

Precarity of Life Arrangements: A Perspective on Precarious Working and Living Conditions Using the Concept of Recognition

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Abstract: Recognition has not previously played a systematic role in precarity research, even though precarity—closely related to employment or extended to the life context—also challenges the recognition of relationships. Consequently, we have developed an empirically based perspective on precarity of life arrangements that has been expanded using the concept of recognition (HONNETH, BUTLER). The empirical foundation is provided by partially guideline-based and partially narrative-based individual and couple interviews with 24 precarious workers (who are employed in insecure, flexible or e.g., part time positions and/or have a low income), which we have analyzed in a case-reconstructive and case-comparative manner, based on the hermeneutic sociology of knowledge. We illustrate the strengths of our eight-dimensional heuristic by using the example of one precarious worker and two precariously employed couples. With our perspective expanded by recognition, the subject-oriented and knowledge-sociological interpretations of precariously employed "individuals in relationships," as well as the accumulations of various strains essential for life-arrangement research, become visible. In addition, this allows us to understand the constitutional contexts, relations and interconnections of different dimensions of precarity. Our heuristic might therefore also inspire further research that is focused on the multidimensionality and complexity of insecure living conditions.

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1. Introduction

Since the turn of the millennium at the latest, the extent and consequences of withdrawing aspects of job security from employees have been discussed and described utilizing the terms *precarization* and *precarity*¹ (CASTEL, 2000 [1995]; CASTEL & DÖRRE, 2009). With the change to an activating welfare state (LESSENICH, 2008), insecure working conditions expanded (KELLER & SEIFERT, 2013) in Germany and large parts of Europe. A zone of precarity and vulnerability has now established itself in wage-labor society, in which neither a permanent exclusion from gainful employment nor a permanent integration into it has occurred (CASTEL, 2000 [1995]; DÖRRE, 2006, 2012). According to the French sociologists CASTEL (2000 [1995]) and BOURDIEU (2000 [1977], 2004 [1998]), processes of precarization in the labor sphere have far-reaching social consequences: They weaken employees' ability to act and also pose a threat to social cohesion. [1]

Within the gender-sociological debate, it has been emphasized that it is not enough to focus solely on employment when determining precarity. The ideas of CASTEL (2000 [1995]) have been criticized for reducing work to wage labor and ignoring other forms of work such as domestic and care work, which are predominantly performed by women (AULENBACHER, 2009).² Moreover, precarity in the labor force has only been considered a problem since male working conditions have become increasingly insecure; the previously insecure employment and living situations of women and migrants were not seen as offensive (AULENBACHER, 2009; MOTAKEF, 2015). Against this background, some gender sociologists have extended precarity with the concept of precarity of life arrangements (KLENNER, MENKE & PFAHL, 2012; see also AMACKER, 2014). According to this concept precarity manifests itself in the dimensions of income and employment situation and care, housing, or health, and can be further reinforced from there. KLENNER et al. (2012, p.218) have defined

1 All translations from non-English texts are ours.

2 At an early stage, women and gender researchers criticized the sociological focus on male gainful employment and explicitly included reproductive work, mostly done by women. With a broad concept of work, they opened up insights into the interrelationship between gainful employment and care work, which has since been the focus of various studies, including the sociology of gender and research on precarity (see Section 2.2; VÖLKER, 2008).

precarity of life arrangements as "a situation of endangerment and insecurity that affects not only the individual's fragility but also affects the family lifestyle and entails a loss of future and capacity to act—possibly for several people." [2]

In our contribution, we follow this concept and extend it using recognition theory. Recognition has not yet played a systematic role in research on precarity. We are calling for the systematic consideration of perspectives from recognition theory in such research for two reasons: [3]

First, recognition theories emphasize that human beings are not monadic individuals, rather they are only constituted and strive for recognition in reciprocal recognition conditions. Thus, the social-theoretical premise consists of subjects being constituted by their intersubjective relations. Methodologically, the subjects are to be understood as *individuals in relationships* (WIMBAUER, 2003, 2012; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2017a, 2017b). HONNETH (1996 [1992], 2003, 2011) distinguished between three forms of intersubjective recognition: love, rights, and achievement. In modern societies, recognition for achievement in the sphere of employment takes on a central position. Although HONNETH did not explicitly consider precarization, researchers of subject-oriented studies have pointed out that precarious working conditions can be accompanied by recognition deficits and loss of autonomy (KNABE, BRANDT, FISCHER, BÖHNKE & KLÄRNER, 2018; MOTAKEF, BRINGMANN & WIMBAUER, 2018; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2018, 2020). For BUTLER (2004, 2010), the relationship between recognition and precarity is the focal point. Starting with all people's vulnerability (precarization), they are interested in the frames of recognizability through which certain groups appear to be worthy of protection and other groups are not. Thus, for BUTLER, precarization is rooted in human vulnerability and the need for recognition. Theories of recognition appear to be ripe for precarity researchers because people strive for recognition, and precarization always challenges the conditions and relations of this recognition. [4]

Second, in empirical studies on the perception and management of precarity, the importance of recognition is often established as a result, even though recognition is not systematically recorded in these studies (see Section 3.2). References are also found in precarious employment definitions, for example, when BRINKMANN, DÖRRE, RÖBENACK, KRAEMER and SPEIDEL (2006, p.17) spoke of the "recognition deficits" to which precarious workers are exposed. However, recognition theory perspectives on precarization and precarity are usually called for rather than systematically developed. So far, though, it has not been determined in detail which criteria of precarious employment imply a recognition deficit. Likewise, it has not yet been determined at which levels and how recognition will become relevant and how non-recognition/recognition in a—precarious—life context will manifest itself in concrete terms. [5]

In this paper, we present our extended perspective on precarity and recognition and condense it into an eight-dimensional research heuristic of precarity of life arrangements (Table 3). We illustrate important strengths and possible insights into the heuristic using three selected empirical cases: one precariously employed

person and two precariously employed couples. As a sensitizing concept (BLUMER, 1954), our empirically-based heuristic can be used to further explore the multidimensionality of precarity and to guide studies in which uncertain life situations are reconstructed in their complexity and ambivalence. [6]

In a recursive research process, we developed our overarching recognition theory perspective on precarity of life arrangements (Table 1) as well as the research heuristic (Table 3). We generated them iteratively from sensitizing concepts (from the state of research and recognition theory considerations), from empirical material, and from the examination of the further theoretical considerations based on this material. [7]

This chronology of the article is deceptive in that we have not—as presented here—gone through the state of research, theory, method, and evaluation step by step. Instead, at all stages, the examination of the state of research, theory, and empirical material recursively interlocked. In evaluating our data based on the hermeneutic sociology of knowledge, openness was our guiding principle. We tried to let our previous understanding take a back seat in the interpretation and extract the actors' assessments of relevance from the material. Only in a further step did we theorize the findings. In WIMBAUER and MOTAKEF (2020), we provided an overview of all theoretical and empirical results. [8]

In Section 2, we discuss definitions (2.1) and the current state of research on precarity of life arrangements (2.2). Then we turn to recognition: We outline the theoretical considerations of HONNETH and BUTLER (3.1), show how recognition becomes relevant in empirical research on precarity (3.2), and describe our recognition-theoretical perspective on precarity of life arrangements (3.3). In Section 4, we outline the methodical/methodological foundations and the design of our study. In Section 5, we present three empirical cases in which we reconstruct the relations outlined in the eight dimensions in the life context of individuals. In Section 6, we draw an empirically founded theoretical conclusion on our extended perspective on precarity of life arrangements: We sum up the strengths and possibilities for insights (6.1) and describe our heuristic (6.2). Finally, we summarize the results and offer an outlook (7). [9]

2. Precarity of Life Arrangements—Definitions and State of Research

There is a long tradition in the social sciences, especially in poverty and unemployment research, of examining the multidimensionality of insecure life situations. In their Marienthal study, JAHODA, LAZARSELD, and ZEISEL (1975 [1933]) focused on the effects of unemployment on families. For example, in research on poverty, in the *Bremer Lebenslagenansatz* [Bremen life situation approach] (VOGES, JÜRGENS, MAURER & MEYER, 2003), the dimensions of education, income, employment, health, and housing were taken into consideration in their objective and subjective forms. This approach, like the similar capability approach of SEN (2000 [1999]), who viewed poverty as a lack of realization of chances, is an essential reference for the concept of precarity of life arrangements (AMACKER, 2012, 2014; KLAMMER, NEUKIRCH & WESSLER-POSSBERG, 2012; KLENNER et al., 2012). [10]

2.1 Precarity, precarious employment, and precarious living conditions

Precarization and precarity are vague concepts. Anyone who wants to define precarity and a precarious life situation more precisely is challenged to develop an analytical concept that is as clearly defined as is necessary for empirical research. However, to avoid excluding central areas of life in advance, an expanded concept is also necessary. This, in turn, should not be arbitrary. We are interested in the complexity of precarious life situations and—for researching the latter—use the extended concept of precarity of life arrangements. In this section, we will sketch out different (i.e., narrow, broad, and comprehensive) concepts and uses of precarization and precarity in order to better understand them. [11]

MARCHART (2013) proposed three ways to use precarization and precarity: In the concept of a societal zone of precarity and vulnerability (CASTEL, 2000 [1995]; DÖRRE, 2006, 2012), he expressed a broad concept of precarity. He saw a narrow concept in understandings in which so-called marginalized groups are placed at the center of precarity. With his concept of the "precarization society" (MARCHART, 2013, p.24), he contrasted these two uses with a third, comprehensive concept, emphasizing that precarization challenges the "totality of social conditions" (ibid.). [12]

While MARCHART's concept of the precarization society is related to post-Fordist social systems, NEILSON and ROSSITER (2008) began in terms of history with the formation of capitalism. They emphasized that precarity, viewed globally and historically, has never been an exception but has always existed and continues to be a normal condition in capitalist societies. For BUTLER (2010), precarity also represents the typical case. However, for BUTLER, precarity is not only a product of the economic system. Additionally, as outlined in Section 1, it is based on a fundamental "precariousness" rooted in the fundamental need for recognition and dependence on others. [13]

These comprehensive concepts stand in contrast with studies in which a narrowly defined term is used while focusing on precarious working conditions rather than so-called marginalized groups (MARCHART, 2013). Studies in which the meaning of precarity is conceived more widely to include household situations and life contexts sit in between these two viewpoints (see Section 2.2). It is here that we locate our research perspective. Initially, though, we want to clarify what is understood by precarious employment. [14]

