equality is not an axiom; it is neither an ethical principle (although fair treatment could be one) nor does it compile norms of social action. It is simply the result of man's historical development" (1995: 154; cf. 250 f.).¹² Of particular interest for the German selection practice with its three tiered school system is the fact that, amongst the leading countries in the PISA study, comprehensive schools represent

¹⁰ Policy vis-à-vis one's allies may also be treated separately, especially the "Bildung arrogance" of the bourgeoisie and its humanistic phraseology; see in particular Bourdieu (1984: 707 – 719).

¹¹ In this way it is no wonder that in hegemonic arguments the interested party repeatedly and with more and more force tries to bring the problem of so-called "elite Bildung" to the agenda (cf. Herrlitz 1998).

¹² The fact that this is not only the case in Germany (with a reactionary talent ideology) is referred to by the debates in the USA about the racist study "The Bell Curve" by Herrnstein and Murray under headings such as "Measured Lies" (Kincheloe et al. 1996) or "Inequality By Design" (Fischer et al. 1996). Even the Nobel Prize winner for medicine in 2002, J. Sulston, objects here: "Every human life is developed from human genes. We should think of these genes as potential and not as imposed limits" (2002: 1). Consult here Gould, who emphasizes in the scope of his referral to false research in the context of "twin studies", that "heredity is not a measurement of an unchanged biological configuration" (1995: 256) and he continues as the basis for the controversy about genes and environment: "In reality it is about the opposed *biological* possibilities and *biological* determinants. We are interactionists, we recognize the mighty influence of biology on human behavior. However determinists such as Arthur Jensen and Prime Minister Lee (...) use biology to construct a *Theory of Limitations*" (258).

For the 'classical' reproduction strategies, which used to be of continuously functioning allocation mechanisms, consult Willis' study (1979), whose original title "Learning to Labor. How working class kids get working class jobs" refers more clearly to these contexts than the German title "Pleasure with Resistance".

CHAPTER 1

the normal type of Bildung organisation as well as high numbers of students in the transition to the following secondary level.

With this background, taking a look here at combating social injustice, a perspective within problems of justice is important, as Steinvorth depicts in a way which is relevant and fascinating for our Bildung practical and Bildung political constellation which is directly able to be linked to the PISA debate: To take responsibility for and to place demands on society which, in turn, is conducive to society, are abilities “that assure everyone the ability to voice their political opinion; for without this ability people remain excluded from all decisions that effect everyone and form the framework for their self-determination; thereupon the ability to take part in the production process in which people can create the material conditions for their existence” (Steinvorth 1999: 277; cf. 220 f.; cf. also Sünker 2002; Bourdieu 2001: 283 f.; Wright 1998; Sen 2000: 94, 110, 158, 176).¹³

From this perspective the question of what is a ‘good’ school for ‘whom’ could be looked at again, but going beyond system functional, economic reductions and referring to the semantics and reality of Bildung, democracy and justice as well as social inequality. Here very differently founded concept debates are able to be linked to the question of good schools beginning with the question that comes from the context of a phenomenally orientated Bildung theory “Is school forgetting our children?” (Kümmel et al. 1978). This question concerns a critique founded on social theory and social psychology of the dominating school system that for many rests on “winner-loser logics” with catastrophic consequences (Aronson 2000). One could consider an Bildung theoretically founded counter draft to contemporary existing schools such as von Hentig presents in his study “rethinking school” (von Hentig 1993; cf. also 1996).¹⁴

If we remember Dahrendorf’s statement about 40 years ago that Bildung politics is to be understood as a means “to make participation in social life possible for people” (1966: 25) and that it is about “providing the basis for a modern society in the constitution of freedom through spreading effective civil rights” (1966: 28), it is obvious to see how far we have come. At the same time it is obvious that Picht’s “emergency” position is ‘coming back with a vengeance’, as the debate about (economical) competitiveness is being taken up again more rigorously and being abused in a new social political way under the auspices of a “knowledge society”.

For this reason one must emphatically insist that the question of the relationship of state, social justice, social rights and Bildung, as the basis for overcoming social inequality, be discussed once again publicly (cf. Sünker); even if a new attempt at Bildung reforms does “take care” of the problem of reproduction of social inequality, the conditions for it *could* be “improved”.¹⁵ For to concretely and

¹³ In light of the conceptualizing it also becomes clear that social work has to reclaim and carry out a responsibility that is more disciplinary and professional for “Bildung” and “Bildung politics”, as W. Hornstein (1981) claimed 30 years ago (cf. Sünker 2002a).

