

Alienating Alienating Education: On the Possibility of Resistant Pedagogy in Neoliberal Society

Alexander Kurunczi, Kenneth Rösen

Introduction: Pedagogy as a Privileged Site of (Anti-)Complicity

Pedagogy forms an integral component of becoming a subject and being integrated into society; processes of education, therefore, aim at a subject's adaption to society. As a result, education and *Bildung* function as privileged sites where the relation between subject and society can be affirmed, negotiated, or criticised. *Bildung* transcends education in that it inherently strives for human autonomy bringing out self-formation and self-disposal as well as developing one's personal abilities. In short, *Bildung* aims at constituting critical subjectivities, with categories such as autonomy, critique, spontaneity, and reflexivity broadly contouring its conceptual terrain. However, *Bildung* is not immune to societal, economic, and cultural pressures, it can also function as an instrument fostering conformity. Due to this dialectical structure of *Bildung*, the concept of *complicity* gains relevance for an analytic perspective on socialisation. In general, our understanding of complicity is in line with Afxentis Afxentiou et al.'s considerations in which

complicity and “wrongdoing” are fundamentally connected.¹ Particularly their focus on the indirect participation in “wrongdoing”² seems worthwhile, for this allows for a focus on the group dynamics and affective components of social life – which are ritualised and normalised by virtue of education and *Bildung*.

At the same time, we problematise the differentiation between direct and indirect forms of “wrongdoing”, for this becomes increasingly blurred in hegemonic structures. As these structures invariably operate with notions of consent and coercion, the distinction between genuinely voluntary acts and acts that are effected by subjectivisation is increasingly fragile. It is, for instance, doubtful whether pupils’ and students’ focus on good grades is the result of their intrinsic motivation or whether it is the result of the pressure to have good grades in order to get a decent job and thus to have a secure future. The forms of conformity which Erich Fromm delineates in his work on the *Social Character* enable an analysis of the genesis of complicity. Complicity, then, has to be understood as a social phenomenon; it is not necessarily evitable. At the same time, these forms of conformity produce states and subjectivities that are utterly alienated. Considering the avoidance of complicity as an exclusively rational, conscious choice would ignore the complex interplay between the macro-level of society and the individual psychological micro-level. We feel that the idea of anti-complicity, therefore, seems to be absolutely essential for crystallising and focussing counter-hegemonic movements and actions. Especially when one conceives of complicity as an endemic moment of contemporary societies³, which is reproduced in educational institutions, it is imperative to develop counter-strategies. This article, therefore, conceptualises a typology of postmodern character features on the basis of Erich Fromm’s notion of the social character, to throw into sharp relief the correlation of individual and social

¹ Afxentis Afxentiou, Michael Neu, Robin Dunford (eds.): *Introducing Complicity*. In: *Exploring Complicity. Concept, Cases, and Critique*. London 2016, pp. 1-15.

² *ibid.*

³ Paul Reynolds: *Complicity as Political Rhetoric. Some Ethical and Political Reflections*. In: Afxentis Afxentiou, Michael Neu, Robin Dunford. (eds.): *Exploring Complicity. Concept, Cases, and Critique*. London 2016, pp. 35-52.

pathologies and distortions. It focusses in particular on structures of time and develops a concept of education aiming at autonomy in order to theorise anti-complicit approaches to education. It also introduces the notion of *Bildung* in order to differentiate between various degrees of complicity as well as anti-complicit endeavours within the field of education.