When determining precarious employment, two concepts can be distinguished (VOSKO, McDONALD & CAMPBELL, 2009): In the first, widespread approach, precarious employment is equated with atypical employment. However, this has been criticized: Precarious occupations are not always atypical (e.g., women in part-time employment), nor are atypical occupations always precarious (BREHMER & SEIFERT, 2007; KRAEMER, 2008). A second determination comprises multiple uncertainties in employment. Although there is no consensus on the dimensions, there are many overlaps. A much-cited definition comes from VOSKO (2010, p.2). She defined precarious employment as "work for remuneration characterized by uncertainty, low income, and limited social benefits and statutory entitlements." According to this, precarious employment appears as a continuum. [15]

In Germany, the debate on precarious employment is based on the (male) *Normalarbeitsverhältnis* (NAV) [standard employment condition] (MÜCKENBERGER, 1985). In terms of job security, such employment conditions go far beyond similar concepts in other wage labor societies (MÜCKENBERGER, 1985; VOSKO, 2010). A prominent definition is found in the work of BRINKMANN et al. (2006, p.17): Against the background of the standard employment condition, the authors described an employment relationship as precarious if

"the employees, due to their jobs, fall significantly below a level of income, protection, and social integration that is defined as standard in contemporary society and is accepted by the majority. Gainful employment is also precarious since it is subjectively associated with a loss of meaning, lack of recognition, and planning uncertainty to the extent that it corrects social standards to the clear disadvantage of employees." [16]

BRINKMANN et al. considered objective and subjective aspects and distinguished three dimensions: material-reproductive, institutional-legal, and social-communicative. In this context, they also mentioned recognition but did not elaborate further. [17]

However, it is not possible to infer precarious employment from a precarious living situation. CLEMENT, MATHIEU, PRUS and UCKARDESLER (2009, p.241), therefore, advocated for systematically linking precarious employment and precarious lives (see also PITROU, 1978). In addition to precarious employment, the household context should also be considered (ALLMENDINGER, JAHN, PROMBERGER, SCHELS & STUTH, 2018; KRAEMER, 2008). On the one hand, a low income resulting from marginal employment can be cushioned by a higher

income partner. On the other hand, a partner's secure employment cannot protect against a precarious overall situation, such as in families with household members dependent on care, where the second income is only small or does not exist. [18]

Against this background, ALLMENDINGER et al. (2018) and PROMBERGER, JAHN, SCHELS, ALLMENDINGER and STUTH (2018) addressed the subject of whether a solidified precariat has developed in Germany, i.e., a group that lives permanently in precarious situations. In measuring a precarious living situation, they differentiated between employment and household situation: Precarious employment is determined by income (low pay, subsistence minimum), lack of social security (lack of protection, no rights to protection against dismissal), and job insecurity (trivial job, risk of unemployment and increased occupational health risks). With regard to the household situation, they considered housing (poor and cramped conditions), financial situation (poverty, financial reserves, debts), special burdens (illness and disability), and lack of legal protection (no derivative social security entitlements) (PROMBERGER et al., 2018, p.12). Their longitudinal data illustrated that 12 percent of the working population in Germany was in an overall solidified precarious situation (ALLMENDINGER et al., 2018). But what can be made tangible with the concept of precarity of life arrangements that cannot be demonstrated with the indicators for determining precarious life situations? [19]

2.2 Precarity in the *Lebenszusammenhang* [life arrangements]

We argue that the concept of precarity of life arrangements can be used to analyze not only the objective dimensions but also the subjective interpretation, perception, and (non-)coping mechanisms of precarious life situations. From a subject-oriented and recognition-theoretical perspective, dynamics and interactions between the dimensions can be reconstructed, making it possible to experience how precarity of life arrangements can be cushioned or consolidated. As we explain in Section 3.3, the considerations of recognition theory are fundamental to understanding this. Since recognition has not yet been systematically considered, the potential of the current reference to precarity of life arrangements has not yet been exhausted. [20]

So far, researchers have used the concept of precarity of life arrangements when studying female-breadwinner (family) households. In particular, multiple burdens were identified in their life contexts. Female breadwinners contributed more than 60 percent of the family's household income (KLENNER et al., 2012, p.27). They often involuntarily became breadwinners when the partner's income decreased significantly. [21]

KLAMMER et al. (2012) focused on female breadwinners' resources and coping strategies in West Germany. The theoretical basis of their conception was Amartya SEN's (1999) capability approach which they combined with the theory of resource preservation based on Stevan HOBFOLL's work (1988, 1998), located in occupational and stress psychology. If family breadwinners were poorly

educated and had completed long periods of parental leave, they often failed to leap from an atypical job to one that could support a family. Despite greater responsibility in their jobs, they found little support from their partners in domestic work (KLAMMER et al., 2012, pp.179f.) and little, if any, more help in care work (pp.189f.). [22]

KLENNER et al. (2012) studied female breadwinner families in East Germany. They drew on the concept of *alltägliche Lebensführung* [everyday lifestyle] as developed by JURCZYK and RERRICH (1993), who claimed that people's lives were actively shaped by other members of their household, which was expressed in the concept of *familiale Lebensführung* [family lifestyle] (JÜRGENS, 2001). In terms of areas of life, KLENNER et al. (2012, p.219) mentioned employment status, financial status, gender arrangement, social security, care arrangements, development opportunities for children, self-care/health, and social integration. As mentioned above, the precarity of life arrangements was described as a "situation of danger and insecurity" that may restrict family life (p.218). KLENNER et al. hence determined four characteristics listed below. The first, third, and fourth of are, in our opinion, not entirely distinct.

1. Uncertainties in planning and organization, "standing on the edge;"
2. Falling below historically given standards of normality;
3. Way of living/organizing one's life on revocation, fragile legal claims;
4. Restriction of autonomy of action; experience of powerlessness. [23]

Family life continued to be characterized by gender-differentiated divisions of labor, even when women were family breadwinners. Similar to KLAMMER et al. (2012), KLENNER et al. (2012) demonstrated in the *gender arrangement* dimension that a woman taking on the role of breadwinner was no longer consistent with more equality in the couple's daily life. Also, to avoid the partner's further destabilization as a male non-breadwinner, female family breadwinners often continued to bear the primary responsibility for domestic and care work. On the whole, female breadwinners showed considerable health and psychological stresses and strains. [24]

Following the *Lebenslagenansatz* [living arrangements approach] (e.g., VOGES et al., 2003) and KLENNER et al. (2012), AMACKER (2012, 2014) examined the precarity of female family breadwinners based on the dimensions of income, gainful employment, education, housing, health, care work, social networks and welfare (2014, p.4). She noted that, from the subjective perception, gainful employment was "not always in the foreground" (2012, p.70). In her Swiss study, factors such as separations, remarriage, a partner's low level of education, and the non-recognition of a partner's foreign educational title, mainly destabilized the life context. Care work took a central position in her study. AMACKER showed how the private and unpaid care of relatives can isolate women and lead them to material poverty. [25]

The researchers presented in this section also offered further conceptualizations of precarity of life arrangements. It therefore becomes clear how burdens from different areas of life accumulate in the everyday lives of female breadwinners. The concept is particularly promising for non-standardized research since it takes the interviewees' subjective relevance seriously, thus allowing for a great deal of openness. We draw on this concept but develop it further by including recognition theory. What does recognition mean, and what is known about recognition in empirical (precarization) research so far? [26]

3. Extension of Precarity of Life Arrangements Using Recognition Theory

3.1 Reflections on recognition theory as a sensitizing concept (BLUMER 1954)

Recognition plays a central role for HONNETH and BUTLER, whereby—despite commonalities—significant differences and incompatibilities become apparent. Since HONNETH's and BUTLER's theoretical conceptualizations are both fruitful for the precarity of life arrangements as "observation-guiding assumptions" (KALTHOFF, 2008, p.12), we reference them together, despite their differences. However, we do not systematically compare the theories (see, for example, BALZER, 2014; McQUEEN, 2015), nor will we provide a systematic theory-empiricism-synthesis. [27]

3.1.1 HONNETH's Three spheres model of recognition

HONNETH (1996 [1992], 2003, 2011) put forward an explicit theory of intersubjective recognition, which he accentuated as a renewal of a critical theory of society, grasping society's whole as an institutionalized recognition order. For HONNETH, positive self-references and a good life (morality) are only possible through intersubjective recognition relations. While the dependence on recognition is an anthropological constant, historically specific norms determine who and what is ever considered worthy of recognition. Like CASTEL (2000 [1995]), he conceived of society as an integration order. For HONNETH (1996 [1992], 2003), however, gainful employment does not represent the central mode of integration. Rather, he distinguished between three ideal-typical recognition forms and spheres: Love (in the sphere of close social relationships/family), rights (legal sphere) and achievement (within the system of the societal division of labor). The sphere of gainful employment, in which social esteem is conveyed as recognition of achievement, is currently of paramount importance. [28]

Love means the intersubjective recognition of the other as a whole and in terms of the concrete nature of his/her needs. HONNETH (1996 [1992]) initially focused on parent-child love but later (2011) differentiated the sphere of love into intimate relationships, family, and friendships. Legal recognition comprises the universal respect of all as morally attributable legal persons, whereby HONNETH distinguished between liberal rights of freedom, political participation rights, and social welfare rights. Unlike in the sphere of love, the moral obligation dimension

is not particular but universal. Social esteem is historically variable and is currently accorded primarily to individual achievement in the sphere of employment. It is not—like love—aimed at entire persons, but only at parts of persons, in particular, at their achievements or at the things that are socially valued as such. [29]

Only all three forms of reciprocal recognition together allow "human subjects to develop a positive attitude towards themselves" (HONNETH, 1996 [1992], p.271). And only then can persons "unrestrictedly understand themselves as autonomous as well as individuated beings [...] and identify with their goals and desires" (ibid.). According to HONNETH, this perception becomes endangered if just one of the spheres lacks recognition, such as the recognition of achievement due to precarious employment. [30]