¹⁴ The topic “children’s rights and children’s politics”, with which the “right to Bildung” once again comes to light, belongs to the context of this discussion, and this means a substantial complication.

¹⁵ See here Müller’s thoughts (1977: 211): The decisive factor in this context is an awareness of the fact that even though “people’s responsibility” is seen to be the aim of Bildung”, this “that (effects)

realistically shape the political project of the “abolition of all Bildung restriction” (Heydorn 1994/95: IV, 138) one must adhere to the fact that a) “Bildung is not independent revolutionary movement, not even indirectly, it can only be so in connection with the entire historical movement” (IV, 62), but it b) is essentially about realising that Bildung “makes its own unchanged contribution which is irreplaceable. This contribution must not be withdrawn from the institution; it cannot be made in the same way in any other place” (IV, 141). A real democratisation of our society/ societies has to be seen as a problem of our planet’s qualified ability to survive. We have to perceive it as a task for various policies tied to the power of judgement and competence of action of all citizens.¹⁶ The demand for Bildung for everyone remains in this context on the agenda as a central challenge for the real existing social inequality and overcoming it.

students according to their background and probable future in very different ways (it is only a particularly naive attempt at concealing the differences that are rooted in the basis of society, although they have been overthrown since the French Revolution, in a few bourgeois countries/counties students are given school uniforms to hide their class specific clothing, at least at school). This lastingly maintained demand for equality and freedom must in particular thrust into a contradiction the people who are, in their daily life situations, are not equal to others, rather inferior; therefore, especially the so called lower class children”.

¹⁶ Here a look at the USA’s view of the problem, that challenges one to make comparisons, from the problem of the dominance of a “large industrial oligarchy that merely uses the façade of democracy” (Berman 2002: 18; cf. 40, 87) up until positioning in the context of democracy and Bildung theory, as Westbrook (1991, XVI) presents in his Dewey interpretations of constitutive Bildung of democracy and Bildung.

Long before the individualization debate (cf. Beck 1986) Kafka formulated in his “Process” the social theoretical and political challenge that is still valid to take up today, or at least when one follows Stach’s interpretation (2002 553), “that Kafka’s private dream logics are one with the nightmare of modernity of the expropriation of his life, that, at the same time, is done behind the backs of such individuals. Everyone is free. However, no matter what decisions one makes; one remains a ‘case’ for which suitable rules, measures, institutions have existed for a long time, and one’s most spontaneous, happiest emotion remains within the closed horizons of a thoroughly administered, planned world”.

CHAPTER 2

CRITICAL BILDUNG THEORY — BEYOND THE MARKET AND POWER?

I

In the field of Bildung we were already bidding “Farewell to illusions of reform” — as Martin Baethge referred to it nearly forty years ago in his 1972 paper with that title — because, as Ludwig von Friedeburg (1994a, 1994b) explained later, in this arena the alliance between enlightenment and modernisation was already close to breaking point. Nonetheless, today we find that the “Bildung question” has lost none of its significance. In the 1960s and 1970s, it was a matter of reconceptualising the Bildung debate so as to counter misinterpretations of the concept of Bildung itself, especially in its conservative variants, and to make the Enlightenment inheritance productive in ways which suited the new context of modernity. If the concern then was to oppose the bourgeois ideology of Bildung and its perpetuation in the class divisions between mental and physical labour with the idea of the multi-faceted and universal nature of Bildung, the problems manifesting themselves today are sharper still, given that the marketisation of social relations looms large on the horizon (Henig 1994; Whitty 1998). What is consistently clear is that the question of the relationships between Bildung and society needs to be restored to the agenda of general political debates, following the pursuit of these debates for a decade in the context of a new (for Germany) Bildung reform discussion, the contours of which are characterized above all by Picht’s concept of “Bildung emergency” and the corresponding “technological gap”, and Dahrendorf’s programmatic formula of a “civil right to Bildung”. Although we have moved beyond the debate around the “illusion of equal opportunity” (Bourdieu & Passeron 1971), the insight provided by that debate, that bildung politics is societal politics, remains as relevant as ever. This is why a multitude of analyses in social science and Bildung theory have over the last 30 years addressed the consequences flowing from the “interdependence of the constitution of society and Bildung institutions” (Heydorn 1980a: 99) for the determination of relations between the Bildung system and society, and for Bildung politics and the production of social inequality. If, from a contemporary perspective, we approach these early Bildung reforms in terms of a quasi-necessary process of societal modernisation in West Germany, as a process of overcoming the stale political culture of the reactionary Adenauer era (cf. chap. IX), then today we can be guided by the idea that a democratic and democratising society presumes and requires educated, i.e., politically active and capable, citizens. This perspective, focused on democratic practice as well as theory, which remains sceptical of the idea that “civil society” might somehow “tame”