Social Character

To emphasise the entanglement between social influences and the development of character, the concept of the *social character* – as established in Critical Theory and significantly shaped by Erich Fromm – proves useful. Proceeding from the dynamic notion of character in psychoanalysis, Fromm retains that libidinous structures are formed by social influences, causing particular “ideological results”.⁴ Consequently, “[e]very form of society has not only its own economic and political, but also its specific libidinous structure.”⁵ Hegemonic tendencies of the capitalist economic system are integral in determining functional libidinous energies in all members of society. This modification of the libido entails the production of similar orientations in terms of character which are, in turn, functional for economic processes of production. According to Fromm, the formation of any character or identity results from identification and the presumed understanding of social expectations.⁶ Herein the dialectics of character and identity development is founded: on the one hand, there has to be identification with norms, values, and role expectations; on the other hand, the promise of autonomous potentials circulates. Subjects’ general identification with society constitutes what Fromm terms a *social character* which encompasses “the essential nucleus of the character structure of most members of a group, which has developed as the result of basic experiences

⁴ Erich Fromm: Politics and Psychoanalysis. In: Stephen Eric Bronner, Douglas Kellner (eds.): *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader*. New York 1989, pp. 213-218, here p. 216.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Erik H. Erikson: *Identity and the Life Cycle*. Frankfurt am Main 1994, pp. 62-75
Herbert Mead: *Mind, Self, and Society*. Chicago 1934, pp. 207-221.

and mode of life common to that group.”⁷ While immediate experiences made in interaction impact the development of character structures, “the social character internalises external necessities and thus harnesses human energy for the task of a given economic and social system.”⁸ Insofar as libidinal energies are shaped in accordance with economic developments, the social character acts as a “putty”⁹ which fixes libidinal energies to the society and “without which the society would not hold together, and which contributes to the production of important social ideologies in every cultural sphere.”¹⁰ Not only is this “putty” functional for the maintenance of hegemony, but it also cements complicit articulations in the subject. Complicity, therefore, is essential in evoking consent as well as being the result of coercive measures.

Liquid Modernity

To comprehend predominant character orientations, it is paramount to examine current social framings influencing identity formations. The foundational tendencies of today’s “liquid modernity”¹¹ are intricately connected to the economic order of neoliberalism. They share their anthropological assumptions: members of society are primarily understood as consumers.¹² The individual’s role is impotent and passive.¹³ Subjects experience recognition only in their preparedness to subject themselves to regulatory techniques while they also have to act as marketers and

⁷ Erich Fromm: *Fear of Freedom*. London 1984, p. 277, emphasis in original.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 279.

⁹ Erich Fromm: The Method and Function of an Analytical Social Psychology. In: Andrew Arato, Eike Gebhardt (eds.): *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*. New York 1985, pp. 477-496, here p. 493.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ In essence, Bauman understands *Liquid Modernity* as a deterritorialised and increasingly mobile “aggregate state” of power (relations) in which structures are fluid and freedom arbitrary; cf. Zygmunt Bauman: *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge 2000, here p. 24.

¹² *ibid.*, pp. 89-95.

¹³ Zygmunt Bauman: *Consuming Life*. Cambridge 2007, pp. 20-24.

commodities;¹⁴ the prerequisite for their status as subjects is unequivocal: “In the society of consumers no one can become a subject without first turning into a commodity”.¹⁵ It does not suffice to subjugate oneself to this transformation once; constantly changing constraints and conditions require an incessant transformation.

However, this adaptation of character – as Fromm already pointed out – depends on the development of society, meaning that the development of character can only react to society’s development. The drift in adaptation that ensues may lead to a lack of orientation. Constant social change, then, evokes a lifelong pressure to train and adapt.¹⁶ The feeling of conformity satisfies, for it constitutes the precondition for being recognised. Consequently, “looking for examples, for counsel and guidance is an addiction”.¹⁷ The interlocking of individuals’ status as subjects and their simultaneous transformation into commodities are functional for contemporary society, for the consumer identity places social relations in “the notoriously capricious and whimsical powers of wind or water indifferent to human manipulation”¹⁸ and assesses them only in regards to their use and the attainable surplus. Social relations become material commodities. Social isolation, furthermore, represents one cause for a lack of critical reflection: such a critique is “toothless”.¹⁹

Apart from that, the fluid, modern consumer society is connected to a multitude of “collateral victims”²⁰; it entails both “*ethical blindness*”²¹, which enables unsubdued devotion to market directives, and the “materialization of

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Bauman, *Liquid*, p. 72.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 111.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁰ Bauman, *Consuming*, p. 97.

