

Bourdieu and the analysis of social classes in Mexico

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Abstract: The following article studies the reception of Pierre Bourdieu's scholarly work in the field of social stratification research in Mexico. With the new millennium, it can be observed that a renewed interest in stratification research arose in Mexico and Latin America. While there is in general great interest in the research work of the French sociologist, his theories and concepts do not enjoy the same relevance in the field of stratification research in Mexico. For instance, the argument of cultural heterogeneity of Latin American countries represents a serious challenge to the usefulness of Bourdieu's class analysis in this region (see García Canclini 1990). However, there are also promising connection points for a Bourdieusian class analysis in Mexican sociology. In this context, Saravís' (2016) class research in urban areas of Mexico and his concept of *social fragmentation* are central. By studying these concepts and Bourdieu's reception in Mexico it is the objective of this article to provide new incentives for research on social classes in Latin America and, furthermore, to promote a Trans-Atlantic dialogue with respect to research on social classes by focusing on a country in the global South.

Introduction

The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu has influenced academic thinking and research activities of scholars far beyond the borders of his country of origin, France. His theoretical innovations and empirical investigations presented new insights and challenges for scholars worldwide to understand the processes of social reproduction as well as social action in their respective countries. In his sociological work he built on the theories and insights of classical authors such as Durkheim, Weber and Marx; authors that have often been regarded as irreconcilable with respect to their theoretical approaches. Nevertheless, it was the attempt of the French sociologist to rethink the classical authors and their contribution to the understanding of the social world as well as his endeavour to create a sociology that goes beyond classical academic dividing lines – as the opposition between agency and structure or the individual and society – that was decisive for his popularity as a sociologist (see for example Burawoy 2018; Jiménez 2005c; Schäfer et al. 2018).

In this manner, Bourdieu has inspired and challenged the academic field of stratification research. In his now famous book *La Distinction* (1979) he offers an alternative way to study and understand class relations in comparison to *traditional* occupational class concepts. Bourdieu shows that class conflicts do not take place only in the field of production but in consumption as well. Furthermore, the development of concepts such as *symbolic domination* and *habitus* allowed researchers in Europe and the US to re-conceptualize the relation between class and culture and to conduct research in fields (e. g. taste) that often have been neglected in the research on social classes. Among others, scholars like Michael Vester and Mike Savage have built on the class analysis of Bourdieu to generate new insights on class relations in societies as Germany or Britain as

well (Vester et al. 2001; Devine and Savage 2005).

In this article, I will focus on the reception of Bourdieu's sociology and the relevance of his concepts to the analysis of class relations in a country of the global South: Mexico. Traditionally, scholars of social stratification research have focused on class relations in *Northatlantic societies*². The Latin American industrialization and modernization process that went hand in hand with the development of large marginalized groups or a large informal sector has often been perceived as an *anomaly* in comparison to the *normal* development experienced by North Atlantic societies (de la Garza Toledo 2011, 12-13). Therefore, the *abnormal* social stratification of the countries of the so-called *Third World* appeared as a research object of secondary importance.

However, with the turn of the millennium it is possible to observe in Mexico and Latin America a renewed interest to study class relations in these societies.³ The informal sector is not necessarily perceived anymore as an *anomaly* or transitional sector that gives account about the incomplete modernization process in Latin America, but as an important sector in the occupational structure that had to be included in class models.⁴ In this context, scholars are eager to catch up with the current international state of research on social stratification. Prominent class concepts, for example the class concepts developed by Erik Olin Wright or by Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero, are discussed and reviewed in Latin America (Franco et al. 2007; Solís and Boado 2016). Besides the interest in studying Latin American countries themselves, the aim is, as Solís and Boado state (2016, xv), to generate insights and data, which enable the comparison of the region with other regions such as, for example, Europe.

In light of this renewed interest in stratification research in Latin America and Mexico and the importance of Bourdieu's thought to stratification research since the *cultural turn*, it seems to be an interesting and important task to discuss the questions: What is the role of Bourdieu's sociology in Mexico? Did his sociology have an important impact on the research of social classes? And perhaps even more pertinent: Are the theoretical concepts developed by Bourdieu for the analysis of social classes in France also useful for the analysis of class relations in a country like Mexico? Addressing such questions is indispensable to evaluate whether Bourdieu's sociology can inspire research on social classes in Latin America and Mexico as it had in other regions of the world. Therefore, the purpose of this article is, first of all, to contribute to a further systematization of Bourdieu's reception in Mexico by discussing the role that his sociology plays in this specific country. Moreover, the article evaluates on this basis the importance and usefulness of Bourdieu's sociology for the analysis of social classes in Mexico and Latin America. At this point it is important to emphasize that the here-presented *state of the art* of Bourdieu's reception in Mexican sociology can not claim to be exhaustive. In view of the large number of publications that exist in Mexico nowadays, and that make references to the work of Bourdieu, a selection process was necessary in order to address the specific interest of this article. The selection process of the literature review will be made transparent for the reader in the following section.

The procedure of the literature review

This literature review can be divided into two steps concentrating on the following objectives. (1) The objective of the first step was to address and to make comprehensible the application of key concepts of Bourdieu's work in Mexico. The focus was on concepts that are central to the analysis of social classes. For this purpose two compilations dedicated to the theory and concepts of the French sociologist have been selected. One compilation is *Pierre Bourdieu en la Sociología Latinoamericana* (Pierre Bourdieu in Latin American Sociology - my translation), coordinated by

Roberto Castro and Hugo José Suárez and published in 2018. The other publication, *Ensayos sobre Bourdieu y su obra* (Essays about Bourdieu and his work – my translation), was coordinated by Isabel Jiménez and published in 2005. I will focus at first on the compilation coordinated by Roberto Castro and Hugo José Suárez as it allows us to address the question of how the *habitus* concept is applied in Mexico. As it will be described below, the *habitus* has become a key concept in the field of class research in general. It was therefore crucial to include a publication that reviews the application of *habitus* in Mexico. Afterwards, *Ensayos sobre Bourdieu y su obra* will be discussed. This publication includes an autobiographical article written by the editor, in which she describes her approach to the theory and research work of Pierre Bourdieu during her formation as a sociologist in Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s. Beyond an individual approach to the sociology of Bourdieu, this autobiographical article permits the reader to get a better understanding of the academic field in Mexico at a time, when Mexican scholars began to develop an interest in the sociology of Bourdieu.