CHAPTER 2

capitalism, thus allows for a linkage to a range of German and international discussions in which the problems of Bildung research, politics and theory are and can be articulated with each other.¹⁷ At the centre of the German 20th century tradition — which can already be seen as classical — stands above all the work of Heydorn, Siemsen and Adorno on a critical Bildung theory organised around social theory. The Anglo-Saxon and French discussions, on the other hand, develop contributions to a Bildung sociology oriented towards societal politics. If the analyses of the first group are linked to a critique of power and domination, and the contemporary analyses of the second group with a critique of market ideology in the field of Bildung, they operate in an essentially complementary way. The analysis of the related themes “society, Bildung and individual” has shown that it is still true today that we can generally assume that the Bildung system has a reproductive function for the social status quo. What remains to be examined are the ways in which the dialectic inherent to the institutionalisation of Bildung (Heydorn 1979) — spanned between the poles “liberation” and “power and domination”, each determined by societal practice — might be developed so as to overcome this simple function of reproducing relations of social inequality. This demands a theory of Bildung processes which takes the social constitution of subjectivity as its starting point, and which is at the same time capable of establishing a capacity for resistance against societal relations of power and domination which can be anchored within this subjectivity. At the structural level, on the one hand, it is possible for Bourdieu to argue in his examination of the relevance of the Bildung system to the “structure of class relations”, pursuing a theme which runs through all of his work, that of all the solutions which have been found in the course of history to the problem of the transmission of power and privilege, that is clearly none which is better disguised, and thus more suited to those societies inclined towards the denial of the more obvious forms of the traditional transmission of power and privilege, as those which guarantee the school system, in that it contributes to the reproduction of the structure of class relations, and at the same time hides under the mantle of neutrality the fact that it fulfills this function (1973: 93). On the other hand, in this context von Friedeburg could declare in one conclusion to his study, *Bildungsreform in Deutschland. Geschichte und gesellschaftlicher Widerspruch* (Bildung Reform in Germany: History and Social Contradiction) (1989), which starts out from the societal contradiction between the individual claim to Bildung anchored in the European Enlightenment (“Bildung as human right”), and functional processes of “incorporation and adaptation” into society, which are always executed by the Bildung system: The civil right to Bildung cannot be realised in the marketplace of systemic competition, through the rivalry between different modes of schooling for declining numbers of pupils, regardless of whether it takes the form of the older three – or the newer four – tier system, the point at which the standard comprehensive school has arrived. Also the idea behind the academic gymnasium schools, which can select their pupils, to combine a number of tiers into one, does not take us any further, but simply reproduces the old two-fold division between

¹⁷ Contributions to the Anglo-Saxon discussions can be found in Sünker, Timmermann & Kolbe 1994; see also the path-breaking contributions of Apple 1982, Wexler 1987 and the McLaren & Giarelli 1995 reader.

higher and lower schools, with all its consequences for social selection. But the history of Bildung reform shows that its progression is determined not by pedagogic insights and organisational concepts, but by social relations of power. Individual demands grow, despite traditional status differences. Continuous expansion in Bildung further erodes the system of credentialisation. The social instrumentalisation of public Bildung becomes ever more difficult. Bildung reform remains on the agenda (1989: 476f.). The example of the “Bildung apex” in high schools, the recent debate on the crisis in professional Bildung — and its corollary, the relationship between comprehensive Bildung and vocational education — the report of the NRW Bildung Commission, titled *The Future of Bildung*, indicate how wide the gulf is between essential societal changes on the one hand, and political reality on the other. Particularly the appearance of “deregulation” in the Bildung field indicates that the critique of market and power relations in both German critical Bildung theory and the Anglo-Saxon discussion of the politics and sociology of education could receive much more attention.

