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The Mediodoxy: A Bourdieusian Third Logic of Practice between Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Lived Experience of Anti-Muslim Racism and Antisemitism

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Abstract

Bourdieu's triad of doxa, orthodoxy, and heresy explains consensus and contestation yet leaves undertheorized the middle ground where practice unfolds. I theorize mediodoxy as a third logic of practice and knowledge that neither ratifies doxa nor negates it. Drawing on 23 interviews with Jews and Muslims, I reconstruct sequences in which actors invoke racialized tropes ("Timbuktu," "pure-blooded"), normalize discriminatory jokes, or acquiesce in exclusion. These cases show symbolic violence operates not only by external imposition but also through the practical compromises of those navigating stigma. Extending Bourdieu's claim that domination works with the complicity of the dominated, I specify mechanisms of complicity and argue that mediodoxy can crystallize as a mediodoxic habitus—durable, patterned, and formed through recurrent experience of antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. Mediodoxy refines field theory and advances the sociology of racism and antisemitism by showing inequality is stabilized, legitimated, and rendered ordinary between orthodoxy and heresy.

Keywords

Bourdieu, habitus-field theory, mediodoxy, symbolic violence, anti-Muslim racism and antisemitism

INTRODUCTION

Bourdieu's triad of doxa, orthodoxy, and heresy provides a central framework for analyzing how consensus is generated, destabilized, and reconfigured in social life. *Doxa* refers to the taken-for-granted assumptions that guide practice without being articulated; once crises

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disturb this tacit order, actors are split into defenders of the established order (*orthodoxy*) and challengers of its legitimacy (*heresy*; Bourdieu 2013). This polarity has been widely mobilized in research on religion, politics, and culture, showing how struggles over legitimacy and classification unfold as field-specific confrontations (Dennaoui 2025; Qadir 2015). Yet much less attention has been given to actors who occupy positions between these poles—positions that neither fully endorse the dominant order nor radically negate it. The lacuna is striking because Bourdieu himself acknowledged the rarity of outright symbolic revolutions, and his field analyses contain scattered hints of moderated deviations, such as the "moderate heresy" identified in *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu 1988:120) or the paradoxical career of Baudelaire in *The Rules of Art* (Bourdieu 1996). More recent theoretical contributions reinforce this view, showing that symbolic revolutions often emerge through synthesis rather than rupture (Petzke 2021) and that heterodox positioning tends to involve complex mediations with orthodoxy (Verter 2003). These findings suggest that intermediate positions are not marginal anomalies but constitutive elements of field dynamics.

Central to this problem is Bourdieu's (1993:47) insistence that symbolic domination works with "a tacit complicity of the dominated." Symbolic domination does not rely on overt coercion; it is sustained because those subjected to it misrecognize the arbitrariness of classificatory schemes and through practice, participate in their reproduction. In this vein, cultural sociologists have shown how actors internalize stigmas or normalize discriminatory routines. Lindell (2022) demonstrates how subjects may self-impose the mark of disgrace. In educational contexts, pupils absorb and reiterate categories that marginalize them via linguistic racism, reinforcing the hierarchies they suffer (Aygün-Sagdic, Bajenaru, and Melter 2015; Mecheril and Natarajan 2025). Essed's (1991) analysis of "everyday racism" likewise foregrounds how discrimination embeds itself in habitual practices rather than exceptional events. Across these accounts, the dominated are not merely passive victims but through their own strategies of coping, normalizing, or resignifying, contribute to the persistence of domination.

This insight is crucial in the field of racism and antisemitism studies. Extensive scholarship has documented the persistence of discriminatory orthodoxies and the emergence of heterodox countermovements (Meer 2014), yet less is known about how those directly targeted may inadvertently reproduce symbolic hierarchies. Antisemitism research has highlighted processes of normalization in which discriminatory jokes or stereotypes are downplayed as ordinary interaction, even by those directly affected (Bergmann and Erb 1997; Beyer and Krumpal 2010; Chernivsky and Lorenz-Sinai 2022). Similarly, scholarship on Islamophobia shows how Muslim actors sometimes navigate stigmatization by partially internalizing dominant frames, transforming them into resources of respectability or cultural capital without fundamentally contesting the underlying classificatory order (Bakali 2016; CLAIM 2025; Kozaric 2024; Meer 2013). These dynamics exemplify neither pure orthodoxy nor full heresy but ambivalent strategies that sustain domination in everyday life.