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 118, emphasis in original.

love”²² as expressed in social isolation and the inability to act in solidarity, resulting from one’s role as consumers. Consumerism and class politics are essential in this respect, for the ‘underclass’ is particularly susceptible to being hit by these collateral damages; it is connected to the inability to adapt so that social inequalities are simply individualised and responsibility is attributed in a classic meritocratic-ideological manner to the individual. Etymologically, meritocracy denotes the rule of those who perform. It entails rewards and social mobility for those who make an effort. As a concept it is fundamentally connected to neoliberal hegemony in which it has gained utter predominance. The underclass, therefore, becomes an unreal group that is not only classified with respect to its social situation, but is stigmatised as abnormal. It becomes the ubiquitous ‘spectre’, in which the abnormal is inscribed and becomes the great Other, against which one has to hold one’s ground in order not to be absorbed in this cluster, too. Following Foucault, the term *underclass* could be understood as a *heterotaxis*, a social stratum in which systematic meanings and norms are ambivalently realised, but which is simultaneously functional for the real construction of norms and sanctioning programmes. Playing on this fear of the spectre, the ‘underclass’ is constructed as the antagonist to conforming and functional classes; the ensuing permanent uncertainty amongst civilians serves to motivate the necessity of continuous self-transformation. Thus, producing this type of lability becomes the most important technique of governmentality.²³

Pathologising Time(s):

It is here that hegemony and time converge: while the shape and trajectory of neoliberal hegemony has “never proceeded unopposed and [...] has never exhibited the purity in practice that it claimed in rhetoric”²⁴, it has nevertheless produced more and more elastic borders of time and space

²² *ibid.*, p. 120.

²³ Zygmunt Bauman: *Strangers at Our Door*. Cambridge 2016, p. 40.

²⁴ Neil Brenner, Nick Theodore, Jamie Peck: Postneoliberalism and its Malcontents. In: *Antipode*. Vol. 41, No. 1 (2009), pp. 94-116, here p. 104.

which allow for the similarly increased mobility of capital and stand in sharp contrast to the figures of displacement and their vulnerability (such as asylum seekers). Furthermore, mobility only relates to particular entities – while the flow of (trans-national) capital is desired, the flow of populations is severely regulated.

Hartmut Rosa's diagnosis postulates a process in which formerly stable structures of the self are becoming increasingly liquid, i.e. flexible and malleable.²⁵ These identities are, in Rosa's words, reminiscent of a player juggling with time.²⁶ They epitomise the imperative flexibility each individual has to be capable of, while these structures also dissolve collective social rhythms, e.g. work processes have become increasingly liquid in post-fordism as the fixed place in the factory has been replaced by the permeable boundary between leisure and work in the home office. Similarly, the understanding of time as something that needs to be exploited is rooted in capitalism's efforts to generate profit. As Rosa points out, time-economic imperatives form the "golden thread of capitalism"²⁷, where time has become commodified – a resource for production itself. Since – technologically – production has become less time-devouring, it needs to be accompanied by an increase in consumption. Consequently, the prevalent form of individualised, classed consumerism in post-fordism has to be seen as a faux-choice which is in fact the result of the social character, rather than a natural desire. The predominance of the social character is, therefore, also a result of a lack of orientation co-existing with an imperative to choose. In terms of the structure of time on which this lack of orientation is predicated, Rosa speaks of a "shrinking of the present"²⁸: the periods of time in which stable forms of knowledge, orientations for actions, or practical maxims can be assumed and transparently understood are shortening. The multiplicity of

²⁵ Hartmut Rosa: *Beschleunigung. Die Veränderung der Zeitstruktur in der Moderne*. Frankfurt am Main 2005, p. 354.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 368.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 272.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 132.

options evokes a threatening abundance of contingency.²⁹ As a result pace becomes “contagious”.³⁰