II

When Georg Bollenbeck closes his major study *Bildung und Kultur* (Bildung and Culture) with the thesis that with “the completed history of the framework of meaning”, the Idea does not have to come to an end, but the concept cannot be rescued, leaving only Hope”, “although it is questionable whether the idea of ‘the self-Bildung of all’ and a realised identity is obsolete” (1994: 312), this is a result of his analytical approach and his interpretations. We should question not his analyses of the history of the decline of bourgeois Bildung, under the heading “From the humanitarian postulate to reactionary modernisation”, but more his interpretations of classical versions of the concept of Bildung, which for him revolve around “political conformity and claims to metapolitical emancipation (1994: 95, 151f), “political abstinence” and inadequate “conceptions of the political constitution of self-forming individuality” (1994: 171) as well as the category of “Bildung individualism” (1994: 156). What we lose in this approach is the advance in knowledge within Bildung theory and history embodied by the contributions of critical Bildung theory. In these contributions, which at the same time were and continue to be relevant both for the further development of dialectical social theory, the — historico-systematically oriented — constitutional preconditions of society and subjectivity were and continue to be brought into a relationship determined by Bildung theory and analysis, without operating within an “either/or” model. Against the background of their social analysis, contributions like Siemsen’s “Die gesellschaftlichen Grundlagen der Erziehung” (1948) (The social foundations of education), Adorno’s “Theorie der Halbbildung” (1972) (Theory of semi-Bildung), Heydorn’s “Über den Widerspruch von Bildung und Herrschaft” (1979) (On the contradiction between Bildung and domination) and “Zu einer Neufassung des Bildungsbegriffs” (1980a) (Reconceptualising Bildung), Koneffke’s and Klafki’s analysis of Bildung as well as Benner’s “Nicht-affirmative Theorie pädagogischen Handelns” (1982) (Non-affirmative theory of

CHAPTER 2

pedagogic action) point towards problematics of class, culture and gender relations which remain for us to reconstruct and develop further.¹⁸ A long time ago — in view of Fascist and Stalinist developments — Siemsen emphasized — in agreement with many of critical theory’s endeavours — what was essential for an analysis of the development of societal and Bildung relations in Europe in the first half of the century: “I see the cause far more in the fact that our consciousness has become exclusively technically oriented, directed towards tremendous outcomes in the areas of mastery of nature and material technology, and thus completely neglecting the area of social relationships. The objective consequence of this has been the decay and the chaotic confusion of our social relations which, although they have certainly emancipated people politically, have also isolated them socially and exposed them to an uncertainty which has given rise to serious complexes of loneliness, anxiety and hate. The “struggle for existence” is equated for them with competition, in which ultimately any means is acceptable. Until eventually the unbearableness of this condition and this consciousness leads to a flights into any sort of social bond, even if it is subordination to a state administration, a party or a Fuhrer” (Siemsen 1948: 5). Adorno’s work can be read as complementary to this analysis of the structure and contents of social relations; in his “Theory of half-Bildung”, first published in 1959, he examines the clear socio-political process of a decline in Bildung thought as well as the productive Bildung theoretical studies of the relationship between social history and Bildung theory: “What Bildung has turned into, sedimented as a sort of negative objective spirit, and not only in Germany, was itself derived from social laws of movement, even from the concept of Bildung itself. It has become socialised half-Bildung, the ever-presence of the alienated spirit” (Adorno 1972: 93). At the same time, Adorno’s analysis contains a particular task within this conclusion: “If in the meantime the spirit only does what is socially correct, as long as it does not dissolve into society in an undifferentiated identity, anachronism is upon us: clutching onto Bildung after society has destroyed its foundations. But it has no other means of survival than critical reflection on half-Bildung, which becomes essential for it” (1972: 121). One response to the problematic constituted by Siemsen’s and Adorno’s analysis, determining and examining the mediations between social structures, as well as the structurations of social relations between the members of a society and the conditions of the constitution of subjectivity, was pursued by Heydorn — already in his early work — when he referred to the linkages between the priority of capitalist utilitarian logic, the marketisation of societal relations and the reduction of social existence to “bare functionality” (1994a: 232). The functionalism underlying this leads to “demand for an Bildung which guarantees people’s maximum efficiency in a technological society, a society which rests on conformity, exchange and mobility within largely determined social boundaries” (1994b: 284).¹⁹ At the same time, he says in a manner reminiscent of Bernfeld’s

¹⁸ Klafki’s 1986; 1990 reflections on the significance of classical Bildung theory for a contemporary general conception of Bildung is also relevant here.

¹⁹ This reflections also identify the systemic location of reflection on the relationship between “Bildung and technology”; for a discussion of technology, technocracy and democracy see Fischer’s 1990 instructive work.

analyses, “Bildung, as always throughout history, secures the ideology and power of an existing society; it has to avoid those reflections which might bring about the de-mythologisation of power. This is how it ends up caught in a clear contradiction” (1994b: 285).