Bourdieu conceptualizes doxa, orthodoxy, and heresy (or heterodoxy) as distinct states of consensus and contestation. Doxa names what is taken for granted—beliefs so deeply embedded they appear beyond debate. It operates silently and unconsciously until shaken by crisis. In every field—conceived as a force field, a game field, or a battlefield—Bourdieu assumes the presence of two contra-polar actors pursuing different strategies of practice: orthodoxy and heresy.[1] Orthodox actors seek to preserve their privileges, positions, and power of nomination by reproducing existing structures (Bourdieu 2001a:50–55). Heretical actors attempt to disrupt these structures, change the rules, and impose alternative naming practices (Witte 2014:69). Power relations are dynamic and unstable. The dominant proclaim the "end of history" as a strategy to naturalize their dominance and obscure heretical

alternatives. Heresy, in turn, deploys "fundamental upheavals," although such events "empirically occur only very rarely" (Witte 2014:73). Whereas orthodoxy ratifies doxa, heterodoxy seeks to rupture it (Witte 2014:88). The difficulty of symbolic revolution lies in the fact that heresy destabilizes not only doxa but also the positions of other actors in the field.

According to Bourdieu (2001a:35), the dichotomy between orthodoxy and heresy appears across all fields of cultural production. As Bourdieu (1988:120) argues, this opposition recurs in different symbolic fields, each time in a specific guise, and is homologous to the opposition between dominant and dominated actors in the social space and in the broader field of power. In social and cultural fields (e.g., the literary or scientific field), established, highly positioned, and capital-rich actors tend to occupy orthodox positions. These actors defend prevailing rules, values, and hierarchies. New entrants, marginalized actors, and those with weaker positions are more inclined toward heretical stances, challenging established conventions. The dominant have an interest in preserving the integrity of doxa. The dominated have an interest in pushing back its boundaries and exposing its arbitrariness. Heresy, by challenging the status quo, compels the dominant to articulate orthodox justifications where previously silence sufficed. Once tacit consensus begins to fracture, the spectrum of opinion splits. Defenders of orthodoxy attempt to justify as *natural* what had been unquestioned. Proponents of heterodoxy make different courses of action visible (Bourdieu 2013:169).

Labeling actors as orthodox or heretical does not necessarily correspond to their self-understanding. Yet Bourdieu's theoretical vocabulary insists on this distinction (Witte 2014:236). A further question arises: To what extent is it theoretically and empirically significant when actors in struggles for recognition and symbolic capital identify as neither orthodox nor heretical and do not act with corresponding strategies but instead occupy a middle position? I designate this middle ground as *mediodoxy*: a position whose habitus is shaped by the perceptual schemes of established actors and by the experiences and transformative aspirations of the marginalized. Mediodoxic actors see through orthodoxy yet avoid the radicalism of heresy. They thus appropriate elements of both positions. This matters because orthodox actors can perceive even minimal critique of doxa and illusio as an "existential threat" that evokes drastic counterstrategies (Witte 2014:89). The stakes in these struggles must be determined empirically because they structure relations within the field and demarcate its boundaries (Bourdieu 2001a:49).

Mediodoxy designates a third logic of action and perception situated between orthodoxy and heresy. This idea captures how actors may unintentionally reproduce asymmetrical relations of domination. The term captures a patterned and ambivalent practical sense in which actors who partially benefit from the doxic order yet lack the symbolic capital to contest it openly reproduce domination through internalized classificatory schemes, routinized silence, and tacit acquiescence. Sedimented in the habitus through recurrent experiences of misrecognition and symbolic violence, mediodoxy organizes the mechanisms by which inequality is upheld, cautiously problematized, and inadvertently reproduced in everyday practice. Rather than naming a position type, mediodoxy designates a dispositional, cognitive-affective, and semantic configuration that mediates between dominant and dominated positions and operates as an intermediate modality of symbolic-doxic domination. Mediodoxy extends Bourdieu's theory by foregrounding the middle ground in which domination is reproduced through ambivalent, everyday practices rather than through the explicit defense of orthodoxy or the open challenge of heresy. The concept also reinterprets the orthodoxy and heresy dichotomy by positing a shared practical terrain on which both ultimately depend. This reframing allows us to see discrimination not only as imposed from above but as reembedded in practice, language, and self-understanding, thereby offering a novel perspective on the reproduction of inequality in contemporary societies.