These shifts are not exclusively the result of an economic determinism; they operate within socio-cultural parameters and are instigated by the social character. In particular, the connection between affective attributions and cultural codes incentivises subjects: on the one hand, the incessant fear of a fall in social status evokes anxiety and a lack of orientation (and mirrors Erich Fromm’s assertion of a dialectical structure of freedom), on the other hand, the promise of social mobility opens up the perspective of eluding the “fundamental uncertainty of contingency” and thus serves as a driving force for self-improvement.³¹ Crucially, it is capital that functions as the key negotiator of contingency: it offers the perspective of contingency as a productive field of options and opportunities to choose from ‘autonomously’. Here, various pathologies converge: the structural, the social, and the individual psychological pathology entail one another.

Without doubt, education is important in the production, establishment, and maintenance of identities. These identities are complicit, as they are constituted by the social character. In order to realise anti-complicit potentials, it would be paramount to establish an environment in which stress and pressure were alleviated and temporal regimes were disrupted. Contrariwise, pressure is exacerbated on a massive scale, as time is – even in a pedagogical context – primarily understood as a resource. Particularly, the very notion of efficiency is deeply ingrained into the understanding of time in educational contexts: the attempts to reduce the number of years people spend in secondary education, the accent on speed, and the focus on economic productivity, which entails a seamless integration into the

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 285.

³⁰ Thomas Hylland Eriksen: *Tyranny of the Moment. Fast and Slow Time in the Information Age*. London 2001, p. 70.

³¹ Rosa, *Beschleunigung*, p. 285.

labour market, all display the relevance attributed to economic categories over a general development of people's personality.

At the same time, the rapid velocity with which subjects are pushed through the education system exacerbates the gap between different classes and social groups. As Washbrook and Waldfogel point out: "Children growing up today in the UK from the poorest fifth of families are already nearly a year (11.1 months) behind those children from middle income families in vocabulary tests by age 5, when most children start school."³² Consequently, socio-economic differences have a significant impact on subjects' attainment in school, while the possibility of remedying inequalities ingrained in modalities of socialisation is thwarted. Analytically, this entails that the capricious whims of an unfathomable destiny are transferred into a structural analysis of privileges and precariousness, while one's intelligibility as being human has to be analysed along the lines of gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. In addition, responsibility no longer suffices as an analytical grid with which subject positions of precariousness and vulnerability can be explained. Only a paradigm that accounts for alliances, intersubjectivity, and affect can unsettle the smokescreen of meritocracy. To a similar extent neoliberal capitalism's structures enable what David Harvey has termed "accumulation by dispossession"³³, which becomes a necessary instrument to extend capital's growth; generally, this is achieved through legal forms of privatisation or deregulation, whereas there is also a tendency to tolerate illegal means "such as violence, criminality, fraud and predatory practices".³⁴

Implications for an Anti-Complicit Education

In light of these developments on the macro-level of society as well as on the less encompassing levels of institutions and families, education has a

³² Elizabeth Washbrook, Jane Waldfogel: *Cognitive Gaps in the Early Years. A Summary of Findings from the Report 'Low Income and Early Cognitive Development in the UK'*. London 2010, p. 3, <https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/low-income-early-cognitive-development-u-k/> (last viewed on 2 Jan. 2018).

³³ David Harvey: *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford 2005, p. 169.

³⁴ David Harvey: *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism*. London 2010, p. 49.