For HONNETH, recognition as a central moral concept has a clearly positive connotation. However, he also described *recognition as an ideology* (HONNETH, 2004) when it does not promote positive self-reference but rather conformity and submission. An ideology of recognition would be present, for example, when the act of recognition remains incomplete on a symbolic level and cannot be implemented on a material-institutional level (pp.64-68). HONNETH also presented reflections on the relationship between the spheres. He argued, for example, that law could enter into the sphere of achievement and love. Yet, many questions remain open regarding the interrelationship between the spheres (WIMBAUER, 2012). [31]

3.1.2 Frames of recognition, precariousness, and precarity in BUTLER's work

BUTLER did not develop an explicit theory of recognition. Nevertheless, on the one hand, recognition takes on a central meaning in their³ reflections on subject theory. On the other hand, in their theoretical interpretation of political events in the USA, they focus on the relationship between recognition and precarity (BUTLER, 2010). BUTLER also fundamentally assumed that subjects are constituted in recognition relations. However, their perspective on recognition theory consists of a power-critical analysis of visibility conditions, which they formulated with the concept of recognizability. BUTLER asked "how such norms operate to produce certain subjects as 'recognizable' persons and to make others decidedly more difficult to recognize" (p.6). [32]

At this point, BUTLER distinguished between precarity and precariousness.⁴ With precariousness, they grasped the vulnerability of the people mentioned in the introduction, who are—as social and physical beings—always dependent upon others' recognition. For BUTLER, recognition is always precarious, although political orders and regulations can increase or reduce precarity (p.32). Against this background, they understood precarity as an instrument of power.⁵ [33]

3 Judith BUTLER's preferred pronoun is "they."

4 For the translation of precariousness as "being precarious," see LOREY (2012, p.31).

Based on FOUCAULT's (1977 [1975]) power and subject theory, BUTLER assumed that subjects are decentered. For BUTLER, recognition would not positively strengthen the subject in what he/she already is; but the decentered subject would be created as such by powerful norms of recognition. It is only through submission to discursively mediated norms that the subject becomes a subject and gains the ability to act. BUTLER also did not share HONNETH's (1996 [1992], p.271) assumption that recognition from the three spheres leads to a successful self-concept; instead, they argued that relations of recognition produce a fragile subject (BUTLER, 2003). Simultaneously, recognition is not positively connoted but needs to be viewed as productive since the subject can appear as an intelligent subject by submitting to recognition norms. In comparison to HONNETH's theory, recognition is, therefore, viewed as more ambivalent. BUTLER (1997) further assumed that norms are not merely reflected in a subject. Instead, subjects must constantly reappropriate norms, which, according to BUTLER, can also result in the possibility of norm transgression. [34]

3.1.3 Connections to HONNETH and BUTLER

Some of the considerations outlined above are of further-reaching and social-theoretical importance for our subject-oriented, empirical research. Like HONNETH and BUTLER, we assume that subjects are constituted in intersubjective relations of recognition. However, we share neither HONNETH's assumption that recognition in the three spheres necessarily leads to positive self-concepts, nor his fundamentally positive understanding of recognition. Like BUTLER, we assume ambivalent recognition relations and draw on their considerations of vulnerability (precariousness). We are also interested in the social framework of recognition.⁶ From HONNETH's considerations, we adopt the sphere model but extend the three spheres to other dimensions (see Table 2). At the same time, we are particularly interested in the interrelationships of these dimensions, taking up BUTLER's references to the ambivalences of recognition. [35]

Neither HONNETH nor BUTLER addressed precarious employment, but in HONNETH's work, it can be assumed that precarious employment often accompanies recognition deficits. In the theories of CASTEL (2000 [1995]) and BOURDIEU (2004 [1998]), the question would be whether these recognition deficits result in resignation and restrictions of the ability to act. It is also conceivable, however, that among respondents, a "struggle for recognition" (HONNETH, 1996 [1992]) could develop from these recognition deficits. What ultimately remains open in the ideas of HONNETH and BUTLER is the concrete content of recognition. Yet, in both concepts, recognition can—inspired by theory— be examined empirically to investigate what precarious workers seek

5 LOREY (2012) introduced—following BUTLER's and FOUCAULT's late work—the concept of governmental precarization, through which she problematized the "complex interactions of a government instrument with economic conditions of exploitation and modes of subjectivation in their ambivalences between subjugation and empowerment" (LOREY, 2012, p.27).

6 Against HONNETH's considerations, the objection has also been raised that he did not take sufficient account of power and inequality (MCQUEEN, 2015) and unequal gender relations (WAGNER, 2003; WIMBAUER, 2012).

and receive recognition for (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020) and which interrelationships can be found. [36]

3.2 Recognition in empirical (precarization) research

While recognition has been taken into account in some occupational sociology studies (HOLTGREWE, VOSWINKEL & WAGNER, 2000; VOSWINKEL, 2001), it still plays hardly any role in research on precarity in German speaking countries. Some researchers interested in how precarious situations are subjectively experienced and coped with (GRIMM, 2016; MARQUARDSEN, 2012; WEISSMANN, 2016) have found that recognition is highly significant. According to MARQUARDSEN (2012), unemployed persons try to compensate for the lack of recognition at work in their social networks. AMACKER (2012, p.79) argued that the life conditions of women, most of whom perform little-recognized care work, are precarious because they fall "outside of the context of socially recognized norms and values." [37]

In one of the few German-language studies of precarity in which recognition was not only relevant in the outcome, but also represented a real theoretical starting point, KNABE et al. (2018) showed how recognition deficits at work are intensified by a lack of recognition in close relationships. From a network theory perspective, following Harrison C. WHITE, they assumed that social networks form subgroups with their own recognition regulations. If actors are denied recognition for an identity in a "network domain," they form "alternative identities" in other domains (KNABE et al., 2018, p.190). [38]

In a recognition-theoretical study on dual-career couples, WIMBAUER (2012) focused on the relationship between work and life, following HONNETH's perspective. Although the study does not concern precarity, WIMBAUER (2012) offered crucial impulses. She asked what recognition dual-career couples sought and could and could not find in work and love, and which inequalities were revealed in this context. First, she reconstructed gendered "hurdles to recognition" where access to one of the two spheres (work and love) was made difficult structurally and intersubjectively; for example, when women wanted to return to work after parental leave. Second, she showed two "traps" of recognition: One qua love and one qua achievement. These were promoted, among other things, by promises of recognition in the employment sphere. As a theoretical result, WIMBAUER defined recognition as a desired but—with respect to gender—systematically unequally distributed good. The striving for recognition for achievement can also become a determinant of social inequality. Thus, according to WIMBAUER, with reference to the structural-level social inequality model by SOLGA, BERGER and POWELL (2009, pp.17f.), recognition is a central dimension and determinant of social inequality. Since social inequalities continue to be strongly gendered, WIMBAUER (2012) emphasized that unequal gender relations constitute unequal recognition relations. [39]

3.3 A recognition theory perspective on precarity of life arrangements

Based on the state of research, i.e., the theoretical thoughts and empirical studies dealing with recognition, we differentiate our recognition theory perspective as a sensitizing concept into three levels (Table 1). Essentially, we start from the relational-intersubjective constitution of the social and the subjects—as individuals in relationships—and generally locate ourselves within a recognition theory framework. [40]

Our perspective focuses first on the societal level, highlighting the framework of recognizability. We distinguish between the so-called macro or societal level and the subjects' micro-level. On the so-called macro-level (1a), we are interested in guiding models and norms in society. Examples include the model of the labor market citizen through which, for instance, non-employment is delegitimized. Further examples are gender and sexuality norms such as heterosexuality and gender binarity, through which people who are neither heterosexual nor gender binary may experience exclusion and devaluation (1a). Concerning the norms of recognizability (1a) that are of interest here, it is also relevant how *Anrufungen* [social appeals] are manifested in our eight dimensions: How can subjects (1b) take up or reject the norms—based on which (inter)subjective capacity do they do this and with which (inter)subjective consequences? [41]

However, this question (1b) is not clearly distinct from the second, (inter)subjective level (2) on which we focus based on the societal level and which represents the heart of our study. Following HONNETH, we further investigate intersubjective recognition conditions and concentrate on individuals in relationships. We examine the subjective significance of the various dimensions (Table 2), especially how intersubjective recognition is manifested in our eight dimensions: Do the respondents seek recognition in the respective dimension (2a), and if so, do they receive it or is it denied (2b)? How do they experience non-recognition, and which ambivalent, destabilizing, or strengthening and stabilizing consequences become apparent in the context of their lives? [42]

The eight dimensions are included in Table 2; the corresponding analytical questions are listed in Table 3 (Section 6.2). It should also be emphasized that the distinction between the first two levels is only an analytical one. On the one hand, subjects are relevant on both levels and, on the other hand, normative frameworks not only occurred in BUTLER's thoughts, but HONNETH also dealt with them. [43]

We will focus first on the scope of recognizability, second on intersubjective recognition, and third on adding the main categories of precarity research (3) (KLENNER et al., 2012, see Section 2). In Table 1, we outline our perspective on recognition from these three perspectives. It represents a central result of our research and was developed in a recursive empirically based theory-generation process. We introduce it before presenting the empirical cases only because it will facilitate the understanding of empirical theory.