In what follows, I reconstruct the fragmentary and implicitly articulated middle positions within Bourdieu's oeuvre to clarify their conceptual limits and to prepare the ground for the introduction of mediodoxy. I then elaborate mediodoxy as a third logic of practice by specifying its four mechanisms and situating it as an extension of Bourdieu's two ideal-typical modalities of action, orthodoxy and heresy. The empirical vignettes, focused on antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism, substantiate this formulation by illustrating how mediodoxy and its mechanisms materialize in situated practice. Finally, to demonstrate its broader analytic resonance, I place mediodoxy in dialogue with Du Bois and Fanon, underscoring its generalizable relevance for theories of domination, complicity, and the reproduction of inequality.

THE INTERMEDIATE POSITION OF MEDIODOXY: TRACING A LINE IN BOURDIEU

A key question is whether and to what extent Bourdieu acknowledges positions that lie between strict orthodoxy and heresy. Although he never names or theoretically explicates such a logic, his analyses gesture toward intermediary configurations that cannot be reduced to either pole, yet these remain only implicitly indicated rather than theoretically elaborated. In his empirical studies of concrete fields, Bourdieu shows that social actors are not always cleanly divided into camps of orthodoxy and heresy; rather, there are gray zones and moderate deviations that mediate (or stand) between the poles. It is instructive to ask whether and in what sense Bourdieu's theoretical architecture addresses these moderate deviators and gray zones.

Homo Academicus, Bourdieu's (1988) study of the French university field, provides an example of *moderate heresy* in the academic field. Bourdieu describes two groups within the French higher education world and alongside orthodoxy, identifies a moderate heresy. On one side stands the orthodoxy of full professors, chair holders who advanced through the classic competitive examinations (concours) and embody the established rules (Bourdieu 1988:120). Opposed to them, Bourdieu (1988:120) places a group of relative "outsiders and originals" in academia—scholars who often gained recognition off the official paths. Bourdieu (1988:120) designates the latter as bearers of a "moderate heresy." This moderate heresy marks an intermediate position: These actors deviate in their trajectories and views from the orthodox schema—for example, by pursuing unconventional research topics or cultivating alternative pedagogical styles—yet their deviation remains sufficiently measured that it cannot be called full-blown heresy. These scholars continue to accept the basic rules of the academic field and ultimately attain institutional recognition. Bourdieu's notion of moderate heresy thus provides an initial indication that functionally differentiated middle positions exist between orthodoxy and heresy. Such actors combine orthodox elements (e.g., the value placed on scholarly seriousness and certain academic rituals) with heretical elements (e.g., novel research perspectives or nonstandard career paths). This mediating stance enables such actors to introduce innovation and deviant ideas without entirely forfeiting legitimacy in the field. This implies there is not always an either/or of orthodoxy versus heresy; yet the only intermediate form Bourdieu explicitly recognizes is moderate heresy.

Bourdieu's analyses of cultural fields likewise reveal intermediate positions that are neither strictly orthodox nor fully heretical but that over time or in certain respects, combine both moments. One example appears in Bourdieu's (1996) investigation of the nineteenth-century literary field in *The Rules of Art*, in which he discusses the poet Charles Baudelaire and his paradoxical career in the literary field. Baudelaire first appears as an outsider who, with his poetry collection *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Baudelaire [1857] 1998), challenged the

prevailing morality and aesthetics of his time (Bourdieu 1996:65–66, 75).[2] The immediate condemnation of some poems by state censors shows the literary orthodoxy's reaction (bourgeois moral standards and academic taste) to a heresy. Yet in the long run, Baudelaire was not simply cast as a marginalized heretic—he underwent posthumous consecration (i.e., recognition and legitimation in the literary field) comparable to that of his initially more successful, more orthodox contemporaries (Bourdieu 2000:85–87).