III

Koneffke has characterised the work required to be done on an analysis of the mediation of societal and Bildung history — with the emphasis on a critique of domination mentioned earlier — as follows: “Reflection on the contradiction between Bildung and society, the incorporation of the objective compulsions both emanating from the capitalist system itself and questioning it at the same time, is the task of radical Bildung theory” (Koneffke 1981: 188).²⁰ This task of radical reflection which Koneffke sets for radical theories of Bildung leads him to a thesis which allows us to identify the ways in which the transformation of society and the Bildung system are related to each other: the clear transformation of Bildung into training is determined in bourgeois capitalist society by the requirement of “needing the dependent masses to also be empirical bourgeois subjects” (Koneffke 1982: 946). This in turn demands for materialist analysis the discovery of a basic category of critical Bildung theory, that of “maturity”, in the wake of its societal functionalisation — in the form of restriction — “in the objectivity of the societal synthesis, the interweaving of general market and power mediations” (Koneffke 1995a: 1). With reference to current analysis in social theory, this makes it possible to identify the systemic location of the discourse of individualisation. In this connection we can immediately say that Beck has also made it clear in his analysis and presentation of the current processes of individualisation — for him within the context of “reflexive modernisation” in industrial society — with his arguments concerning the “new spurt of individualization” as a “new mode of societalization” (Beck 1992: 127), that in the social history of capitalism, “individualisation” is nothing new (Sünker 1989: 121ff). In his analysis of bourgeois society, Hegel had already established that “the individual has become the son of bourgeois society”, because bourgeois society extracted the individual from the bonds of the family, the members of which alienate one another and recognize them as independent persons (Hegel 1955: § 238). What is decisive in this process is that the isolation of the individual, expressed in the pursuit of “selfish purposes”, and the establishment of “multi-faceted dependency” — this is how the market mechanism and market participation is described — go hand in hand (Hegel 1955: § 183). This leads to what is a fundamental problem of capitalist social formations: approaching the relationship between individual and society as a problem of control, that is, as a question of integration and adaptation, and thus to set it against bourgeois subjectivity’s perspective of autonomy. The autonomy of the individual, which for Hegel is bound up with the idea of freedom and the concept of free will

²⁰ Susan Buck-Morss's 1993: 347ff work on Benjamin is also relevant here, in relation to Benjamin's conception of a materialist and revolutionary approach to Bildung.

CHAPTER 2

(1955: 22ff), is in Hegel's case not conceptually sacrificed to an abstract universality (Theunissen 1982), but becomes apparent and real at one and the same time in the process of the establishment of the bourgeois-capitalist form of society. This constitutes a reference point for pedagogic theory and its actual history, and becomes concrete in the various forms of the "problem of maturity" (Koneffke 1981: 178ff). In Beck's reading of the situation of advanced modernity it is decisive that individuation takes place in the framework of a process of societalization which increasingly undermines individual autonomy — contrary to the claims of individualisation: it is true that individuals are released from traditional bonds and relationships, but in exchange for the compulsion of the labour market as well as a consumer existence and its associated mechanisms of standardisation and control: "The place of *traditional* ties and social forms (social class, nuclear family) is taken by *secondary* agencies and institutions, which stamp the biography of the individual and make that person dependent upon fashions, social policy, economic cycles and markets, contrary to the images of individual control which establishes itself in consciousness" (Beck 1992: 131). As a result of this new mode of social integration, individualisation provides the basis precisely for new forms of control over individuals who see themselves as "free". This is why Beck insists on a "simultaneity of individuation, institutionalisation and standardisation in the life course" (1986: 210), which leads to a new mixture of private and institutional situations. This functional analysis of contemporary social processes also resonates with his finding that there is today a system of care, administration and political institutions which act on life forms diverging from authoritative standards of normality in a normative, pedagogic and disciplinary way (1986, S.215). The individual is thus made responsible — and this is the decisive point for questions of the constitution of subjectivity and practical competencies — for "shaping their own life course, precisely where they are nothing but the product of their relationships" (1986: 216). The false character of the talk of a plurality of life forms is reinforced by the observation that under given relations the system of social inequality simply reproduces itself at a higher step up the ladder, while maintaining the same relations of inequality (1986: 208). There are also Anglo-Saxon contributions which can be read as complementary to this assessment, which speak of "conservative" instead of "reflexive" modernisation, the political consequences of which are characterized by the liberation of individuals for economic purposes, so as to be able to control them more effectively for social purposes (Dale 1990).