particular responsibility not only to *avoid* complicity, i.e. to be detached and non-complicit, but also to *foster* resistant subjectivities by taking a markedly anti-complicit stance. A pedagogical enterprise that tries to position itself entirely outside of a hegemonic totality of neoliberal society seems both unfathomable and undesirable. Nor can the forms of anti-complicity which pedagogy can strive for be understood as a strict and regimented collection of instructions on how to act and to behave. Indeed, any nostalgic attempt to restore more stable and solid configurations of time and (infra-)structure would not only be doomed to fail – for fostering imperatives that are unintelligible in the corresponding social arena would completely disentangle education and society– but would also rehabilitate structures of authority, force, and asymmetrical relations of power within the educational context. Yet the relationship between neoliberal developments – which Brenner et al. have described as a process of “neoliberalisation” in order to stress the heterogeneous character of various forms of governmentality throughout space and time³⁵ – and resistant, oppositional movements is anything but symmetrical, sequential, or singular and universal.³⁶ In fact, what emerges are resistant palimpsests forming a haunting “spectre of discontent”,³⁷ their – temporary – unification in an anti-complicit education committed to emancipation and the envisioning of alternatives has to be a central aim.

Anti-complicit education might be seen as providing alienation from alienation. It localises and contains practices of neoliberal hegemony and ruptures the naturalised truths and unquestioned imperatives that suffuse them; critical reflection of subjects’ inevitable enmeshment in hegemonic relations is, therefore, paramount. These positive effects of an alienation of the second order epitomise a break with the complicity of forms of autosuggestion. As such methods only focus on short-term reframing rather

³⁵ Brenner et al., Postneoliberalism.

³⁶ Helga Leitner, Jamie Peck, Eric S. Sheppard: Squaring up to Neoliberalism. In: id. (eds.): *Contesting Neoliberalism: Urban Frontiers*. New York 2007, pp. 311-327, here p. 313.

³⁷ Alpesh Maisura: The Neo-Liberalisation Policy Agenda and Its Consequences for Education in England: A Focus on Resistance Now and Possibilities for the Future. In: *Policy Futures in Education*. Vol. 12, No. 2 (2014), pp. 286-296, here p. 293.

than the establishment of systemically productive personality features, this method can conceivably have a detrimental impact as the frustration might evoke the subjects' aversion towards this very process. The interventionist character of anti-complicit education offers a reflexive processing of socialising influences. Deceleration, irritation, and ruptures act as non-affirmative modalities of evoking an intra-discursive outside, of offering a "dis-illusion" in the most literal sense. One could say that anti-complicit pedagogy alienates, i.e. questions, de-naturalises, and de-familiarises, a neoliberal form of education, which produces alienated subjectivities. The aim of anti-complicit pedagogy thus is to alienate an alienating form of education.

Also, this understanding of anti-complicit pedagogy as an alternative space of critical reflection suggests a step towards rendering the subject immune to the disciplining sanctions of the culture industry. It is imperative that this understanding of anti-complicit pedagogy stresses the heterogeneity of subjective experiences and offers a space in which the experiences of vulnerability and anxiety of the subaltern, the alienated, the stigmatised – in short, the less privileged – be uttered. This affective dimension has to be firmly embedded in efforts to evoke feelings of solidarity and to combat neoliberalism's immanent hostility to all forms of social solidarity that confine capital accumulation.³⁸ Pedagogy inhabits a proliferative space of difference and emotional complexity. Anti-complicit education has to aim at the implementation of a radically democratic and progressive politics which tackles the naturalisation of inequalities in terms of wealth distribution and the allocation of recognition effected by neoliberal hegemony.

A Critical Theory of *Bildung*

This very neoliberal hegemony is evident in totalitarian tendencies of a significantly flexibilised and accelerated society resulting in alienated

³⁸ Harvey, *Brief History*, p. 75.

processes of a seamless identification with external ideologies; they attest to the “automatization of the individual.”³⁹ In Fromm’s words,

“They [the automatised individuals] look so similar to their surroundings that they are hardly distinguishable from them. The person who gives up his individual self and becomes an automaton, identical with millions of other automatons around him, need not feel alone and anxious any more. But the price he pays, however, is high: it is the loss of the self.”⁴⁰