General perspective	Sub-questions/differentiated perspectives of the analysis
<p>1. Social level: Normatively and discursively institutionalized/founded frameworks of (unequal, precarious) recognizability (BUTLER, 2010; HONNETH, 1996 [1992], 2011)</p>	<p>a) Macro level/society: Normative-legal and discursive-cultural framework of recognizability (such as model of the labor market citizen, achievement-oriented society, heterosexual matrix, gender order)</p> <p>b) Micro level/subjects: (Inter-)subjective capacity for and (inter-) subjective consequences of the possibility to follow or exceed norms</p>
<p>2. (Inter-)subjective level: Enabled or denied (unequal, precarious) intersubjective recognition in the different recognition spheres/dimensions (see Table 3 and HONNETH, 1996 [1992]; WIMBAUER, 2012)</p>	<p>a) What do individuals want recognition for (subjective relevance of the recognition forms/spheres)? Which subjective meaning orientation do the individuals exhibit?</p> <p>b) What experiences of non-recognition (up to disregard, alienation, reification) do individuals have in different spheres/dimensions?</p> <p>c) How does the interrelation of recognition spheres/forms become apparent? Can recognition in other dimensions cushion recognition deficits in one dimension? Do recognition deficits accumulate or increase? What ambivalences of recognition manifest themselves?</p> <p>d) Which (gender-differentiating) inequalities in the distribution of recognition chances and precarization risks can be found? Which structural and intersubjective barriers to recognition appear?</p>
<p>3. Complementary precarization theory perspective (KLENNER et al., 2012; MOTAKEF, 2015)</p>	<p>a) Planning and design uncertainties, future prospects</p> <p>b) Restriction of action autonomy, experiences of heteronomy and powerlessness</p>

Table 1: General recognition theory perspective on precarity of life arrangements [44]

On this basis and following KLENNER et al. (2012), we define precarity of life arrangements as a "situation of danger and insecurity" (p.218), in which

individuals in relationships can experience limitations and lack of recognition in various dimensions of their individual and family life, to the point that they are restricted in their ability to act (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). [45]

Researchers studying the precarity of life arrangements have so far mainly shown that burdens can accumulate (Section 2.2). In particular, the dynamics that may arise must be taken into account. Also, we assume that recognition in the dimensions of the life context is influenced mutually. Thus, dynamics are conceivable in which precarity, for example, can be cushioned by recognition deficits in one dimension due to recognition in another dimension or reinforced and solidified by recognition deficits in further dimensions. [46]

Following the current state of research (AMACKER, 2014; KLENNER et al., 2012), as well as recognition theory considerations (HONNETH's sphere model, 1996 [1992], 2011), we provisionally determine eight dimensions of precarity of life arrangements (see Table 2). In contrast to the existing concepts of precarity and the precarity of life arrangements, we consider explicitly—following HONNETH—recognition as well as the sphere of rights and the recognition of love. Furthermore, we adopt the dimension of housing from AMACKER (2014) and the life situation approach. The dimension of gender arrangement in KLENNER et al. (2012) which we consider relevant, is a sub-dimension of love recognition, and it is relevant in all dimensions concerning gender-differentiating inequalities.

1. Gainful employment
2. Income and assets, financial security
3. Rights and (unequal) legal recognition
4. Recognition of love (according to HONNETH 1996 [1992], 2003, 2011) in the sphere of social closeness
5. Political and social participation, social inclusion and affiliation
6. Housework and especially care for others / care
7. Health, self-care, and available time
8. Housing situation

Table 2: Dimensions of precarity of life arrangements [47]

We have further elaborated these dimensions examining the material (see Table 3 in Section 6.2). However, not all eight dimensions and all sub-dimensions are always significant in the empirical reconstruction of precarity of life arrangements. In each concrete case, an empirical question arises: Which dimensions in the life context become precarious and, thus, virulent, and into which dynamics are they integrated? Correspondingly, we do not check all dimensions in our empirical examples. [48]

4. Methods and Methodological Foundations and Research Design

We conducted our research from 2014 to 2017 as part of the German Research Foundation project "Unequal Recognition? 'Work' and 'Love' in the Context of Life of Precarious Employees" (Wi2142-5-1).⁷ We now explicate what our methods and methodological foundations were, and how the study was designed. [49]

4.1 Hermeneutic sociology of knowledge and a relational approach: Methods and methodological foundations

According to our primary social theory assumptions, subjects are constituted by intersubjective recognition (see Section 3). Individuals are not our object of analysis as monadic individuals, but as "individuals in relations" in their social embeddedness and their interrelation with other social contexts (WIMBAUER, 2003, 2012; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2017a, 2017b). Methodologically, we located ourselves in the interpretative paradigm and proceeded from a social constructivist, subject-oriented, constructive-minded and relational approach. Thus, we chose to conduct an open, qualitative survey and evaluation procedure for our study. [50]

Following interpretative sociology (WEBER, 1972 [1921]), we are interested in the subjects' meaningful social actions. We also follow the tradition of symbolic interactionism according to SIMMEL (1992 [1908]), MEAD (1934), and BLUMER (1969), and we assume that there are individuals in relationships who act meaningfully and communicate meanings. In our material, we reconstructed the subjective meaning created in interactions—and for couples—the intersubjective meaning (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2017a, 2017b). [51]

We locate ourselves in the hermeneutic sociology of knowledge (HITZLER, REICHERTZ & SCHRÖER, 1999; SCHRÖER, 1994; SOEFFNER, 1999). In this sense, our subjective understanding has been sensitized by BUTLER's critique of essentialism (see 3.1.2). However, we assume that actors who are equipped with knowledge are actors who constitute and process meaning and who produce their realities in interactions. We share BERGER's and LUCKMANN's (1966) assumption that (inter)subjective meaning emerges in interactions with social norms and institutionalized knowledge bases. The same applies to their social constructivist assumption that there is no objective reality independent of individuals and that social reality is a phenomenon generated by meaningful human actions. This does not mean, however, that reality can be changed individually and arbitrarily (ibid.; see also WIMBAUER, 2003, 2012; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2017b). [52]

7 WIMBAUER led the project, and MOTAKEF and Ellen RONNSIEK worked as research assistant. The project lasted from May 1, 2014, through September 30, 2017, see also <https://www.projekte.hu-berlin.de/de/ua> [Date of Access: September 19, 2019].

4.2 Research design and interviews

We focused on the recognition, wishes, and deficits of precarious workers but also on coping with non-recognition in the context of life: Can a lack of recognition at work be cushioned or even compensated for with love and other forms of recognition (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2018, 2020)? Based on the recognition sphere of love in HONNETH's theories (Dimension 4), we investigated both precariously employed couples and precarious employees who are single. [53]

Our sampling criteria included precarious employment, such as part-time work; marginal or flexible-in-time employment (following BRINKMANN et al., 2006); unemployment; low incomes (based on the at-risk-of-poverty threshold); low to medium education levels; and people who were 25-50 years of age. Concerning couples, both partners had to be in precarious employment and see themselves as part of a couple. [54]

Between 2014 and 2016, we conducted partially guideline-based, partially narrative interviews with 24 precarious employees throughout Germany. We interviewed eight couples (seven heterosexual couples, one gay couple) and eight precarious workers (four men, four women) who were not in a relationship. We conducted joint couple interviews (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2017a, 2017b) with the couples and, in some cases, in-depth individual interviews at a time interval of half a year.⁸ [55]

Despite our intensive acquisition of interviewees, this proved to be very challenging overall, especially for the couples.⁹ Frequently, the male partners refused to do the interviews if the female partners were the ones who had contacted us. The criterion of a low to medium level of education also proved challenging as mainly well-qualified people contacted us. Therefore, in our sample six of the 24 respondents had a university degree. [56]

In our partially guideline-based, partially narrative interviews (based on SCHÜTZE, 1983), the initial question had major significance. We used a broad generating narrative stimulus. We asked the couples the following question: "How did you become a couple?" The employees who were not in a relationship were asked this question: "How did you come to live, love, reside, and work the way you do today?" Regarding the sets of questions, we began by addressing the topics as openly as possible and in a narrative-generating manner. Then, we addressed more specific areas of life, such as gainful employment, finances, the couple's relationship, housework, family, children, care, friendships, close

8 Four of the eight joint couple interviews were performed in the three-semester teaching research project "Precarious employment, precarious life contexts?" at the University of Tübingen, led by Christine WIMBAUER and later by Sarah SPECK, and partially interpreted there (ACULAI et al., 2015).

9 Difficulties and challenges encountered when interviewing the precarious employees are reflected on in WIMBAUER and MOTAKEF (2017a, 2017b).

relationships, leisure time, giving meaning to life, the welfare state, wishes, and ideas for the future. The interviews lasted three to five hours. [57]

The joint couple interview setting we used has clear advantages over the individual interview when not the individual, but the couples' level is of interest (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2017a, 2017b). The joint couple interview can, for the most part, capture the partners' concrete interactions in situ (PRZYBORSKI & WOHLRAB-SAHR, 2014 [2008]). In the joint couple interviews, consensual or non-consensual narratives about negotiations and interactions can be traced, and information about the couple's shared or non-shared interpretations and reality constructions (BERGER & KELLNER, 1964) can be captured. In addition to the joint couple interviews, we also conducted one-on-one interviews with both partners in various cases, and we addressed follow-up questions and aspects more relevant to one individual's biography than to the couple. [58]

We recorded the interviews and had them transcribed word-by-word by a transcription office. All of them were anonymized. We evaluated the interviews following the theoretical and methodological foundations of hermeneutics in the sociology of knowledge (HITZLER et al., 1999; SCHRÖER, 1994). How exactly did the evaluation take place? The project team used hermeneutic sequence analysis to provide a word-for-word interpretation (formation of reading) of the initial narrative and selected key elements. We also paraphrased the entire interview material extensively. For the interpretation, we also took into account the respondents' socio-demographic data and completed CV tables. In a multi-stage hermeneutic case-reconstructive research process, we developed case structure hypotheses and individual case reconstructions that we contrasted continuously in case comparisons that were based on all our interest dimensions. In the end, we made a theoretical generalization (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). [59]

We understand the cases presented below as empirically-based key cases, based on which we demonstrate exemplary—and not complete—significant interactions of precarious recognition, precarious love, and other areas of life of precarious workers, illustrating the potential of our multidimensional heuristic. Of course, this can neither be done completely nor conclusively here. [60]

5. Recognition and Non-Recognition in the Life Context. Empirical Case Studies

The following empirical examples will be used to illustrate the possibilities of our recognition theory perspective on precarity of life arrangements (Table 1). The dimensions listed in Table 2 form the basis for this analysis, although we do not always go through them entirely.¹⁰ We conducted the interviews in German, and translated the following quotations. [61]

5.1 Ambivalent recognition of love and its destructive dynamics: Ulrike Urban

Ulrike Urban¹¹ is in her mid-forties and lives alone. She suffers greatly from not having started a family and not having found a qualified job despite her many efforts. Urban completed training as a social worker, specializing in helping disabled persons. After her training, however, she realized that she could not distance herself enough from this job and that she had "completely ruined her health." Therefore, she completed a second degree, but her job applications afterward were unsuccessful. After a period of unemployment, Urban started to work in the care sector again. In our reconstruction, we work out ambivalences in the dimension of love recognition (Dimension 4) and show how destructive dynamics are set in motion in the interplay of the dimensions of gainful employment (Dimension 1), income (Dimension 2), social participation (Dimension 5), care for others (Dimension 6), self-care (Dimension 7), and housing (Dimension 8) (see also WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). [62]

At the time of the interview, Urban had been caring for Uwe Ullner, who had required intensive care for several years. Although she was paid for only two hours a day, she cared for him all day and on the weekends. Her contract was for a limited time, and if Ullner had died, Urban's nursing job would have ended. Besides, her employment was marginal and thus barely covered by social security, which was why she meets the criteria of precarious employment according to the institutional-legal dimension (Dimension 1: gainful employment). Since Ulrike Urban received only a small income and had hardly any savings, she was also extremely precarious according to the material-reproductive dimension (Dimension 2). Her precarious employment, income, and asset situation was a burden to her. She looked anxiously into the future, at which point she feared being "poor, old, [and] sick." This was "the horror" for her—but she had little hope of being able to avert this. [63]

¹⁰ We presented all empirical cases in detail and the various dimensions in WIMBAUER and MOTAKEF (2020). Shorter, partly similar representations are found concerning Ulrike Urban in MOTAKEF et al. (2018) and WIMBAUER and MOTAKEF (2018), concerning the couple Caspar/Christiansen in MOTAKEF (2019a) as well as the couple Caspar/Christiansen and Poturica in MOTAKEF (2019b).