IV

In contrast to Beck's "purely negative perspective", Heydorn, within the framework of his analysis of the dialectic of the institutionalisation of Bildung and via an overview of societal and Bildung history, was able to conclude that: "Institution and maturity find themselves in an unbridgeable opposition to each other" (Heydorn 1979: 317; Sünker 1995). In what is probably the most advanced social scientific study of organisations in which the organisation is seen as the

embodiment of domination (Türk 1995), Heydorn proposes that “Institution is domination; institution becomes superfluous” (1979: 331) and “maturity is the transcendence of all institutions as tutelage through domination” (1979: 335). In opposition to the domination characterizing the dialectic of the institutionalisation of Bildung, he declared that “Bildung will once again become what it first was: self-help” (1979: 324). This is the position to which Heydorn has taken his analysis of social reality dealing with the interdependence of societal constitution and Bildung institutions (Sünker 1989a, 1993b, 1994). This generates the need to situate Bildung history and to conceptualise Bildung theory within the framework of the history of society, in order to develop insights into the mutual mediations between micro, meso–and macro social processes. In order to avoid subjective or objective misinterpretations, we need a critical theory of Bildung which works with the help of an impetus towards cultural revolution and a resolution of the concept of totality informed by the concept of contradiction (Sünker 1989: 25ff, 69ff). Here the concept of cultural revolution refers to a revolutionisation of everyday life, the basis of individual and social existence, with the help of which it is possible not only to conceive of the abolition of superfluous structures of domination, but also to insist on the possibility of unfolding emancipatory human needs, accompanied by the competencies required for constituting social relationships, something which cannot be achieved in the framework of the existing social formation (Heydorn 1979: 12f; 1980a: 165; Lefebvre 1978: 107ff; Adorno 1973: 97f). In Heydorn’s approach to Bildung theory, he links this perspective, which he calls the “totality of subjectification” (Heydorn 1980b: 297), to a general socio-political conception which connects the transcendence of alienation, the “revolutionising of human labour” and leisure time as well as needs, with the development of a radical democracy (1980b: 295). He also takes up this position to oppose the metaphysical tendencies of Bildung theory with the principle of immanence, and thus the capacity for history to be changed through human praxis. If “Bildung for agency” is to be understood as a “means of liberation” (1979: 45, 324), we need on the one hand an analysis of the connections between schooling and the constitution of society, and on the other hand a theory of history which is not based on a philosophy of history, but which links its analysis to an examination of concrete historical relationships and forms of human interaction. The analysis of the history of relations between Bildung and society results in the idea that Bildung remains unrealised, because the human condition remains to this day constituted by “determination” (1979: 31, 115, 300, 335). This means that the question of the potential for human history to encompass freedom stands on the agenda (1980a: 178). Because Bildung is understood as the “actualisation of potential” enabling people to realise their humanity, becoming “their own actor” (1980a: 164), the original impetus of the Bildung idea can be interpreted as the human understanding of one’s own freedom, “as an attempt to end one’s submission to authority” (1979: 32). Maturity in the form of human self-disposition thus constitutes the primary reference point, being the “fulfilment of the human dream and the dialectical correlate of development (1979: 322). For this reason Heydorn believes — mediating Marx and Landauer, so to speak (Koneffke 1995b: 22) — that “Bildung is rationally mediated spontaneity” (1979: 24). This mode of argumentation enables him to refer to the field of human subjectivity and praxis as well as to the historical and social structural context: he mediates this with the idea that Bildung