In his own time, Baudelaire occupied an intermediate position between two currents. On the one hand stood a poetry grounded in "indifference towards political or moral commitment" and on the other, "a poetry more open to the world, with the spiritualists moralistic eulogists of Nature" (Bourdieu 2000:89). Bourdieu (2000:90) concludes that "Baudelaire sets himself against both polar positions" yet draws on each of their constructive tendencies: "In the name of the cult of pure form, aligning himself with the radical wing of autonomous literature, he refuses subordination to external function and respect for official norms." My aim here is not to reconstruct in detail the nineteenth-century literary field, as Bourdieu does, but to note a heuristic extension inspired by this account of a Bourdieusian middle position. Ultimately, Bourdieu (2000:90) holds that "with this unprecedented combination of socially exclusive position takings, he [Baudelaire] brings into existence, in a site of high tension, a hitherto impossible position." According to Bourdieu (2000:92), this position expressed an inner tension "in which Baudelaire placed himself," stemming from "the psychological and social sufferings linked to his experience of the family microcosm." With respect to the efficacy for action of the middle position, Bourdieu (1996:111) points to its revolutionary status:

> The great artistic revolutions are not the act either of the (temporally) dominant, who here as elsewhere have no quarrel with an order that consecrates them, or of the simply dominated, who are usually condemned by their conditions of existence and dispositions to a routine practice of literature and who may supply troops equally to the heretics or to the guardians of the symbolic order. Revolutions are incumbent on those hybrid and unclassifiable beings.

These actors, positioned between norm and practice, open up pathways that can be understood as mediodoxic positionings: dispositions and practices situated between orthodoxy and heresy that reproduce asymmetrical relations of power precisely by normalizing them while also leaving open limited spaces for reinterpretation and gradual transformation. In this sense, mediodoxy exemplifies how domination is reproduced not only at the poles of consensus and rupture but also in the ambivalent middle ground where actors negotiate their place within the field.

In general, Bourdieu (1996:121–23, 138) analyzes the dynamics of the nineteenth-century literary field as a polarized configuration: a heteronomous pole of the notables (i.e., established authors seeking success and recognition by external standards, e.g., state patronage or mass audiences) and an autonomous pole of the bohemians or avant-garde writers who prioritized artistic autonomy over commercial success. The former corresponds to an orthodox stance (conformity to established rules and external expectations) and the latter to a heretical one (breaking with convention in favor of principles proper to art). Yet Bourdieu (1996:122) emphasizes that numerous intermediate stages existed between these ideal types. Authors could occupy different degrees of autonomy and sometimes make compromises. Some writers operated relatively autonomously (Bourdieu 1996:130–31) while still seeking recognition from literary institutions—and conversely, more conventional authors sometimes adapted innovations. Such middle-positioned actors combine aspects of orthodoxy

and heresy: They transfer legitimate forms into new contexts or translate subversive contents into accepted forms. Indeed, successful cultural developments often unfold through such mediations. In this connection, Bourdieu speaks of symbolic revolutions in which initially heretical positions gradually acquire the status of a *new orthodoxy*. The triumph of artistic modernism in the nineteenth century can be understood in this way: Radical heretics such as Baudelaire or Manet were ultimately canonized through conflict, establishing new standards in the field that condensed their heresy into a renewed doxa (see also Bourdieu 2015).

In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu 2013)—the theoretical elaboration of his praxeology—Bourdieu provides a conceptual basis for understanding such phenomena. Bourdieu (1993:73) again stresses that doxa is the unsayable that, "often associated with a crisis," becomes sayable—and a field of tension between orthodoxy and heresy then emerges (Bourdieu 2013:169). A partial contestation of doxa can thus lead to partial ruptures. One might say that as long as the crisis is not total, heresy, too, remains limited. For Bourdieu, an objective crisis is a necessary condition for the silent presuppositions of practice to become conscious and objects of debate. But crisis alone does not suffice to produce a complete break (heresy); actors must also put the unsaid into words (Bourdieu 2013:169). Here, there is room for (gradual) change: Lesser shocks to doxa may yield only partial corrections, whereas radical crises enable fully heretical rethinking and the generation of a new orthodoxy. From this perspective, a range of transitional forms emerges between fully intact doxa and fully developed heresy—contexts in which what was previously unsayable becomes open to discussion even as powerful residues of the old continue to resonate. This dynamic is analogous to Weiß's (2013) notion of "racist residues" among actors engaged in anti-racist commitments. It is here that a mediodoxic state can be located: a practical domain—a space—in which old and new, orthodoxy and heresy, operate simultaneously.