¹¹ All cases and interviews were anonymized. The interviews were transcribed accurately in word and sound, including breaks. In this paper, we have anonymized dialects and done some linguistic smoothing.

Ulrike Urban longed more than anything else for love recognition (Dimension 4). In the interview, she kept coming back to the fact that she had not found a partner or established a family:

"I would have liked to have had a family and children. Unfortunately, this did not happen ... That is quite a hard thing for me ... as I am still sort of like in a mourning process." [64]

She found no equivalent for her search for love recognition by a partner/husband and family/children in friendships and was very dissatisfied with the extent and quality of her social relationships. To her regret, she lacked time to cultivate friendships. Her few friends also had "little understanding" for her care work. For this reason, she kept her entire care situation "out of her friendships." Possibly, therefore—according to our interpretation—a mutual withdrawal from the few still existing friendships took place. Ulrike Urban did not mention other social relationships or social and cultural participation (Dimensions 4 and 5), or she mentioned them only negatively. She would also have liked to change her living situation (Dimension 8) and said that she lived in a small and remote place. She did not want to receive her friends (or us) there. [65]

However, why did Ulrike Urban maintain the precarious care situation? She cared for Ullner because she "loves him so much" and "could not bring herself to leave him in the hands of the nursing service," which she considers extremely bad. The "special relationship" with Uwe Ullner was enormously important to her. She liked him, and above all, he liked and needed her, or more precisely, she felt needed by him: "It is clear to me that Uwe needs me in some way." [66]

One interpretation is that Ulrike Urban sought in her relationship with Uwe Ullner the love recognition she would have wanted in her own non-existent family and couple relationship (Dimension 4: love recognition). In her relationship with the person in need of care, she found recognition in the form of HONNETH's (1996 [1992], 2003) idea of love recognition as a whole person, as Uwe Ullner would have liked and needed it. One could argue that it was Uwe Ullner, not Ulrike Urban, who received love recognition from a partner. [67]

However, the love recognition she had was asymmetrical, both from her own perspective (she said, for example, that he needed her more than she needed him) and in our reconstruction (she cared for him and acknowledged his needs, but he could not do this in return because of his need for care). So, what challenges the argument that she was not precariously involved in a love recognition is our interpretation that her relationship was a destructive symbiosis: Due to the—according to one way of looking at it—desperate search for love recognition, which she wishes and believes in receiving from the person she cares for, Ulrike Urban could not find another, more secure occupation (Dimensions 1, 2), could not cultivate her friendships (Dimensions 4, 5), endangered her health and self-care (Dimension 7), and could not change her living situation. [68]

Ulrike Urban herself formulated some of these interpretations. She also talked about a symbiotic relationship with this person: "Yes, this is indeed such a symbiosis—more from his side." She considered the nursing situation itself to be, "very burdening. I also admit that I have reached a breaking point, which cannot be resolved so easily now." She stated: "The care I am giving—I am basically harming myself." Yet she saw no potential for action or change. [69]

Altogether, deficits in the case interpretation were clear in the dimension of love recognition, which activated destructive dynamics in the dimensions of Urban's life context: She suffered from being insecurely employed and having little money, and was thus unable to plan. Nevertheless, she could not change her situation. She shifted her search for recognition to her caring relationship. According to her interpretation, she was "liked" and "needed" there. She received—in our view—a form of intersubjective recognition of love, even though it is asymmetrical and ambivalent. The ambivalent "love" recognition relationship restricted Urban's opportunities for self-care. [70]

It was also stressful in terms of physical and psychological health (Dimension 7: health, self-care, and available time) and prevented her from seeking and taking up a better-paid job, which she certainly wanted (Dimension 1: gainful employment and income). Furthermore, it contributed to Urban's withdrawal from her few remaining friendships and the non-disclosure of critical personal aspects in these relationships (Dimension 5: political and social participation, social inclusion, and affiliation). [71]

We have just shown how Ulrike Urban shifted her search for love recognition into her care relationship and how the recognition she received there proved to be ambivalent. In the following sections, we will present reconstructions based on couples' interviews. In contrast to the case study just presented, here it will become clear how non-recognition can be processed in a couple's relationship; that is, how couples mutually pay tribute to and withhold recognition from each other, while at the same time solidifying and mitigating precarity of life arrangements. In the first case, we will reconstruct how mutual recognition of love can become a resource for the couple. [72]

5.2 Pepo and Patricia Poturica: Recognition of love and strong couple cohesion on the inside; fragile sole breadwinner arrangement on the outside

Patricia (25) and Pepo Poturica (28) have been a couple for ten years; they have three children (2, 4, and 7 years old). Pepo is the sole breadwinner of the family. Patricia takes care of the children and the household. She dropped out of school/vocational training because of her first pregnancy and has not worked in a paid job since then. Pepo Poturica worked as a skilled road worker for some years until he had to leave his company when, due to new management, a loss of income was announced. In our case reconstruction, we work out how the couple strengthened their cohesion through their mutual love recognition, reducing the lack of recognition of the labor market and other recognition deficits. By orienting

themselves toward a gender-differentiated division of labor, they expressed themselves as a couple with a harmonious and loving relationship and as a good parenting team. What appears to be coherent and consistent to them is ambivalent and fragile when viewed from the outside. We will outline their case using interactions in the dimensions of love recognition (Dimension 4), gainful employment (Dimension 1), income (Dimension 2), and health (Dimension 7). [73]

After he was let go, Pepo Poturica was employed as an unskilled worker, although he was promised upon hiring that he would be needed and paid as a skilled worker. At his request, when he would get his job as a road worker back, he was put off because the company had consistently low orders. In our reconstruction, Pepo Poturica was frustrated and felt degraded (Dimension 1: gainful employment). The effort that he put into his training and his professional experience in his old company seemed to be worth nothing to him: "I deliberately started learning a profession earlier so that I would not get into this situation in the first place, and now ... I am taking a step back again." [74]

While deficits of recognition can be reconstructed in Pepo Poturica's working sphere, the couple paid tribute to each other through love recognition and found strong cohesion in their relationship (Dimension 4: love recognition). This cohesion was also based on their parenting experiences: Patricia Poturica told us how challenging it was for her to be a parent initially since she had not known Pepo for long, and she was still very young at the time of pregnancy. In retrospect, she said that this strengthened their joint responsibility as a couple:

"So, through our children, we have come closer together, I must say. We work hand in hand. If you do not work hand in hand, then either you separate, or it works; you stick together, and then it fits." [75]

However, as both said, they were not only "good parents," but they also held "love itself" together as a couple, according to Patricia Poturica. She could "no longer imagine a life without [Pepo]." Pepo Poturica also expressed what he appreciated about Patricia: "What I find remarkable about her is really that she always harmonizes with me ... she goes through thick and thin with me. I like ... that she stands behind me." [76]

In our reconstruction, the couple had strong cohesion based on their shared roles as parents and mutual love. They also experienced themselves as a well-functioning team because they were oriented towards a gender-differentiated labor structure and experienced this as coherent and consistent. Consensually, the couple explained to us their clearly regulated division of labor according to gender (Dimension 4: love recognition/gender arrangements):

- Pepo Poturica: Everything in the household and the children's upbringing falls within her area of work.
- Patricia Poturica: Me, to 99 percent (laughs). However, when he is at home, he plays with them, of course. Nevertheless, everything that has to be done—cooking, changing diapers, changing clothes, bathing—I do all that. That is my job, that is what I do, and I do it with heart and soul.
- Pepo Poturica: Yes.
- Patricia Poturica: And I do not ask him for anything at all.
- Pepo Poturica: No, zero.
- Patricia Poturica: He goes to work.
- Pepo Poturica: Quite the opposite.
- Patricia Poturica: This is his part, and my part is simply the children. [77]

They claimed that this labor division made their everyday life more comfortable since they did not have to negotiate who should do what. However, as Pepo Poturica was only paid as an unskilled worker, the family's finances were very tight (Dimension 2: income). Patricia Poturica said that "there are always expenditures, particularly for the children." She was often anxious and, therefore, could not sleep at night: "There are really months where I say we will only get through by a hair's breadth." [78]

Yet the couple did not consider that Patricia Poturica earned extra income: She had no education and no work experience. Above all, she could not imagine taking up a job because she wants to be there for her children. According to our interpretation, Patricia Poturica did not experience not being in a job as a lack of recognition (Dimension 1: gainful employment). For her, the children were her top priority (Dimension 6: care for others). In their first three years of life, the children did not attend childcare facilities, if only because of the high fees: "You pay an arm and a leg for childcare." Above all, however, this was better for the children—in their perception, anyway. [79]

In the couple's interview, Patricia Poturica repeatedly pointed out that her job was also challenging and that she put much effort into the children's upbringing and the household: "There is a lot to be done. I get up at 6:30 in the morning and go to bed at 11:30 in the evening, and until then, I'm just running." She was also supported by Pepo Poturica, who explained how long his wife worked. He would be asleep by the time she finished her work. He regularly had to stop her from working any longer. [80]

While the couple had a strong cohesion and experienced their life together with the children as harmonious, the family was "marked" by neighbors in kindergarten and at school. In Patricia Poturica's interpretation, this was because of her age:

"Yes, you go to the parents' evening, then the teacher strangely looks at you ... I have also been asked before, 'Are you the sister?' I said, 'No, I am the mom.' 'Oh, I see.' You are not really recognized because you are seen as the young fool who cannot get anything done anyway." [81]