(2) In the second step of the literature review, three authors have been reviewed with the objective to represent key research approaches in the field of stratification research in Mexico. The authors are Patricio Solís, Nestor García Canclini and Gonzalo A. Saraví. While Solís is especially interested in research about occupational classes, basing his research work on authors such as Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (Solís and Boado 2016), García Canclini has been concerned with the study of popular culture and classes, building on authors such as Bourdieu and Gramsci (García Canclini 1984; 1994). In contrast, Saraví has been focused on studying processes of social exclusion and social inequality, above all in urban areas (Saraví 2009; 2016). Therefore, these three authors represent three different approaches in the field of stratification research. The discussion of these authors makes it possible to review the usefulness of a Bourdieusian class analysis in Mexico and Latin America from the perspective of different key approaches within the heterogenous field of stratification research. Furthermore, the comparison of these authors and their different approaches allows us not only to evaluate Bourdieu's reception in Mexico but to discuss further potentials of a Bourdieusian class analysis in this country.

The purpose of this article is attained if the reading stimulates a process of further reflections on the research field of social classes and social inequality. Scholars like Jodhka et al. (2018) have shown the innovative potentials for the understanding of class relations when confronting Bourdieu's sociology with the social realities in societies of the global South such as India, Laos or Brazil. Therefore, this article aims to contribute to the Trans-Atlantic dialogue in the field of stratification research that will permit a better understanding of the class structures of capitalist societies in the South as well as in the North (see also Rehbein and Souza 2014).

The Sociology of Bourdieu in Mexico

In their introduction to *Pierre Bourdieu en la Sociología Latinoamericana*, the authors Roberto Castro and Hugo José Suárez (2018b, 13-14) notice that in countries such as Brazil or Argentina the influence of Bourdieu has been studied systematically already (see for example Baranger 2008 and 2010), while in Mexico this still remains a pending task.⁵ Therefore, Castro and Suárez (2018b, 13-14) emphasize that the publication of *Pierre Bourdieu en la Sociología Latinoamericana*, which they coordinated as editors, represents a further step to understand and visualise the impact that Bourdieu's sociology had on the academic thinking and research activities of scholars in Mexico. In this context, the articles in this book focus on the Bourdieusian concepts of *habitus* and *field* and how these concepts are used in Mexico – as well as in other Latin American Countries.

In the field of stratification research, the concept of *habitus* has attracted the attention of many researchers to restudy the relation between class and culture (Devine and Savage 2005; see also Vester et al. 2001). As Bourdieu (1979, 433) states in *La Distinction*, beyond the identification of social classes by recurring to their position within the relations of production, a social class can – or has to – be defined by the collectively shared *habitus* as well. The *habitus* represents a system of embodied patterns of action that people develop in learning processes during their life courses. Individuals who share a common social condition are likely to gather comparable experiences and to go through similar learning processes (Jodhka et al. 2018, 2, 14-16). Therefore, in research about social classes the focus on class-specific experiences and patterns of action became as relevant as an analysis of the occupational class structure. It is this twofold definition of social classes that made Bourdieu's sociology so attractive for stratification researchers also outside of France (see Christel Teiwes-Kügler and Andrea Lange-Vester 2018, 115).

From this perspective, it may seem surprising that in *Pierre Bourdieu en la Sociología Latinoamericana*, the articles dedicated to the use of the *habitus* concept do not discuss in the first place questions related to the analysis of social classes – surprisingly at least for a reader familiarized with the debates on social classes and the cultural turn in Europe. To mention only a few articles in the compilation: the *habitus* concept is, for example, used within the sociology of law to study social practices of legal actors (Cuéllar Vázquez 2018). The concept is applied as well in an investigation regarding the participation of sex workers in religious centres in Mexico City (Flores Castillo and Mendoza 2018), or to generate new insights on the processes of stabilisation of social and political movements, in this case the LGBT movement in Mexico (Martínez Carmona 2018). To avoid misunderstandings, the observation that the *habitus* concept is not primarily used in the analysis of social classes in Mexico is not meant as a critique. Quite the contrary, the multiple uses of the *habitus* concept to study social practices of highly diverse social actors and groups is positively surprising and inspiring. In fact, this raises the question of whether in Europe – or especially in Germany – the full potential of this concept is actually exploited to shed light on different social phenomena.⁶

However, regarding the field of stratification research, it can be observed that an analysis of social classes based on the *habitus* concept is missing, at least in the publication *Pierre Bourdieu en la Sociología Latinoamericana*. This first impression that the sociology of Bourdieu has been of less interest in Mexico to conduct research on social classes, or to *rethink* the relation between class and culture, is further confirmed when reviewing other publications that deal with the theory and research of the French sociologist. Even though the impact of Bourdieu's sociology in Mexico still needs to be studied more systematically, there are publications that can be viewed as central in discussions of his work. This is the case, for example, of the compilation *Ensayos sobre Bourdieu y su obra*, coordinated by Isabel Jiménez (2005a), who was a student of Bourdieu at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences) in Paris during the 1990s.⁷

Bourdieu and the academic field in Mexico

The compilation coordinated by Jiménez was published in the context of the *Seminario Permanente de Investigación y Formación Pierre Bourdieu* (Permanent Seminar for Research and Formation Pierre Bourdieu – my translation). The seminar is a common project of three Mexican Universities.⁸ The aim is to promote the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu in Mexico and to incorporate the method of the French sociologist in the investigation of the Mexican and Latin American

societies (Jiménez 2005b, 9). For this purpose, the book includes, besides articles written by Mexican scholars, contributions of Bourdieu's French disciples as well; for example, Loïc Wacquant.