CHAPTER 2

can become comprehensive and universal, which in turn rests on the possibility of an institutionalised process of Bildung for everincreasing numbers of people (Heydorn 1980b: 287) as well as being supported by more recent research in industrial sociology. Even if within the socially determined empirical restriction of the potential for maturity, the relationship between practical domination and people's simultaneous subjectification is undermined, there is still a development taking place in the underlying structure of society. The degree of structural rationality it ends up achieving is linked to the abstract character of production in the sense that "the comprehensive character which Bildung has acquired in view of technical development" corresponds to a comprehensive paralysis of its potential for enlightenment and for establishing individuals as self-determining actors (1980b: 290). Society's contradictory constitution and reality also includes Bildung, with the following consequences in relation to socio-historically achieved potential: "The universality which Bildung has achieved shows that the moment Bildung overcomes its historical class divisions, it can become universal for a liberated species" (1980b: 291). In order to make this perspective more precise, to explain the extent to which the growing significance of institutionalised Bildung and the increasing achievement of human content are related to each other (1980b: 287f), it is necessary to identify anew the contemporary dimensions of the hidden content of the concept of Bildung (1980b: 291), and to sketch the contours of a concept of Bildung "demanded by the present" (1980b: 295). In this respect, the reference to the formation of consciousness takes on an unprecedented historical significance (1980b: 294). When Heydorn ends his article on survival with "Consciousness is everything" (1980b: 301), this rests on the notion that thought processes which demythologise society — supported by its rational structure — (1980: 300) are both necessary and possible, and on the insight — following a train of thought in Hegel's analysis of the master-slave relationship (Sünker 1989: 103ff) — that humans only become subjects by mentally penetrating their material conditions, and thus transforming them (1980: 294). Precisely because Bildung is for Heydorn only one rather than an independent revolutionary element in the movement of history (1980a: 100), he insists that the institution of Bildung offers "a self-transforming contribution, which cannot be exchanged" (1980a: 167) for the realisation of a perspective which keeps this freedom in view. In order to counter the strategies of the paralysis of consciousness, we need to examine the ways in which Bildung theory can be used to concretise the identification of the dialogic structure of pedagogic processes and relationships, which revolve around mutual recognition and the mauseitic.

V

In the context of the problem of hegemony, that is, the dominant constitution of contemporary social formations — within which the state is seen as "contested terrain" — if our focus is on marketisation and its associated disempowerment, the debates and processes of deregulation in Bildung take on particular significance. The Anglo-Saxon contributions in particular, because of their experience with

Thatcherism and Reaganism as well as the accompanying renaissance of neo-liberal economics with its consequences for all social relations, have analysed the ideology of market apologists as well as the consequences of market strategies in the Bildung field – and thus also the “seductive appeal” of the market metaphor (Hennig 1994). In view of the globalisation of the capital relationship, and the associated strategies of the capitalistic formation of world society or the world system (Amin 1992; Wallerstein 1991: 227–272), the ever-intensifying divisive processes with western capitalist societies (which can be referred to as the “two-thirds society”, resting on post- or neo-Fordist modes of regulation and accumulation regimes), a particular strategic significance attaches to strategies of depoliticisation in the Bildung field accompanying ideologies of the market (Whitty 1998; Boggs 2000). As Heydorn suggested more than 35 years ago (1994a: 291; see also McLaren 1993: 81–144), regardless of all other transformations, the leitmotif of strategies aiming at securing domination remains an interest in adaptation to the production process on the one hand and the development of a socially conformist worldview on the other. In the sociology of Bildung as well as in political science, it is thus clear that when one looks at social reality in the USA and the UK, in contrast to the modish preference for institutional autonomy and parental choice, and in opposition to the celebration of variety and choice, this approach can make no contribution to a reinforcement of the position of most citizens in a class society characterized by unequal access to cultural as well as material resources (Whitty 1998; Hennig 1994). Instead it is always true that in reality market strategies lead to an intensification of disparities, so that the disadvantaged, because of their weak market position, fall behind in their social position, and are certainly not able to improve it.

What is “improved” in a market-oriented Bildung system is more the reproduction of social inequality; the discourse of market relations provides the deepening of social distinctions with a new rhetoric of legitimation (Whitty 1998: 97; Hennig 1994: 188ff). The complement to this securing of social inequality — on an economic as well as ideological basis — are fundamental redefinitions of the understanding of the state and state activity, as well the possible forms to be taken by the relationships between state and “civil society”. “The growing tendency to base more and more aspects of social affairs on the notion of consumer rights rather than upon citizen rights involves more than a move away from public-provided systems of state education towards individual schools competing for clients in the marketplace. While seeming to respond to critiques of impersonal over-bureaucratic welfare state provision, this also shifts major aspects of education decision-making out of the public into the private realm with potentially significant consequences for social justice” (Whitty 1998: 100). Pointing in same direction is the identification of the danger of a destruction of social and political institutions and the public sphere, all of which provide the preconditions for real changes in the social system (Hennig 1994). In this sense, the propagation of the ideology of the market can clearly be seen as a contribution to processes of the paralysis of consciousness which, according to Heydorn, become necessary for the securing of power and domination because of the rationality of social processes and forms of production under late capitalism. An interesting point here is that the “return” of a public or government-run Bildung system (the distinction can only be indicated here) to a “marketised civil society” decisively undermine the potential