Patricia Poturica, according to our reconstruction, defended herself against these perceived reservations about her family:

"When people see us, they think, 'Oh.' However, when they look into our lives and see what we do, how we live, how we behave, many of these people are positively surprised and say, 'Wow. I did not think that you would do it like that,' or they say to me, 'I did not think that you would manage it so well with three children' or that Pepo would go to work regularly." [82]

They claimed not to be "antisocial" but, rather, presented themselves as a decent and respectable family, even though she was a young mother. She and her husband performed their respective, gender-differentiated tasks and worked together in the best possible way: She took care of the children while he earned money. The results of our reconstruction, however, convey that Pepo Poturica must under no circumstances become unemployed. Pepo losing his job would jeopardize the essential recognition of the family as respectable and its social existence. Furthermore, it would also threaten the family's economic existence. Since, as has been demonstrated, becoming a family breadwinner was not an alternative for Patricia, she demanded in the couple's interview that Pepo should under no circumstances give up his job. If he did, she believed he would abandon his family and her:

"Well, you just think, 'OK, I am going to pinch my ass cheeks together for a while because that is important to us.' If Pepo says overnight, 'I do not go to work anymore,' what will I do? Then we can move out of here, then we can sell the car, nothing will work anymore, and I will sit there with three kids." [83]

Only towards the end of the couple's interview did it become clear why the possibly of giving up employment was such an essential issue for Patricia. Pepo Poturica had developed a strong dust allergy, and his doctors had strongly advised him to give up employment on the construction site immediately, as damage to his lung function was imminent. However, for both persons, termination of Pepo's employment was out of the question—he would only quit after finding a new job. [84]

According to our reconstruction, the couple had a strong couple cohesion, and their gender-differentiated arrangement appeared to them as coherent, harmonic, and functional. We argued that the couple's arrangement was strengthened inwardly by the mutual recognition of love. However, from the outside, it appeared ambivalent and fragile, as the couple was in a dilemma due to the threat of occupational disability. If Pepo Poturica continued to work on the construction site, his state of health would deteriorate. On the other hand, while resigning would be beneficial to his health it would jeopardize the family's material

existence, respectability, and recognition. As is constitutive for the sole breadwinner model, Patricia Poturica was materially (and otherwise) dependent on her partner, and Pepo Poturica could not provide for his family alone in case of illness. [85]

5.3 Caroline Christiansen and Clemens Caspar: Non-recognition in a female family breadwinner arrangement

Caroline Christiansen (46) and Clemens Caspar (49) lived with their two teenage children in a female family breadwinner arrangement. Caroline Christiansen worked for a newspaper on a freelance basis and earns most of the (family) money alone. At the time of the interview, she was also looking after the children and household almost alone. Clemens Caspar ran a small café during the day until the evening, but he hardly made any money. Both shared a passion for nature conservation and had been volunteering in local projects for many years, but Caroline no longer found the time for that. We will show that the couple was unequally affected by precarity in their lives, which we attribute, among other factors, to Clemens Caspar's contempt for gainful employment, his non-recognition of his wife's needs, and her achievements as the family breadwinner. The dimensions in which we will illuminate interrelationships are (1) gainful employment, (2) income, (3) rights, (4) love recognition, (5) social participation, and (6) care for others. [86]

Clemens Caspar only worked in his vocation for a short time after his training and was then unemployed or precariously employed (Dimension 1: income). As he emphasized in the interview, it was never his goal to be in a stable employment situation. In general, gainful employment was never of great importance to him. He could not understand people's strong identification with their gainful employment:

"So [you'd be at] these weird parties, when you are in your early twenties, and people asked 'what do you do,' and then everybody was telling you how great their jobs were, and what they do, and how important they are." [87]

He claimed that, for him, gainful employment "is not that important to absolutely have to find a job to feel good." It is only essential "for economic reasons." When his previous employment contracts had expired, he had never worried, "Oh dear, now I will lose my job." He instead filled his free time with activities that he considered meaningful: "I can well live without it, that is, without the work, because I have enough other things to do. So, I am occupying myself." Naturally, these were meaningful activities: they included time with his children and involvement in nature conservation projects (Dimension 5: social participation). At the time of the interview, he was still running his café. That also gave him great pleasure because his friends in the neighborhood frequently visited him. [88]

Caroline Christiansen was a freelancer for a newspaper. When she started there, she was offered a permanent position. She worked enthusiastically in a department where she could report on local nature conservation projects.

Nevertheless, her euphoria quickly faded. The newspaper company was restructured, and instead of a permanent position, there were austerity measures, job cuts, and a high degree of work density. She was no longer needed in her department, but she was given the opportunity to transfer to a regional department that from her point of view was unattractive and boring. She would have preferred to turn down the offer. However, since she considered her chances of finding a new job to be slim and bore responsibility for her family, she accepted the role: "Well, I am doing this to help the family make ends meet. I have no alternative. At my age I do not need to fill out any applications. It is completely pointless." [89]

While we did not find any recognition deficits in Clemens Caspar's precarious employment biography, we reconstructed large recognition deficits in Caroline Christiansen's case, working as a freelancer and, more importantly, in an uninteresting department. Frustrated and annoyed, Caroline Christiansen would regularly come home and report the day's happenings to her partner. Clemens Caspar would refuse to listen, however, because, according to our reconstruction, he considered it hypocritical when she complained about her work. He thought that unlike him, she required the work for herself:

- Clemens Caspar: Well, with you, it is different; you need the work. Caroline just needs a job. So, I think she defines herself more through work than I do [...] and yes, without it, she would break down. Moreover, she feels she must keep the business running and, therefore, she goes to work. So that you say you would, if you could, choose and do something else, not do that job anymore; that doesn't happen. You really need this job.
- Caroline Christiansen: I would work less but something else. [...]
- Clemens Caspar: No. [...]
- Caroline Christiansen: Sure, I would!
- Clemens Caspar: You need this job. [...]
- Caroline Christiansen: [...] I could also do less there. If it would be enough financially.
- Clemens Caspar: Well, financially, it is not enough even now. So, it does not really matter in the end. [90]

In our interpretation, Clemens Caspar insinuated in this interaction that his partner did not work because she had to feed the family, but because she could not do otherwise. For him, she required her work for her being and her *Sosein* [suchness] (MOTAKEF, 2019a, 2019b; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). In our reconstruction, he denied his partner recognition for her efforts to feed the family (Dimension 2: income) and her existence (Dimension 4: love). We interpreted his indication that her income was already insufficient ("it does not really matter in the end") as depreciation and devaluation of her gainful employment as unnecessary, meaningless, and useless. [91]

Caroline Christiansen rejected this and repeated several times that she would very much like to be active in her conservation projects again and that she would like to write about these projects, albeit voluntarily (Dimension 5: social participation). However, she said she had no freedom to do so, in part because Clemens hardly earned any money—a claim he countered. He believed she should stop her frustration by simply leaving her job and applying for unemployment benefits (Dimension 3: rights). [92]

However, for Caroline Christiansen, this was not an option. Also, in her perception she was deceived by the job center a few years ago: She signed a form falsely on request of a clerk, which led to the fact that they did not receive social security assistance. As a consequence, she had to borrow money from friends to get by for several months. Looking back, she remembered: "It was humiliating even then. Malignant. It is something that pulls you down. And no matter how much you try to tell yourself, 'I do not give a damn,' it does not work." Ever since this humiliating experience, she has completely dismissed the possibility of ever applying for benefits again. [93]

When asked about their relationship as a couple and their couple cohesion (Dimension 4: love recognition), they mentioned their children, whom they are proud of, and their previous joint activities in nature conservation. When we asked what they value in each other, Clemens Caspar found no answer: These are "tough questions." Caroline Christiansen mentioned their shared and, in her eyes, successful parenthood and their common passion for nature conservation—and she liked "the unconventional" about him. [94]

At the time of the interview, Caroline Christiansen looked after the children almost alone, as her partner was usually at his café (Dimension 6: care for others, care). This had been different in the past: Since Clemens Caspar was unemployed or only marginally employed when the children were small, and Caroline Christiansen had also worked less, they had shared the care and education of the children at that time. [95]

Unlike in the previous case, we did not reconstruct a strong couple relationship. In contrast to Pepo Poturica, Caroline Christiansen was not recognized for feeding the family. In Clemens Caspar, we reconstructed a disregard for gainful employment, which was also represented in his non-recognition of her achievements as a family breadwinner. While Clemens Caspar found space in his café, Caroline Christiansen's life context accumulated recognition deficits and burdens. According to our reconstruction, not only was this due to her gainful employment, but her partner also contributed to it: He did not give her any credit for feeding the family; he prevented her, in our interpretation, from cushioning recognition deficits on the employment side through recognition of her nature conservation projects, and, finally, he paid little attention to her needs—namely, wanting to talk about her work-related exasperation and to avoid being dependent on the job center. [96]

6. Empirically Reasoned and Theoretical Conclusion of the Recognition-Extended Perspective on Precarity of Life Arrangements

6.1 Strengths of and insights into the recognition theory perspective based on the three case studies

We primarily illustrated the knowledge gained from our extended research heuristic of precarity of life arrangements compared with the precarity research in industrial sociology through Ulrike Urban's example of a precariously employed person. First, if we had only reconstructed her ways of coping with precarious employment, we would have seen the case of a caregiver who was frustrated about her employment situation but did not want to improve it in an allegedly "irrational" way. The structural deficits in which professional nursing activities—predominantly performed by women—were often embedded would also have become visible. Second, using a broader perspective on the context of life could have shown that Urban was burdened in several dimensions of her life context in addition to her income and employment; for example, with regard to her social integration. Third, only a recognition-extended perspective conveyed that she continued her underpaid employment in nursing care because of her search for love recognition, which resulted in severely limited opportunities for recognition and inequalities in other life dimensions. [97]

In this case, the powerful interactions were centrally located between the dimensions of gainful employment, care for others, and love recognition. Urban tried to compensate for the love recognition through a partner or a family that she aspired to but lacked via love recognition in a caring relationship. This provoked a spiral of destruction: All her other needs—self-care, health, leisure time, friendships, social participation, domestic work, her living situation, a better-paid job—were subordinated to the ambivalent love relationship. [98]