Regarding the reception of Bourdieu in Mexico, the contribution of Isabel Jiménez (2005c), "Una historia de acercamiento a Bourdieu y su obra" (A history of an approach to Bourdieu and his work – my translation) in this book is especially interesting. The article is autobiographical and offers important insights into the academic field of Mexico. As the title already indicates, Jiménez describes here her approach to the theory and research of Pierre Bourdieu during her formation as a sociologist in Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s. According to the author, the discussions and research interests within the social sciences in Mexico were highly influenced during this time by global political and social events. Among others, she mentions the Cold War, the critique against the Stalinist model of development, the struggles for liberation, and US American interventionism in different regions of the world. At least in the field of critical social sciences, the changes in the political and social landscape were accompanied by an interest for theoretical re-orientations. In this context, authors like Althusser and Gramsci became more important. In comparison to more orthodox Marxist approaches, both authors offered scholars committed to the tradition of Marxist Theory an approach to study social phenomena that had been relegated until then – in the Marxist terminology – to the *superstructure* of society (Jiménez 2005c, 149-150).⁹

For Isabel Jiménez, it is the role of education in society that became of central academic interest to her. As she states, the field of education and culture initially appears neglectable to scholars interested in studying social power relations. But with the development of Marxist Theory by authors such as Althusser, who stress the importance of the *superstructure*, the role of education in the reproduction and possible transformation of society attracted her attention. It was only after discussing the theories of Gramsci and Althusser when Jiménez finally begins to concentrate on the work of Bourdieu (ibid., 140-141). Her main interest is the publication *La reproduction* that Bourdieu wrote together with Jean-Claude Passeron (see Bourdieu and Passeron 1970). In this context, Jiménez confesses that her initial approach towards the sociology of Bourdieu was marked by an attitude of confrontation. The prominent critique at this time against the publication of Bourdieu and Passeron – which also influenced Jiménez – is that the authors deny the capacity of resistance of social subjects and that their focus on processes of reproduction neglect the potential for transformation (Jiménez 2005c, 111-112).

Despite this critique and initial rejection, Jiménez kept being attracted to the work of Bourdieu. Of special interest to her is that the French sociologist appears to offer a sociology that allows investigation of social phenomena beyond the common opposition of *objective* and *subjective* (ibid., 126). Furthermore, the sociology of Bourdieu seems to be relevant for Jiménez because he also attempts to establish a sociology beyond the opposition of positivism and critical social theory. To put it briefly, representatives of the former seek to generate knowledge about the social world by conducting empirical research while trying to ignore the role of theory in the process, and representatives of the latter neglect or deny the importance of empirical research when developing social theory. In this context, Bourdieu's sociology is of special interest for Jiménez as the French sociologist emphasizes the importance of theory as well as empirical research for the generation of knowledge (ibid., 132-134).

The autobiographical article of Jiménez clarifies that Bourdieu's sociology has an important influence on Mexican scholars especially in the field of educational research. His sociology appears as an opportunity to expand the critical analysis of social power relations to social and cultural institutions, such as the school or the educational system, that have been perceived as

neglectable by scholars in the tradition of critical theories of capitalism. When following the writings of Bourdieu, the school no longer appears as an institution of secondary importance for the reproduction of social inequality and power relations in society. Quite the contrary, the central role of the educational system to reproduce and stabilize power relations in society through the dimensions of culture and symbolic violence became apparent. It is in this context that Bourdieu's sociology became attractive for many Mexican scholars (see also Moraña 2014, chap. 3.4).¹⁰

However, while the innovative potentials of Bourdieu's sociology are used in the field of educational research, the same does not seem to be true for research on social stratification and classes. Jiménez (2005c, 137 - 138) mentions that in her approach to the French sociologist and his works, also *La Distinction* (see Bourdieu 1979), have been of great importance. It is in this text where Bourdieu presents new concepts and a new approach to the analysis of social classes, as Jiménez recognises. Furthermore, she points out that Bourdieu's class analysis has potential also for the analysis of class relations in other societies than France (Jiménez 2005c, 137 - 138). Nevertheless, besides this observation she does not discuss Bourdieu's class analysis any further. Also in the compilation that she edited – and where her autobiographical article was published – Bourdieu's class analysis is not of central relevance. An exception is the article by Solís (2005) that I will discuss in the following section.

***La Distinction* and stratification research in Mexico**

The Mexican sociologist Patricio Solís explicitly intends to put under close scrutiny, in an empirical research project, the applicability of Bourdieu's class concepts for the analysis of Mexican society. In this context, the introduction of Solís is already noteworthy. At the beginning of the 2000s, he comes to the conclusion that:

Although the work of Pierre Bourdieu gradually has gained presence in sociological thought in Mexico, it is difficult to find systematic research studies that link the thinking of the French sociologist to our realities. This discrepancy between theoretical exegesis and empirical investigation is unfortunate, because while the richness of Bourdieu's thought has become evident in his empirical studies on France, its utility still has to be proven for societies with a historical development and a social reality that differs from the Europeans, such as it is the case for the Latin American societies (Solís 2005, 313).¹¹

Therefore, it is the aim of Solís to do something against this *unfortunate* discrepancy between theoretical exegesis and empirical investigation. Based on concepts that the French sociologist presents in *La Distinction*, Solís (2005, 314) runs a research project with the purpose to investigate the lifestyle differences of male adults in Monterrey, a city located in the north of Mexico. Regarding the analysis of lifestyle differences, he concludes that Bourdieu's thought can be summarized in three hypotheses. Firstly, he mentions the hypothesis of social *distance* that results from Bourdieu's concept of the *social space*. As Solís explicates by referring to Bourdieu, it is the social distance between people within social space that also explains the differences in their lifestyles. The position that an individual will occupy within the social space, in turn, is defined by the volume and composition of the different forms of capital she or he possess (ibid.). In this context, it is important to highlight that Bourdieu differentiates between different forms of capital. Besides economic capital, it is especially the possession of cultural capital that is of central relevance for his concept of social space. This is why not only the total amount of capital that an individual or social group possess is important, but also the composition – in other words, the

relation between the cultural and economic capital possessed (see Bourdieu 1979, 140-141).

Secondly, the social distance between people does not lead to differences in social practices automatically. Therefore, Solís mentions the *habitus* that people develop during their socialisation processes as the central mechanism which explains the correspondence between social position and social practices for Bourdieu. Thirdly, differences in the *habitus* do not only lead to different social practices or lifestyles, but to the establishment of power relations between the different social classes as certain practices are socially seen as more or less valuable (Solís 2005, 314).

Solís (2005, 314-315) underlines the relevance of conducting qualitative research on the *habitus* to fully understand the relation between the social position an individual occupies within the social space and his or her specific social practices. However, the Mexican scholar makes clear that he decided to concentrate on “the identification of statistical correlations between positions in the social space, tastes and cultural practices” (ibid., 315).¹² It is on the basis of this research interest that he reviews the utility of Bourdieu’s sociology to study lifestyle differences in Mexico as well.