CHAPTER 2

for democratic debates, decision-making processes as well as collective action (Whitty 1998: 101). It can also be said that “atomised decision-making within an already stratified society may appear to give everyone formally equal opportunities but will actually reduce the possibility of collective struggles that might help those least able to help themselves” (Whitty 1998: 100; see also Giroux & McLaren 1992: 101f.). Against the background of an analysis of hegemonic relationships, we can conclude that the ideology of the market and marketisation strategies achieve their aim to the extent that they destroy a public sphere in which general interests do not simply stand in the shadow of private interests. The difference in character between public and private institutions, between public and private action, the difference between public and private interests as well as the awareness that individuals cannot be held accountable in a private capacity and in the context of private activities and institutions, and in the field of *Bildung* this produces a need to think about possible alternatives, beginning with a defence of current structures, because this is still founded on universalistic principles (Gutmann 1988; Shor 1992; Whitty, Gewirtz & Edwards 1994; Whitty 1997: 33ff).

VI

The question of ground-breaking alternatives has been posed in the Anglo-Saxon and German discussions in terms of a fundamental transformation of social relationships. The starting point for my concluding reflections will be a suggestion made by Benhabib, which thematises the problem of universalism and particularism, of centralism and decentralisation:

“In a time of neoconservative undermining of the welfare state, it is of decisive importance that we distinguish between radical and conservative critiques of bureaucratisation and centralism. I propose separating the demand for the decentralisation of administrative and political decision-making channels from the decentralising of the legal system; for a decentralising of the legal system would be irreconcilable with the obligation of universal civic and political rights” (Benhabib 1983: 66f). If, in the pursuit of the development and securing of individual freedom, the demand is made for the “establishment of a completely different social order” (Koneffke 1995b: 19), if “the creation of a new social order in which people – individuals and communities – are more nearly the authors of their own individual and collective histories” (Bowles & Gintis 1987: 209), stands on the agenda,²¹ then it is clear that it “is a matter of no more and no less than the development of alternative forms of societalization, that is, of understanding the welfare state as more of a societal than a bureaucratic institution” (Altvater 1982: 139; Gorz 1989: 257ff; Anderson 1993: 140–170). If it is true, as Theunissen has formulated in his engagement with constitutive theories of bourgeois society, that it

²¹ Determinations of the relations between individual and society in diversely developed social stages should also be thematised here, particularly in respect of the potential for the formation of multiples individualities (see Berman 1988: 90-98; zur Lippe 1981: 48-74).

is not bourgeois society in itself which possesses any normative force, but its underlying idea, and that this makes it possible “that this idea extends beyond bourgeois society and will only find its appropriate expression in other forms of society (Theunissen 1981: 12), then the ideas examined here concerning the relationship of Bildung and politics in opposition to the de-politicisation strategies of marketisation can become practically relevant for the democratisation of society. In his interpretation of Humboldt, Heydorn, in contrast to Bollenbeck, pleaded for the Humboldtian presumption of a constitutive distinction between politics and pedagogy, so that Bildung is actually cordoned off from social reality, so to speak, precisely in order to keep reality in view and avoid illusions, “securing for people an ever threatened haven” (Heydorn 1979: 117). In and for the present, there is also an emancipatorally relevant distinction between societal conditions and individual existence. None the less, for Heydorn the perspective of a totality of subjectification has improved so that the question of the relation of Bildung to politics can be posed anew: because politics is no longer underpinned by Bildung, but the political process itself is instead to be understood as a process of universal Bildung. This is why, for him: “Mass liberation, with which the Bildung pursuit of the universality of the species comes to an end, as the embodiment of its self-disposition, can only be realised through a long chain of independent actions. The experience of happiness which they generate is irrevokable” (Heydorn 1980b: 297).

The leitmotif of this approach, which speaks of the need for independent actions and social movements, also corresponds to the arguments of Anglo-Saxon commentators. Public and publically effective discourses and decision-making process are particularly relevant precisely in the field of Bildung policy because of their consequences for those affected by such policy. A critique of power and domination from the perspective of German critical Bildung theory thus resonates with the defence of societal responsibility for Bildung institutions and processes in opposition to atomistic strategies of individualisation and privatisation from the perspective of Anglo-Saxon Bildung sociology and, given the globalisation process on the side of capital, should be explicitly linked together. If, as Koneffke suggests in his interpretation of Marx, there are only subjects and forms of maturity in the plural (Koneffke 1995a: 3; Sünker 1989: 423f.; Sünker 1994), the task, the socially responsible task (Gutmann 1988) facing us is that of securing or at least fighting for everyone’s Bildung conditions and Bildung processes — in the interests of all members of society, and thus of a substantively democratic society.