While Ulrike Urban desperately sought love recognition, we observed how mutual love recognition strengthened the couple's cohesion in our second case. If we had solely focused on precarious employment, we would not have seen the housewife and mother, Patricia Poturica. Pepo Poturica would appear as an employee who, as long as he did not find anything better, hold on to his precarious employment at all costs. Using the broader perspective on life context could also have clarified the burdens resulting from this precarious employment, for example, in terms of income and health. However, only the recognition-extended perspective on precarity of life arrangements conveyed how the orientation towards the couple's gender-differentiated division of labor made it impossible for Pepo Poturica to give up his gainful employment despite the threat to his health. If he quit his job, he would—in his wife's perception—endanger her family's acceptability and material status. What strengthened the couple inwardly was the fact that she paid tribute to him as a breadwinner, and he recognized her as a housewife and mother. This proved to be fragile and ambivalent from the outside, partly because of his state of health. Without the recognition-extended perspective on precarity, it would not have been clear that mutual love recognition

was a stabilizing resource for the couple, helping them both to cushion recognition deficits in other dimensions. [99]

In the Caspar/Christiansen case, we did not find a strong bond between the couple, and both partners were afflicted differently by precarity in their life context. Here, we were able to show, through the recognition-extended perspective, how Clemens Caspar's disregard for professional recognition and non-recognition of Caroline Christiansen's achievements as a family breadwinner led to an accumulation of recognition deficits for his partner, and how he prevented her from receiving alternative recognition in nature conservation projects. [100]

Our recognition-extended perspective is thus insightful and clarifies how recognition and recognition deficits are processed in the life context. It also sensitizes us to the interrelationships between the dimensions and can therefore shed light on how recognition and recognition deficits can be cushioned or reinforced. Now that we have emphasized the interrelationships and relations between the dimensions, we will illuminate the various dimensions. [101]

6.2 A recognition-extended research heuristic of precarity of life arrangements

In Table 1, we present a general recognition theory perspective on precarity of life arrangements, and in Table 2, we have provisionally identified eight recognition-extended dimensions. In Table 3, we present our empirically-based research heuristic, which results from the entire recursive research process. [102]

Similar to a sensitizing concept (BLUMER, 1954), our heuristic does not take on a "cognition-determining character, [...] but rather a merely tentative [...] and thus sensitizing function [...] in the sense of opening, not of verifying the conclusion of cognitive processes" (KRUSE, 2019, n.p.). Thus, it is intended to orient and inspire further research on precarious life situations, gender, inequality, and recognition. In this respect, we understand our heuristic as a work in progress. Depending on one's research interest, individual dimensions can be focused on or be supplemented. [103]

Based on the empirical examples presented, we will illustrate the eight dimensions and selected sub-dimensions. Since we developed the heuristic using all of the material, we refer to detailed discussions in WIMBAUER and MOTAKEF (2020). Table 3 shows the eight dimensions and sub-dimensions (cf. the sub-questions in Table 1, Points 2a to d)¹² resulting from a recognition perspective: What do the individuals in relationships want to be recognized for in the respective dimension (Table 1, 2a)? For what do they receive recognition (Table 1, 2b)? Do other dimensions show strengthening or weakening interactions or ambivalences (Table 1, 2c) and (gender-differentiating) inequalities (Table 1, 2d)? [104]

¹² As far as this is ever possible and reasonable.

Researchers already have findings on these dimensions, in some cases from sociological studies which have so far only been synthesized in part and made suitable for a precarization perspective. While up to now, there have only been provisions on which criteria constitute precarious employment for the dimension of gainful employment, these are lacking for other dimensions or are inconsistent. Here, too, we do not offer a final overall integration, but rather a proposal as to how these perspectives can be made fruitful for each other. [105]

Recognition, according to the assumption underlying our heuristic, transverses all dimensions. In some, recognition itself is the dimension (especially 3, 4); in others, it is central as recognition "for" (achievement, 1, care for others [care] 6) or "through" (for example 2) or becomes only indirectly significant (for example 7, 8).

1. Gainful employment (HONNETH, 1996; BRINKMANN et al., 2006)

- a) Institutional-legal dimension of the (in-)formal working condition, labor, and social law protection and recognition
 - b) Material dimension (partly overlaps with 2)
 - i) Material-reproductive: Securing existence and participation?
 - ii) Material-recognition-theoretical: Is the income perceived as adequate and enabling a dignified life?
 - c) Social-communicative dimension
 - i) Creation of meaning, subjectivation, social contacts in/through gainful employment?
 - ii) Intersubjective recognition in/through gainful employment?
- Superior:
- d) What normative framework of recognizability for gainful employment is given?
- Comprehensive:
- e) Interactions with other dimensions?
 - f) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?

2. Income and assets, financial security (overall)

Individually and in the household / in the community of responsibility:

- a) Material-reproductive dimension (income, transfers, assets, debt):

Is it possible to secure one's existence and participation individually and for the household/care community?

- b) Material recognition-theoretical dimension:

Is the overall income situation (income, transfers) perceived as adequate and enabling a "good" life?

Comprehensive:

- c) Interactions with other dimensions (e.g., participation, health, housing, love)?
- d) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?

3. Rights and (unequal) legal recognition (HONNETH, 1996 [1992], 2011)

a) Liberal liberty rights and political participation rights (HONNETH), supplemented by equality rights and further differentiations:

Do all have the same formal rights of freedom and participation (objective rights), and can they effectively make use of them (subjective rights)? (Illegalized migrants, for example, cannot.)

b) Social welfare rights (HONNETH), further differentiated into:

- Entitlement rights and foundations: For which "benefits" or needs are which social and family policy benefits granted? What is accepted by the welfare state (especially gainful employment due to the employment centrality of the social system)?

- Labor rights and labor protection: How are certain forms of employment (not) legally protected and safeguarded (see 1a)?

Dimensions beyond HONNETH:

c) What are the legal-normative frameworks of legitimate recognizability? Which subjects/social groups/characteristics (e.g., "performance") are constituted as (not) worthy of recognition (e.g., through sexual rights and the heterosexual matrix; or the acquisition and performance-centering of the welfare state)?

Comprehensive:

d) Interactions with other dimensions?

e) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?

For example, where is inequality legally institutionalized (e.g., concerning sexual orientation, migration, non-recognition of care)?

What unequal system of recognition is institutionalized by law and the welfare state?

Moreover, on a subjective/intersubjective level:

f) Which, although possible, formally given, objective rights can, in fact, not be redeemed by individuals as subjective rights?

4. Intersubjective recognition as a "whole" and unique person ("love" in the sphere of social closeness) (HONNETH, 1996 [1992], 2011; WIMBAUER, 2012)

a) Integration and intersubjective recognition in couple, family, and friendship relationships

- Extent and quality of these relationships

- Intersubjective recognition in these relationships vs. ambivalent recognition/non-recognition

b) Gender arrangements in (romantic) couple, family, and friendship relationships?

Superior:

c) Which normative frameworks of recognizability are given (e.g., social heteronormativity, gender order, couple normativity, right of residence)?

Comprehensive:

d) Interactions with other dimensions? Does meaning take place through (recognition in close relationships? Ambivalences of recognition?

e) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?

<p>5. Political and social participation, social inclusion, affiliation (BARTELHEIMER, 2007)</p> <p>a) Resources for and access to political participation and affiliation</p> <p>b) Extent and quality of political participation (overlaps with 3a)</p> <p>c) Resources for and access to social participation and affiliation</p> <p>d) Extent and quality of social participation (partial overlap with 4a)</p> <p>Comprehensive:</p> <p>e) Interactions with other dimensions?</p> <p>Does sensemaking take place through affiliation? Ambivalences of belonging?</p> <p>f) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?</p>
<p>6. Housework and care (AMACKER, 2014; KLENNER et al., 2012)</p> <p>a) How are the domestic work and care arrangements organized?</p> <p>b) What intersubjective and material-financial recognition and support do domestic workers, especially caregivers, (not) receive?</p> <p>c) What developmental opportunities do the children have?</p> <p>Superior:</p> <p>d) What normative framework of recognizability for (domestic work and) care is given?</p> <p>Comprehensive:</p> <p>e) Interactions with other dimensions?</p> <p>f) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?</p>
<p>7. Health, self-care, and available time</p> <p>a) Extent of physical and mental health or impairment</p> <p>b) Time options for and extent of self-care, leisure time, and self-recognition</p> <p>Superior:</p> <p>c) Which normative frameworks are given for the realization and recognizability of medical prevention, physical and mental health, self-care, and leisure/idleness (e.g., social ableism, pathologization of certain phenomena, devaluation of idleness)?</p> <p>Comprehensive:</p> <p>d) Interactions with other dimensions?</p> <p>e) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?</p>
<p>8. Housing situation</p> <p>a) "Objective": Sufficient space, equipment, building fabric, heating, electricity, spatial location for gainful employment and family (in case of commuting or separation), a family of origin (grandparents/parents, siblings), and friends for all household members?</p> <p>b) "Subjective-recognition theoretical": Is the housing situation perceived as adequate for a dignified life, and does it allow for social participation?</p> <p>Comprehensive:</p> <p>c) Interactions with other dimensions?</p> <p>d) (Gender-differentiating) inequalities?</p>

Table 3: Recognition-extended analytical dimensions of precarity of life arrangements [106]

6.2.1 *Gainful employment*

Gainful employment is undoubtedly a central dimension in precarity research; it is also the dimension with the most findings and definitions (see Sections 1 and 2.1). Researchers in the sociology of labor, in particular, revealed how precarious employment (and unemployment) can develop both objectively and subjectively. By considering gainful employment as the first dimension, we also ascribe great importance to it. HONNETH (1996 [1992]) considered gainful employment as a central source of recognition—as recognition for achievement. However, we decenter gainful employment to the extent that we understand it as one of the eight dimensions in the life context. [107]

As with Caroline Christiansen and Ulrike Urban, we often found the desire to participate in gainful employment. However, many of those participants we questioned were unable to fulfill this aspiration: Like Christiansen, Urban, and Pepo Poturica, almost all of them reported structural deterioration in their working conditions (work intensification, job and salary cuts, dismissals), which resulted in considerable recognition deficits for them (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). [108]