For this purpose, Solís refers to data collected in 2000 within the *Encuesta Sobre Movilidad Ocupacional y Curso de Vida en Monterrey 2000* (Survey on Occupational Mobility and Life Course in Monterrey – my translation). The social space that he defines is composed of seven occupational groups that include *large business entrepreneurs and senior managers* (grandes patrones y cuadros superiores), *professionals* (profesionistas), *middle level managers* (cuadros medios administrativos), *small and medium-sized business entrepreneurs* (patrones pequeños y medianos), *lower level managers* (Cuadros bajos administrativos), *skilled manual workers* (obreros especializados) and *unskilled manual workers and service proletariat* (obreros no calificados y proletariado de servicios).¹³ As could be expected, the upper occupational classes (large business entrepreneurs and senior managers, professionals) dispose over a higher amount of capital than the lower occupational classes (skilled manual workers, unskilled manual workers and service proletariat). The other occupational groups occupy a position in-between these opposed ends of the class structure – also in terms of the possession of capital. Regarding the capital composition of the occupational groups, only differences between the *professionals* and *large business entrepreneurs and senior managers* are mentioned by Solís. In the latter occupational class, the share of economic capital is higher than the share of cultural capital with respect to the total amount of capital. For the former occupational class, it is the other way around (ibid., 315-316).

To identify statistical correlations between the social positions and cultural practices of male adults in Monterrey, Solís (2005, 316-320) analyses the responses given by representatives of the different occupational groups regarding their cultural practices. For example, he evaluates music tastes, consumption and reading habits, knowledge about museums in the city and the preferred newspaper of the respondents. His analysis reveals that there exists a significant statistical correlation between occupational class and preferred cultural practices. With respect to reading habits, Solís (2005, 318) points out that while 62.8 percent of respondents belonging to the class of *large business entrepreneurs and senior managers* state that they frequently read *novels or other books*, within the occupational class of *unskilled manual workers and service proletariat* only 17.5 percent of respondents indicate reading frequently. Comparable differences in the cultural practices of the different classes can also be observed considering the attendance of cultural sites, such as museums or auditoriums. Whereas 51.4 percent of *large business entrepreneurs and senior managers* confirm to have visited between seven to nine cultural sites, in the case of *unskilled manual workers and service proletariat* just 3.8 percent of respondents state to have visited the

same amount of cultural sites (ibid., 318).

Further examples of class-specific differences in the cultural practices that Solís (2005, 316-320) found in his statistical analysis could be listed. However, at this point it can be summarized that he comes to the conclusion that differences in the cultural practices and lifestyles of male adults in Monterrey can be largely explained by their distance in the social space. Class-specific cultural practices became apparent in the different occupational classes. As the hierarchy of the occupational classes also reflects a hierarchy in the possession of capital, Solís (2005, 321) finds that Bourdieu's hypothesis is *partly* confirmed. He sees two limitations of Bourdieu's sociology to explain lifestyle differences in Monterrey. On the one side, Solís (2005, 321) concludes that while the total amount of capital possessed by the occupational classes is relevant for the explanation of life style differences, the same does not prove to be true for the specific composition of the possessed capital. Therefore, he draws the conclusion that it would be sufficient to focus only on one dimension, the vertical hierarchy between occupations, instead of Bourdieu's social space with the two axes of economic and cultural capital. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that the distinction between occupational classes he used in his analysis was perhaps not sufficiently marked with respect to the composition of capital. In this sense, the (small) differences in the composition of capital of the occupational classes were not relevant enough to explain differences in cultural practices (ibid., 322).

On the other hand, Solís (2005, 321) notices that despite class specific differences in the cultural practices there are also certain common cultural interests across classes. In this context, he mentions especially the interest of *professionals* in artists of Mexican folk music, such as the mariachi or ranchera music. The *professionals* share this interest with respondents of the lower occupational classes. This observation is important, because Solís (2005, 322) infers from it that with respect to the explanation of lifestyle differences it is necessary to focus on social phenomena beyond the possession of capital. In this sense, he highlights that, despite the class differences, people in Monterrey often share a common history of rural migration. From his point of view, the interest in Mexican Folk music across classes could be explained rather by the migrant background than by the possession of capital (ibid., 322).

In his article Solís presents one of the view attempts that I found in my review of the reception of Bourdieu in Mexico that explicitly aims to conduct class analysis based on the concepts and thoughts that Bourdieu introduced in *La Distinction*. However, classes are defined as occupational categories and Solís focuses on the identification of statistical correlations between those pre-defined occupational classes and their cultural practices. Bourdieu's (1979, 433) two-fold definition of social classes, the request to define social classes by their position in relations of production as well as by the collectively shared *habitus*, is not considered. At the beginning of his article Solís (2005) still emphasizes that besides a statistical analysis of lifestyle differences, also qualitative research based on the *habitus* concept is needed to conduct class research following Bourdieu. Nevertheless, at the end of his article he concludes that due to the strong focus on capital, Bourdieu's class analysis might be too narrow to explain the differences in the cultural practices in Mexico. At this point Solís does not take into consideration that it is precisely the *habitus* concept that could be helpful to explain the inertia of cultural practices; in other words, why even the children of rural immigrants will keep listening to Mexican Folk music.

Furthermore, to highlight that members of the occupational class of *the large business entrepreneurs and senior managers* have visited more museums or read more books than the *unskilled manual workers and service proletariat*, may provide information on cultural preferences

of the members of different occupational classes. However, a further discussion of the relation between different cultural preferences and the establishment of power relations in Mexico would have been interesting. In other words, which cultural preferences are important for the reproduction of social classes and social inequality in Mexico? It is indispensable to focus on the *habitus* concept and symbolic power relations to fully evaluate the usefulness of Bourdieu's sociology for the analysis of social classes.

Therefore, in the following section I discuss an author who offers a different approach to Bourdieu in comparison to Solís and who has been of central relevance for the reception of Bourdieu in Mexico as well as Latin America in general. It is Nestor García Canclini and especially the introduction that he wrote for the publication of *Sociología y Cultura* (Sociology and Culture – my translation) in 1990, the Spanish version of *Questions de sociologie* from Pierre Bourdieu.¹⁴ This introduction is of particular interest as García Canclini (1990) also directly refers to *La Distinction* and discusses the relevance as well as the limitations of Bourdieu's class analysis for Latin American societies.