Automaton denotes a way of constituting human selves which, paradoxically, have no access to their own selves, are unable to articulate their own needs, and thus become the foundation for dominance. An automaton is incapable of resistant thinking and acting and merely affirms existing circumstances. These sinister developments have to be combated from a perspective of a theory of *Bildung*. Thus it is necessary to embed these analyses in the history of a critical theory of *Bildung*. Heinz-Joachim Heydorn examines traditional theories of *Bildung* with regard to their emancipatory potentials and inserts *Bildung* into a historico-social, political context. His pivotal work *Über den Widerspruch von Bildung und Herrschaft* (1970), refers to the dialectics immanent in the term *Bildung*. Following the institutionalisation of education, it has become an instrument for the ruling class, an “instrument of domination”.⁴¹ Thus *Bildung*’s critical potential as a category is twofold. “*Bildung* is not only the subject of critique, but also its object.”⁴² Only reflection on social constraints may unleash humanity; this necessitates education because “only after the realisation of concrete confines can freedom become effective.”⁴³ The individual has to be considered in a double role, too: both in its own and socially negotiated possibilities for development, as well as in its ambivalence, caused by society’s paradoxes.

³⁹ Fromm, *Fear*, p. 176.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 159.

⁴¹ Heinz-Joachim Heydorn: *Über den Widerspruch von Bildung und Herrschaft*. In: Heydorn: *Studienausgabe Band 3*. Wetzlar 2004, p. 44; see also pp. 33-39.

⁴² Peter Euler: *Bildung als “kritische” Kategorie*. In: *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*. Vol. 49, No. 3 (2003), pp. 413-421, here p. 415.

⁴³ Heinz-Joachim Heydorn: *Zum Verhältnis von Bildung und Politik*. Studienausgabe, Band 2. Wetzlar 2004, p. 200.

Any theory of *Bildung* has a two-fold aim: on the one hand, it needs to reappraise the contradiction between *Bildung* and domination; on the other hand, it needs to formulate an appropriate diagnosis of its time and the society in which it navigates.⁴⁴ In light of this demand, any theory of *Bildung* acts as a form of critique inherent in society; such a theory “does not attack the system from the outside, but from within.”⁴⁵ Thus *Bildung* is connected to reflection and distance towards social conditions; only if it remains attached to these categories, i.e. reflection and distance, the “liberation of any human through their consciousness”⁴⁶ is fathomable. Both elements – reflection as well as distance – form the foundation for autonomy, itself the highest aim of all processes of *Bildung*.⁴⁷ Autonomy generally denotes the ability of any human to understand processes of social determination, which enables them to productively acquire knowledge about historico-social conditions and to critique those in order to create spaces against oppressive structures; “from its inception autonomy is only comprehensible as dissent from that which is set”⁴⁸. The historical connection of autonomy and *Bildung*, however, makes the former as much a dialectical category as the latter. Ever since the social ascendancy of the bourgeois class, autonomy has been modified as an instrument of domination and a strategy in service of heteronomy, since autonomy can only emerge by virtue of identification with a social order: “while autonomy serves as the finished thought in the dimension of the mind, it is a trace of blood [*Blutspur*] in reality”⁴⁹. Even though autonomy is aimed at emancipation, becoming autonomous in capitalist structures is tantamount

⁴⁴ Ludwig A. Pongratz: Aufklärung und Widerstand. Kritische Bildungstheorie bei Heinz-Joachim Heydorn. In: Ludwig A. Pongratz, Peter Euler (eds.): *Kritische Bildungstheorie. Zur Aktualität Heinz-Joachim Heydorns*. Darmstadt 1995, pp. 11-38, here p. 25.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁶ Heydorn, *Schriften 1967-1970*, p. 182.

⁴⁷ Werner Sesink: Vom Wert der Mündigkeit. In: Ludwig A. Pongratz, Peter Euler (eds.): *Kritische Bildungstheorie. Zur Aktualität Heinz-Joachim Heydorns*. Darmstadt 1995, pp. 151-168, here p. 166.