Using the theories of BRINKMANN et al., (2006), the division into an institutional-legal, material, and social-communicative sub-dimension proved fruitful. In our material, it became clear how closely these three sub-dimensions were connected with recognition: Christiansen's reconstruction revealed recognition deficits in that the promised indefinite employment period turned out to be an empty promise, and that after all these years, she was left with continually working on a freelance basis (institutional-legal sub-dimension). Pepo Poturica also exhibited a lack of recognition and incredible frustration that he was only employed and paid as an unskilled worker (material sub-dimension). Analyzing Ulrike Urban's case showed the great importance of the social-communicative subdimension: Even though she was only marginally employed and paid, she drew meaning, love recognition, and achievement from her care relationship, which, according to our reconstruction, turned out to be ambivalent and even destructive in her life context. [109]

6.2.2 *Income and assets*

The dimension of income is fundamental and closely linked to gainful employment. In addition to the economic function of income, it is—if nothing else—also a function of recognition and non-recognition in cases of low income. Ulrike Urban, Pepo Poturica, and Caroline Christiansen felt underpaid and unrecognized in this respect, particularly given the educational investments they had made. Patricia Poturica and Caroline Christiansen were very concerned about their families' material existence; Ulrike Urban also feared that she would be poor when old. Moreover, here, the relations to other dimensions become apparent, since limited financial resources directly reduced (recognition) chances in almost all other dimensions such as social participation when joint activities with friends were not possible, housing when rent was expensive and affordable

housing was lacking, and health. Indirectly, financial resources influence pairing chances and a lot more. [110]

6.2.3 Rights and (unequal) legal recognition

The dimension of legal recognition played only a very small role in previous conceptualizations of precarity of life arrangements. However, it did feature in HONNETH's sphere model (1996 [1992]) and the Social Security Code II research¹³ (e.g., PROMBERGER et al., 2018). Our interviewees often reported on their experiences with receiving assistance (unemployment benefits I and II). We showed how Caroline Christiansen did not want to receive social benefits again at any price because she felt betrayed by the job center, and by no means did she want to repeat this experience. Even if the family had been entitled to benefits, Caroline Christiansen, unlike her partner, had already categorically ruled out the possibility of receiving them. [111]

Also, in this dimension, we cite, with BUTLER (2010), legal-normative frameworks of recognizability. In our reconstructions, we often found the connection between recognizability, respectability, and gainful employment: Patricia Poturica, for example, linked her family's respectability and recognizability to her partner's gainful employment. As stated elsewhere (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020), in other cases, we also encountered the interpretation pattern of the "lazy unemployed," from which the respondents dissociated themselves. [112]

6.2.4 Intersubjective recognition as a whole and unique person

Love or intersubjective recognition as a whole and unique person (HONNETH, 1996 [1992], 2011; WIMBAUER, 2012) has not been considered as part of any conceptualization so far. Although KLENNER et al. (2012) saw gender arrangements as a separate dimension, we understand them as a sub-dimension and gender inequalities as a transversal aspect. However, a great deal of potential has remained unexploited in this area. Intersubjective love recognition in couple, family, and friendship relationships can prove a central source of meaning and a resource that makes it possible to shift recognition deficits from other dimensions to the background and cushion them. We demonstrated this with the example of the Poturica couple. The Urban case also illustrates the importance of this dimension. First, the search for love recognition can become a central orientation for action, and second, even love recognition from a caregiver can have a destructive potential for the caregiver's entire life context. [113]

In this dimension, we also often found gender-differentiating inequalities in couple arrangements (MOTAKEF, 2019a, 2019b; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). The Christiansen/Caspar couple is an example of this. Caroline Christiansen is mainly responsible for the family on her own, and her partner did not recognize her for this effort. [114]

¹³ The German *Zweite Sozialgesetzbuch* (SGB II) [Social Security Code II] refers to the Second Book of the Social Code in which job seekers' basic security is regulated.

6.2.5 Political and social participation

Here we were interested in the resources and accesses, the extent and quality of social and political participation, and the respondents' affiliation (BARTELHEIMER, 2007; MARQUARDSEN, 2012). Many of them lacked the financial and frequently also the time resources, as they had to earn money. Such was the case with the Christiansen/Caspar couple. [115]

Recognition played a significant role here. For Christiansen/Caspar, for instance, volunteer work had become a source of alternative performance recognition. Since Caroline Christiansen could not write about nature conservation topics in her freelance work, she would have liked to do so voluntarily. Nevertheless, her partner prevented her from doing so. While this dimension is a central source of meaning and recognition for him, it was closed to her. Also, this dimension could not wholly compensate for her lack of professional recognition. [116]

6.2.6 Housework and care for others

As KLENNER et al. (2012) and AMACKER (2014) also emphasized, the arrangements in which the little-recognized domestic work and care for others (care), predominantly performed by women, take place are decisive for precarity of life arrangements. We also came across the structural incompatibility of gainful employment and care, often criticized by gender researchers (e.g., AULENBACHER, DAMMAYR & DÉCIEUX, 2015). This can affect single parents in particular and be very challenging for couples as well (WIMBAUER, 2012). With the Poturica couple, we showed that, on the one hand, both wanted Patricia Poturica to be a housewife and look after their children at home. On the other hand, the sole breadwinner arrangement endangered their material existence, as Pepo Poturica did not earn a family income from his precarious employment and was endangering his health at the same time. [117]

Using Ulrike Urban as an example, we worked out recognition ambivalences that can manifest themselves in this dimension: In her relationship with the caregiver, Urban found recognition and was eager to provide adequate care. However, since caring for others continues to receive little social recognition—and is not considered a service for which there is recognition, according to HONNETH's (1996 [1992], 2003, 2011) ideas—and her care facility did not provide round-the-clock care, Urban compensates for these failures but could not secure her existence and was thus isolated. [118]

6.2.7 Health, self-care, and available time

Like in reports regarding precariously employed and unemployed people in general (e.g., EGGS, TRAPPMANN & UNGER, 2014; for mental illnesses, OSCHMIANSKY et al., 2017), we also found many health restrictions. These emerged partly due to recognition deficits in a precarious employment and living situation, such as in the case of burnout and states of exhaustion, partly as a cause and partly as complex entanglements (WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020).

As we illustrated with Ulrike Urban, our respondents often lacked the time and resources for self-care and recreation, especially if they were responsible for caregiving. [119]

Recognition is not a genuine and immediate category in the dimension of health and self-care. However, indirect and concerning the ability to be recognized, recognition is manifold and eminently relevant, for example, in the interrelation with love recognition. Thus, Pepo Poturica's ability to be recognized as a male breadwinner in his relationship was called into question by his imminent health-related disability. Chronic illnesses are often taboo in society, and self-care, according to the results for all interviewees, seemed to have almost no legitimate recognition in society and for individuals. This was entirely different from "performance" (MOTAKEF et al., 2018; WIMBAUER & MOTAKEF, 2020). [120]

6.2.8 Housing situation

The dimension of housing is essential as a basic existential need. It is frequently particularly problematic for precariously employed people in times of housing shortages and high rents in many cities, which is why the couples in our sample exhibited great difficulties when they wanted to move in or out together. In our study, however, we did not systematically look at the housing situation. As in the case of income, the interactions with other dimensions are apparent: A poor housing situation puts a strain on health and makes a wide range of participation considerably more difficult. Recognition also plays an indirect role here. In the case of Ulrike Urban, we reconstructed deficits in recognition that became apparent about her housing situation: She seemed ashamed of her small apartment far from the city center, which is why she did not want to receive her friends (or us) there. [121]

7. Summary and Outlook

Our plea is to reduce precarity (not only) in gainful employment and income and to systematically consider recognition in precarity research. As a result of a recursive research process, we presented a recognition-extended perspective on the precarity of life arrangements and condensed research heuristic, illustrating an excerpt of their strengths and possibilities for insight. In doing so, we went far beyond previous conceptions of precarity of life arrangements. First, we extended this concept using the concept of recognition, and second—utilizing HONNETH's (1996 [1992], 2003) work—we considered rights and, above all, love recognition as a separate dimension. All this enables us to focus on interrelations and ambivalences between the dimensions and to better understand the complex dynamics in the life context. [122]

Regarding the use of our proposed research heuristic, we would like to emphasize the following selected aspects: Practices of resistance played hardly any role in our study and among our respondents.¹⁴ It would certainly be revealing

¹⁴ This would most likely be relevant to Clemens Caspar. However, it would be necessary to examine whether he actually resistantly questioned employment norms or merely rejected them

if future researchers in empirical reconstruction and theory genesis were to systematically address questions of resistance and norm transgression, whereby a reference to BUTLER's theories would come to mind. Here, it would have to be asked under which biographical, social, and societal conditions norms can be questioned and possibly even transformed, as well as how this could be described theoretically. [123]

Besides, using a life course perspective in the sense of a real panel would be very insightful for a recognition theory reconstruction of precarity of life arrangements. Furthermore, the question arises as to whether precarity is a transitional phase or is condensed in the biography (ALLMENDINGER et al., 2018). Finally, recognition conditions can change over time if some areas of life, such as caring for others (care)—for instance, when children grow up—or models, such as the link between masculinity and gainful employment, lose or gain importance. [124]

In this paper, we have only hinted at a gender theory perspective on precarization and recognition. For us, that seems indispensable and must be explicitly considered in every dimension, especially since gender relations in modern societies (and not only this one) are genuinely unequal recognition relations (e.g., WIMBAUER, 2012). [125]

The recognition-theoretical framework of precarity of life arrangements we propose also requires "provincialization" (CHAKRABARTY, 2007). Even though intersubjective recognition is socially constitutive from our theoretical perspective, the heuristic we propose is not universally valid. Instead, our heuristic is closely interwoven with the modern wage labor society and its institutionalized order of recognition embedded in time and space. Therefore, the research heuristic has to be modified if gainful employment receives a different social meaning, and different institutionalized recognition rules should be available in western industrialized nations. Finally, we hope that our heuristic will be used to inspire further empirical research and stimulate discussions and further developments. [126]

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reactively (and it would have to be determined more precisely what is meant by resistant action and how it can be distinguished from a mere verbal rejection). With regard to life context and gender inequalities, it would be necessary to further discuss with Clemens Caspar whether his rejection of gainful employment and his disinterest in professional recognition represents resistant action against the system of gainful employment. Did he maybe reject gainful employment only as a spouse and in the interview, to legitimize the unequal division of labor in his couple relationship (for a detailed interpretation, see MOTAKEF, 2019a, 2019b)?

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