Bourdieu and the analysis of popular classes in Mexico

As Baranger (2010, 136) indicates, a central concern of García Canclini in his introduction to *Sociología y Cultura* is to discuss the relation between Bourdieu and Marxism. In this respect, there are some similarities between García Canclini (1990) and Jiménez (2005c) in the way they approach the sociology of Bourdieu. Both authors refer in their articles to the writings of Marxist authors as Althusser or Gramsci and they discuss the innovative potential of Bourdieu's sociology, its strengths and weaknesses, against this background. More precisely, it can be pointed out that it is especially the relation between Bourdieu and Gramsci that seem to represent a major concern for both authors. While Jiménez (2005c, 149) comes to the conclusion that Gramsci has to be a central theoretical reference for the development of Bourdieu's sociology, García Canclini (1990, 37) expresses astonishment at the fact that Bourdieu does not cite more often the writings of the Italian philosopher (see also Baranger 2010, 136). Furthermore, the few references to Gramsci that can be found in the works of Bourdieu lead García Canclini (1990, 37) to question the citation methods of the French sociologist.

The interest in the relation between Gramsci and Bourdieu that is apparent in the articles of Jiménez and García Canclini can be explained by the fact that both authors study the topic of cultural domination.¹⁵ Therefore, comparison of the French sociologist and the Italian philosopher is reasonable as they share a mutual academic interest. However, there are also other reasons. Gilberto Giménez¹⁶ (2016, chap. 15, section 2), for example, points out that the interest of Mexican scholars to directly address the subject of culture in their investigations started, above all, with the reception of works of Antonio Gramsci that experienced a rapid dissemination in the 1970s. In close exchange with a Mexican anthropology that had focused on investigation of peasants or indigenous groups, the thoughts of Gramsci promoted a rich analysis on popular culture that exists nowadays in Mexico (ibid.). In this context, it seems obvious that it was relevant for Mexican scholars to discuss the relation between Bourdieu and Gramsci, as the latter had already influenced for so many years the research on (popular) culture. In addition, despite the interest of both authors in cultural domination, there are important differences between Gramsci and Bourdieu that apparently needed to be addressed and clarified.

First of all, García Canclini emphasizes that one of Bourdieu's major achievements is to improve our understanding of the mechanism of social reproduction of social classes. From his point

of view, Marx and Marxism had focused on the field of production to analyze the formation of classes and the struggle between classes. Therefore, the importance of the field of consumption had been neglected. However, Bourdieu has shown, especially in *La Distinction*, that the field of consumption and cultural practices are of central relevance to fully comprehend the struggles between classes and the legitimation of the social hierarchy (García Canclini 1990, 14-15, 43-44). From this perspective, Bourdieu shares with Gramsci a common theoretical orientation as culture plays a central role in the comprehensive understanding of class struggles and the establishment of power relations or hegemony (see also García Canclini 1994, 48-49).

Nevertheless, García Canclini criticizes that Bourdieu focuses too strongly on social reproduction and loses sight of processes that lead to change or social transformation. Above all he is critical about the point that the French sociologist underestimates the potential of resistance of the popular classes. According to him, Bourdieu overemphasizes in *La Distinction* the subordination of the popular classes to the dominant culture. At this point, it becomes important for García Canclini to complement the theories of Gramsci and Bourdieu, as the former concentrates on manifestations of resistance among the popular classes (García Canclini 1990, 37-38).

To complement Bourdieu and Gramsci is especially important for the case of Latin American societies. Following the argument of the Brazilian sociologist Sergio Miceli, García Canclini (1990, 30-31) explicates that in the multi-ethnic societies of Latin America there exists more cultural heterogeneity than in European societies; for example, in France.¹⁷ In this sense, the processes of capitalist modernization goes hand-in-hand with the emergence of homogenous, unified symbolic markets. However, according to García Canclini, in Latin America the homogenization of the symbolic market is not as extensive as in Europe. There is still a variety of cultural capitals that coexist and that are not reducible to each other. These different forms of cultural capital have their roots in different traditions or periods, such as the pre-Colombian or the Spanish colonial systems. Furthermore, cultural heterogeneity has been central for the emergence of political movements in Latin America that can be interpreted as movements of resistance against the dominant culture and socioeconomic system. Therefore, in Latin America it is not possible to conceptualize popular culture as an *impoverished version* of the dominant culture (ibid., 29-31).

For García Canclini the perspective of the French sociologist on the social and cultural practices of the popular classes is also problematic for other reasons. He criticizes that, for Bourdieu, the *taste* of the popular classes is defined by the orientation towards practical, functional criteria. The possibility to classify cultural products merely by aesthetical criteria is a privilege that is apparently reserved to the Bourgeoisie. However, García Canclini disagrees with this conception of the cultural differences between the dominant and popular classes. He argues that the popular classes develop their own aesthetical criteria, independent from the standards of the dominant culture. In Europe as well as in Latin America, it became evident that there are cultural practices within the popular classes that neither take the culture of the dominant classes as an orientation nor follow the *utilitarian concern* of the immediate practical utility of cultural goods or practices (ibid., 31-33).

The passive subordination of the popular classes that García Canclini (1990, 37-38) criticizes with respect to Bourdieu is the reason why it is so important for him to complement Bourdieu with Gramsci in Latin America. As García Canclini argues already in earlier publications, for Bourdieu the cultural differences between the social classes can be explained by their different access or appropriation of one common symbolic market. However, due to the restricted access or lower share of cultural capital of the common symbolic market, the popular classes are confined

to an inferior position. In contrast, a Gramscian approach allows scholars to concentrate on the opposition between hegemonic and subaltern groups. In other words, it becomes possible to focus on movements of resistance or manifestations of counterculture (García Canclini 1984, 69; see also García Canclini 1990, 29-30; Moraña 2014, chap. 2).

Despite the critique against Bourdieu, García Canclini emphasizes at the same time that it is important to understand the limits of autonomy and resistance of the subordinated classes. He warns against the tendency to merely focus on manifestations of resistance and overstate the capacity of opposition and cultural autonomy among the popular classes. From his perspective, this tendency can especially be observed in the works of scholars that build upon Gramsci. As important as it is for García Canclini to discuss capacities of opposition among popular classes, it is equally important for him to understand the mechanism of social reproduction. On the basis of Bourdieu's sociology and his concepts, for example the *habitus*, it becomes possible to comprehend how the social world is interiorised and a subconscious consensus is established in the daily practices of the people (García Canclini 1990, 37 – 38; see also García Canclini 1984).