⁴⁸ Heinz-Joachim Heydorn: Zu einer Neufassung des Bildungsbegriffs. Studienausgabe, Band 4. Wetzlar 2004, pp. 56-145, here p. 56.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 57.

to “an identification with the pure, omnipotent, and violent subjectivity of ‘modern man,’ which is structurally prefigured through capital.”⁵⁰ As a result of this process, “education that aims at autonomy equals education that aims at dominance.”⁵¹ Autonomy constitutes the supreme value of pedagogy, which dedicates itself to a “thorough formation of consciousness, starting as early as possible and trying to establish any human’s resistance.”⁵² The demand any critical theory of education is confronted with lies in forming autonomous potentials that are capable of evoking anti-complicit actions. However, the fundamental dialectics should not escape notice. Autonomy as such is not necessarily resistant; it can easily lead to complicity, “if the gesture of critical distance regarding social forces – itself characteristic for all autonomy – is not used with regard to autonomy and its very constitution.”⁵³ The resistant potentials of a perspective aiming at autonomy can also be systematically and systemically domesticated.

Concluding Remarks

When complicity is understood without further differentiation and becomes a term of indiscriminate normative essence, it not only loses its analytical acumen, but – as Reynolds expounds – its rhetorical power in mobilisation.⁵⁴ Particularly in pedagogic contexts, it would forfeit its sting. Yet, it does not necessarily follow that different levels of collectivity could not be ascertained and differentiated – especially amidst anti-complicit, resistant efforts, a collective moment of accord and agreement is unequivocally relevant. That movements can utilise a quasi-complicit moment of solidarity (in this sense, as a quasi-complicity with the aims of the movement) in order to keep the alliance contingently closed and in unison should not be disputed.

⁵⁰ Sesink, *Mündigkeit*, p. 163.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² Heydorn, *Neufassung*, p. 142.

⁵³ Gernot Koneffke: Einleitung: Zur Dialektik der Mündigkeit. In: id. (ed.): *Pädagogik im Übergang zur bürgerlichen Herrschaftsgesellschaft. Studien zur Sozialgeschichte und Philosophie der Bildung*. Wetzlar 1994, pp. 7-20, here p. 11.

⁵⁴ Reynolds, *Complicity*.

The concept of complicity enables an adequate understanding of the dialectics of any educational endeavour – a dialectics that appears sedated and paralysed at the moment. By virtue of a dialectically designed concept multiple issues are addressed: A narrative that remains oblivious to the magnitude of the situation is not invigorated. Nor is adaption to the labour market conceived of as inevitable. Lastly, an approach that is merely analytical and misses out on demanding and implementing a different pedagogical praxis is circumvented. Anti-complicit education enables the construction of (more) autonomous technologies of the self in Foucault's understanding of "practices of freedom"⁵⁵ which understand that critique is not an either-or-development, but an ongoing process of "reflective indocility" and "voluntary inservitude"⁵⁶. If pedagogy and a theory of *Bildung*, respectively, aim at autonomy as a result of *Bildung* in order to establish the possibility of anti-complicity, the ideas of critical theory of *Bildung* have to be anchored in consciousness, for "excavating our own history, its critical and coherent probing is an unfulfilled task. It has to have the character of a rediscovery."⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Michel Foucault: The Ethics of a Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom. In: id. (ed.): *Ethics. Subjectivity and Truth*. London 1997, pp. 281-301, here p. 283.

⁵⁶ Michel Foucault: What is Critique? In: James Schmidt (ed.): *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*. Berkeley 1996, pp. 382-398, here p. 386.

⁵⁷ Heydorn, Widerspruch, p. 41.

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Bios

Alexander Kurunczi holds a B.A. in English/American Studies and Media Studies from the Ruhr-University Bochum, where he currently pursues his M.A in both of these subjects.

Kenneth Rösen earned his B.A. in Education Studies from the University Duisburg-Essen and pursues the M.A. course "Erziehungswissenschaft, Bildungstheorie und Gesellschaftsanalyse" (*Education Studies, Theory of Bildung, and Social Analysis*) at the University of Wuppertal.

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Contact

alexander.kurunczi@rub.de

kenneth.roesen@uni-wuppertal.de