Analysis of social classes, heterogeneity and the autonomy of popular cultures

As valuable as the evaluation of García Canclini is with regard to the use of Bourdieu's sociology in Latin America, the question can be raised as to what extent his emphasis on the heterogeneity of Latin American societies can have unintended effects on stratification research and contribute to a discrepancy in this research field. The idea of heterogeneity in Latin America and the argument of the variety and non-reducibility of different forms of cultural capital may be one further explanation for the reason why, at least in Mexico, there is a tendency to focus exclusively, or too strongly, on the cultural practices of popular classes in empirical research. Furthermore, this tendency is often accompanied by a research approach that analyses the culture of popular classes as *autonomous* or *self-sufficient* (Giménez 2016, chap. 15, section 2). In this context, Gilberto Giménez's evaluation of *cultural studies* in Mexico is especially interesting:

However, generally the popular cultures have been approached in Mexico as if they were autonomous or self-sufficient, apart from any reference to the global cultural system of the country and, especially, without reference to its counterpart, 'the legitimate culture' or 'consecrated' and, to a minor extent, to the culture of the urban middle classes. That means that they have been approached from an angle at least implicitly 'populist', that is to say, as a valued alternative against the 'bourgeois culture' and not as 'dominated symbolism' that bears inside itself the marks of domination. (Giménez 2016, chap. 15, section 2, paragraph 5).¹⁸

Even though García Canclini himself warns against a *romantic* perspective on popular cultures or the tendency to merely focus on the capacity of resistance of popular classes (García Canclini 1990, see also García Canclini 1994), this approach to popular classes appears to be still dominant in Mexico. In his own research projects, García Canclini (1994, 63) states that popular cultures develop as much on their own, as in the conflictual interaction with hegemonic groups. Furthermore, he highlights the importance of the possibility of an *unequal appropriation* of the existing generally institutionalized cultural capital in a society by the different social groups or classes (ibid.). Therefore, García Canclini underlines the relational character of culture. However, the emphasis on the heterogeneity of Latin American societies can reinforce the tendency to merely study popular cultures as if they were *autonomous* or *self-sufficient*. The attractiveness of such an approach can be enforced by the political desire to defend this autonomy or independence against

the hegemonic groups, as García Canclini (1994, 70-71) observed in Gramscian approaches to popular cultures. In this sense, Giménez (2016, chap. 15, section 2) also notices that while in Mexico there are plenty of anthropological studies that deal with popular culture such as peasant or ethnic culture, the dominant cultures or even the urban middle classes do not receive the same attention in Mexican cultural studies. Nevertheless, more recent empirical investigations point to the importance of Bourdieu's cultural class analysis especially for the urban areas of Mexico (see for example Romeu et al. 2018).

Popular classes, occupational classes – no need for a Bourdieusian class analysis?

Therefore, I would like to conclude the discussion of the reception of Bourdieu and his importance for stratification research in Mexico by briefly referring to another specific research field where Bourdieu's sociology has been relevant in the past and where the discussion of his sociology could provide further incentives for a research program on social classes in this Latin American country. It is the research field that deals with questions of social exclusion in urban areas in Mexico and where scholars conduct research on social phenomena such as gated-communities, urban poverty and the unequal access of citizens to public institutions (see for example Bayón 2015, Camus 2015 and Saraví 2016). In this field there is a proximity to Bourdieu's sociology and some authors build upon the theories of the French sociologist. Next to an economic analysis of inequality that concentrates for example on the dimension of income inequality, Bayón and Saraví (2019) emphasize the importance of an anthropological and sociological approach to social inequality. In other words, the establishment of moral and symbolic boundaries in social relations or the presence of symbolic violence in daily interactions are seen as important as differences in income distribution to understand the manifestations and reproduction of social inequality (see also Camus 2019).

Furthermore, it is the relation and interactions between different social classes that are at the centre of interest in this research field. In this sense, Saraví (2016, 29) stresses the importance to apply again the concept of social classes in research about social inequality. From my point of view, his approach to social classes offers the most promising research approach to study class relations in Mexico. In an earlier publication I had the possibility to review his research work (Scholz Alvarado 2018). In contrast to García Canclini and Solís, he does not directly aim to reflect on the applicability of Bourdieu's concepts in Mexico. However, in his research on class relations in Mexico, Saraví (2016) makes reference to Bourdieu's theory and concepts. Moreover, his research work offers several connection points to develop further Bourdieusian class research in this country. Therefore, I will focus on his approach in this final evaluation to discuss the potential for a research program on social classes in Mexico that, among others, build upon the conceptual framework of Bourdieu.

Social classes and social fragmentation

In his work on Mexico, Saraví raises the question: "How is it possible to live together in societies that are so profoundly unequal?" (Saraví 2016, 13).¹⁹ Saraví's (2016) unexpected answer is that profound social inequality led to a fracture in Mexican society that makes living together possible. The social disparities have reached such an extent that they penetrate all areas of social life. Therefore, in societies like Mexico social inequality is not only a question of gradual differences with regard to, for example, income levels (ibid., 279-280). As Saraví (2016) presents in detail in his research work, members of the popular and privileged classes do not share the same institutions, they attend different types of schools, associate their school attendance with different

meanings and even gather different experiences in an urban landscape that is permeated by high inequality.²⁰ In other words, members of the popular and privileged classes make class-specific experiences as their biographies take place in different institutions, urban areas and social contexts (ibid.).

In summary, Mexican society is marked by an extensive and persistent social inequality and the result is the fragmentation of social life. As Saraví (2016, 15) concludes, this fragmentation, paradoxically, can create certain social stability. However, this stability can be described as empty because it is not based on a solid ground of solidarity. On the contrary, it is the fragmentation, the frequent physical absence and the limited interaction between members of different social classes in many routines of daily life that make it possible to forget or ignore social inequality. To a certain extent, members of the popular and privileged classes are members of different social worlds (ibid. 230-231). Nevertheless, Saraví emphasizes that the different social worlds do not merely co-exist as independent entities, but the relation between members of the popular and privileged classes is hierarchical. They are integrated unequally in Mexican society (ibid., 265-266). Even if the fragmentation allows to a certain degree to forget about the profound inequality in the routines of daily life, respondents are well aware about the inequality when they are being asked in an interview (ibid., 230-232). The social stability created by a fragmented society, fragmented in the sense of sociocultural and spatial distance between members of different social classes, is a weak and empty stability. Not only because the fragmentation leads to the reproduction of economic inequality, as Saraví emphasizes, but the fragmentation limits the possibility to gather common experiences. The interactions by members of different social classes are accompanied by feelings of distrust, prejudices and the wound that results from experiences of denial of respect or the refused recognition of being a valuable member of society that can, finally, escalate into high levels of violence (ibid., 281-282).

In his empirical investigation Saraví (2016) shows the potential and importance of conducting research on social classes in Mexico to get a better understanding of the mechanisms that lead to the reproduction of social inequality in this Latin American country. To get an answer to his initial curiosity regarding the peculiar stability of deeply unequal societies, he has chosen a research approach that focuses on collective experiences and practices in daily life. This is a research approach that takes into consideration the relational and multidimensional character of social classes (ibid., 29). In other words, social classes are not merely defined *on the paper*²¹ by the researcher on the basis of a predefined category, for example the occupational activity, rather social classes are studied with regard to the class-specific experiences they gather in daily life. Those experiences are a decisive condition for the existence of classes (ibid., 29).²² From this perspective, the hypothesis of heterogeneity is replaced by the concept of a relational and class-specific fragmentation in the urban areas of Latin America.

In this research approach to social classes, that concentrates on class-specific experiences and practices, similarities between Saraví's class analysis and Bourdieu's two-fold definition to study social classes become apparent. The focus on experiences and social practices permits to study the cultural and subjective side of classes without losing sight of the economic dimensions. Nevertheless, in his research project Saraví (2016) concentrates on the experiences of antagonistic classes. He contrasts the experiences and practices of the popular classes with the privileged classes. This sharp contrast generates valuable insights into class-specific experiences and practices. However, the antagonistic groups appear overly homogenous. In my research on social classes I have focussed on the analysis of different *habitus* types within the privileged and popular classes. In my analysis the cleavages and dividing lines that separate the antagonistic classes became apparent

as well as the distinctions and divisions inside the same class. Among other aspects, important differences can be observed within the privileged classes in Mexico City between class fractions that had established themselves already for several generations in Mexico City and families of social climbers that migrated more recently from rural areas. In this light, Solís (2005) conclusions seems to be accurate that the moment of migration is relevant for the social practices and cultural orientations of people in Mexico. The analysis of *habitus* types of the social classes in Mexico can provide important insights to develop a more differentiated understanding of the class relations and conflicts in this country.

Bourdieu and the research on social classes in Mexico: Conclusions and Outlook

In view of the renewed interest in stratification research in Latin America and Mexico, it was the objective of this article to discuss the role of Bourdieu's sociology in Mexico and whether his theoretical concepts, as for example the *habitus*, have been used to study social class relations. In fact, there is great interest in the sociology of Bourdieu in Mexico and his concepts of *habitus* and *field* are used in a wide range of empirical research projects (Castro and Suárez 2018a). However, it became apparent that Bourdieu's sociology of culture and domination were more important in other research fields, for example educational research, than in the field of stratification research (Jiménez 2005a). From this point of view, the articles written by Solís (2005) and García Canclini (1990) represent an exception. Both authors discuss the usefulness of Bourdieu's sociology for the analysis of social classes in Mexico and Latin America. Nevertheless, there are significant differences in the way Solís and García Canclini sought to prove the validity of Bourdieu's sociology in this region. While the former is interested in the analyses of statistical correlations between occupational classes and cultural practices. The latter is interested in discussing the relation between symbolic domination and popular classes or hegemonic and subaltern groups. Therefore, both authors come to different conclusions regarding the usefulness of Bourdieu's sociology. Solís (2005) concludes that the cultural practices of different social classes can only partly be explained by referring to Bourdieu's theoretical framework. In this context, he emphasizes the importance of rural migration when analysing cultural practices or the higher importance of vertical stratification (total amount of capital) than horizontal differences (capital composition) in Mexico. For García Canclini (1990), Bourdieu's sociology appears to have limited validity in Latin America as in contrast to European countries, which are perceived as socially and culturally more homogenous, Latin America is marked by heterogeneity and, thus, by a variety of cultural capitals that are not reducible to each other.

Finally, Saravís (2016) research work was presented. In contrast to García Canclini and Solís, he does not explicitly evaluate the usefulness of Bourdieu's sociology in Mexico. However, in his empirical study on social classes and social inequality he partly builds upon the thought of the French sociologist. Furthermore, to include Saravís in this article made it possible to present a further perspective in the heterogeneous field of stratification research where Bourdieu's sociology could promote the analysis of social classes. Saravís has been interested in studying processes of social exclusion especially in urban areas and, therefore, adopt a different position than Solís and García Canclini in the field of stratification research. From my point of view, Saravís research approach offers the most promising connection points for the further development of a research program on social classes in Mexico that, among others, can build upon the sociology of Bourdieu. In this context, a better understanding of the class-specific *habitus*-types that exists in Mexico would enable researcher to reach a more differentiated comprehension of the class-structure and

conflicts in this Latin American country.

The analysis of class structures of Southern societies has been neglected for a long time in the field of stratification research. However, I am convinced that a better understanding of the class structures of societies like the Mexican will not only provide important insights for the societies of the South, but also for Northatlantic societies (see Rehbein and Souza 2014). Extensive and persistent social inequality is no longer only a problem of the so-called periphery but represents a challenge for the social stability and cohesion of the centre as well. In this context, I share the hope of the Brazilian researcher Jessé Souza (2008, 21-22):

My hope is that the study of the periphery countries can be related once again with universal questions and that it can contribute to the clarification of problems that troubles all contingent and incomplete types of human societies.²³

The underlying objective of this article was to contribute to this endeavour by discussing the reception of Bourdieu's sociology in Mexico. While an exhaustive treatment of the reception of Bourdieu in Mexico still requires further research, the here selected works are key points of reference in the literature. The discussion of their works seeks to further promote the Trans-Atlantic dialogue and to give incentives for the research on social classes and social inequality that is relevant for all "incomplete types of human societies" (ibid., 21-22).

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Notes

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²I will use the term "Northatlantic societies" following Jodhka et al. (2018). The authors state: "We will refer to the countries of Western Europe, the US and Canada as Northatlantic societies, while we call the former 'Third World' the global South" (ibid., 8).

³For a more detailed discussion of stratification research in Latin America see Franco et al. (2007) and Boris (2008).

⁴An author who already addressed the role of the informal sector in the stratification of Latin American societies in the 1980s is Alejandro Portes (1985).

⁵In his discussion of the relation between Pierre Bourdieu and Latin America, Omar Aguilar (2015, 67) notices that the sociology of Bourdieu was never institutionalized in this region, even if his sociology had an important impact on Latin American scholars. In contrast to other authors, for example the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann, who had a predominant influence on the sociological thought of certain universities in Chile and Mexico, the same does not apply to Bourdieu, according to Aguilar (2015, 67). This *lack of institutionalization* might be a further reason for the difficulty to systematize Bourdieu's reception in certain Latin American countries, such as Mexico.

⁶Despite a certain popularity in the analysis of social classes, the *habitus* concept still meets strong resistance from many German scholars studying the relationship between structure and action. In this context, Schäfer et al. (2018, 374-375) are right to notice that in the sociologies of Northatlantic countries, scholars depart from the assumption of liberty of the individual actor. Bourdieu's *habitus* is then dismissed as too deterministic. The potential of the *habitus* to explain creative and innovative action, without losing sight of the structural embedding of individual action, falls victim to old academic divisions between liberty and determinism (ibid.).

⁷The compilation *Ensayos sobre Bourdieu y su obra*, coordinated by Isabel Jiménez (2005a), is mentioned as a relevant and interesting publication regarding the reception of Bourdieu's sociology in Mexico, for example by Castro and Suárez (2018b, 13) and Moraña (2014, chap. 3.4).

⁸The three universities are: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Universidad Veracruzana (UV) and Universidad Pedagógica Nacional in Oaxaca (UPN) (see Jiménez 2005b, 9).

⁹For a more detailed discussion of the development of Mexican Sociology at the end of the 20th century, see Girola and Olvera (1994), as well as Girola and Zabludovsky (1991).

¹⁰At this point, there is a parallel in the reception of Bourdieu's work in Mexico and Germany. In both countries it was the field of educational research (in contrast to other research fields) in which scholars first began to notice and apply the theory and concepts of Bourdieu's sociology (for the case of Germany see Liebau 1987, for a detailed description of the Bourdieu reception in Germany see Rehbein 2018).

¹¹In original Spanish: "Aunque la obra de Pierre Bourdieu ha ganado paulatinamente presencia en el pensamiento sociológico en México, es difícil encontrar trabajos sistemáticos de investigación que vinculen el pensamiento del sociólogo francés a nuestras realidades. Este desencuentro entre la exégesis teórica y la investigación empírica es desafortunado, porque si bien la riqueza del pensamiento de Bourdieu ha quedado en evidencia en sus estudios empíricos sobre Francia, su utilidad está aún por demostrarse para el caso de sociedades con un desarrollo histórico y una realidad social diferentes a las europeas, como son las sociedades latinoamericanas." (my translation).

¹²The complete sentence in original Spanish: "Esa es precisamente mi intención en este artículo, donde me refiero exclusivamente a la segunda faceta, esto es, a la identificación de las correlaciones estadísticas entre posiciones en el espacio social, gustos, y prácticas culturales" (my translation).

¹³Translations of the occupational classes from Spanish into English are my own.

¹⁴With respect to the importance of García Canclini for Bourdieu reception's in Latin America, see Baranger (2010, 136) and Moraña (2014, chap. 2).

¹⁵Far beyond Mexico, the relationship between Bourdieu and Gramsci has repeatedly been discussed by scholars interested in the field of cultural domination (see, for example, Burawoy 2012 in the US).

¹⁶Gilberto Giménez is another author of central relevance to Bourdieu reception's in Mexico. Among others, Giménez wrote introductory texts about Bourdieu's theory and concepts (Giménez 2005). He discusses the analytical value of the *habitus* by comparing it with similar concepts from other academic disciplines such as social psychology and cognitive anthropology (Giménez 2018) and he emphasises the importance of Bourdieu's analytical distinction between interiorized and objectified forms of culture to understand cultural phenomena (Giménez 2016). Furthermore, Giménez is a significant author in research of popular culture in Mexico (Giménez 2017). Nevertheless, the works of authors such as Solís and García Canclini contain a more explicit discussion of the analytical value of Bourdieu's class analysis and ideas presented in *La Distinction* for the research of class relations in Mexican society. For this reason, in this article, I do not focus on Gimenez' contribution to Bourdieu's reception in Mexico. However, at certain points I will refer to his work when it is relevant to further clarify Bourdieu's reception and research on popular classes in Mexico.

¹⁷At this point García Canclini (1990, 30-31) refer to the work of: Sergio Miceli. 1972. *A noite da madrinha*. Sao Paulo: Editoria Perspectiva.

¹⁸In original Spanish: "No obstante, las culturas populares han sido abordadas en México, por lo general, como si fueran autónomas y autosuficientes, al margen de toda referencia al sistema cultural global del país y, particularmente, sin referencia a su contraparte, la 'cultura legítima' o 'consagrada' y, en menor medida, a la cultura de las capas medias urbanas. Lo que quiere decir que han sido abordadas bajo un ángulo por lo menos implícitamente 'populista', es decir, como una alternativa valorizada frente a la 'cultura burguesa' y no como un 'simbolismo dominado' que lleva en sus propias entrañas las marcas de la dominación" (my translation).

¹⁹In original Spanish: "¿Cómo es posible vivir juntos en sociedades tan profundamente desiguales?" (my translation).

²⁰For a more detailed discussion of Saravís' class analysis in Mexico see: Scholz Alvarado 2018.

²¹With the expression of *classes on paper*, Bourdieu (1990, 284-285) underlines the difference between the construction of social classes by the researcher and actual mobilized social classes that act in the social world. As Bourdieu explicates, the social researcher can categorize people into different collectives by their similarities and differences, for example their similar positions in social space. He compares this categorization with the work of a zoologist or botanist (ibid.). However, he emphasizes that the class on paper remains a theoretical class, a mere probabilistic class (ibid.).

²²When emphasizing on the importance of analysing social classes by focusing on the dimension of experience, Saraví (2016, 29 – 30) also refers to the work of British historian E. P. Thompson and especially his well-known publication *The Making of the English Working Class*.

²³In original German: "Meine Hoffnung besteht darin, dass das Studium der peripheren Gesellschaften wieder mit universellen Fragestellungen in Verbindung gebracht werden kann und dass es zur Klärung von Problemen

beitragen kann, die allen kontingenten und unvollkommenen Typen menschlicher Gesellschaft zu schaffen machen” (my translation).

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