Bourdieu does not name this state explicitly, yet his theory implies it. He notes that in the transition from doxa to discourse, dominant groups attempt to control consciousness through orthodoxy (i.e., to limit change or shifts in the doxic boundaries) while the critical discourses of the dominated break open this consensus (Bourdieu 2013:169–70). The result is complex negotiation processes in which—before a new doxa consolidates—intermediate[3] formulae circulate. This phase can be interpreted as mediodoxy: the phase in which neither the old nor the new order triumphs doxically but instead, the two operate in mutually imbricated form.

Bourdieu himself did not coin a specific term for a middle position between orthodoxy and heresy, and conceptually, his analyses tend to pivot on the poles of doxa (uncontested consensus) and once consensus fractures, the dualism of orthodoxy versus heresy. Bourdieu is notably committed to treating his central concepts—nomos, illusio, doxa, specific capital, and orthodoxy versus heterodoxy—as characterized by relatively stable differentiation. As Petzke (2021:488) observes, this orientation leaves intrafield processes of transformation comparatively undertheorized. Moreover, Bourdieu conceives the emergence of a new doxa as proceeding through "dialectical syntheses between opposite poles" (Petzke 2021:491), that is, between orthodoxy and heresy. This formulation treats intermediary positions as theoretically peripheral. Even Bourdieu's (2008) own biographical trajectory, reconstructed in *Sketch for a Self-Analysis*, illuminates his tendency to conceptualize transformation through polar oppositions: Having grown up in Béarn, a rural village in southwestern France, and subsequently experiencing rapid upward mobility, he generalized this dialectic into the influential notion of the *cleft habitus* (see also Bourdieu and Eagleton 1992:117). It is precisely at this juncture that the concept of mediodoxy intervenes. In addition to extending debates on reflexive habitus (e.g., Adams 2006; Adkins 2003; Sweetman 2003), mediodoxy can identify modalities of racial domination and differentiate intrafield dynamics by articulating a third logic of practice. These considerations show that Bourdieu's theoretical

architecture is primarily oriented toward dichotomous position-takings and explaining how a formerly heretical stance becomes orthodox. Mediodoxy designates an additional logic that operates in everyday practice by propelling and stabilizing the existing doxa through mechanisms of ambivalent internalization, silence, and tacit acquiescence.

Nevertheless, Bourdieu's works implicitly show that intermediate positions are both theoretically conceivable and empirically significant. In particular, the empirical observation of moderate heresy in *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu 1988) suggests a moderate stance: It shows how actors combine elements of orthodoxy and heresy to introduce innovations within a field without being expelled from it and to become the new orthodoxy. Field analyses—whether of the nineteenth-century literary field or the academic field—also make clear that change unfolds processually. Revolutionary breaks (symbolic revolutions) are the exception; far more often, innovations arise through moderate deviations that are gradually institutionalized. A Bourdieusian theoretical approach to mediodoxy would thus examine how such moderate deviators operate strategically: They must risk enough heresy to offer something new yet maintain enough attachment to orthodoxy to be heard and to secure legitimacy. Indeed, in Bourdieu's field theory, successful challengers often act doubly: On the one hand, they break with certain doxic assumptions of their field, and on the other, they appropriate enough of its recognized resources (capital, style, habitus) to impose their viewpoint as a classificatory schema within the field. This double game points to a middle position that is neither wholly conformist nor wholly heretical.

Although Bourdieu repeatedly gestures toward intermediate positions, these references remain scattered, situational, and ultimately undertheorized. These gestures provide field-specific position types, not an account of the dispositional, cognitive, and semantic mechanisms through which such intermediate stances reproduce domination in everyday practice. Moderate heresy, for instance, identifies a relational location within a particular field hierarchy; it does not illuminate how ambivalence becomes sedimented in actors' habitus, how symbolic violence is internalized, or how practical sense generates patterned forms of silence, legitimation, and acquiescence that stabilize doxic boundaries. Nor does it capture the mechanisms that mediodoxy brings into analytic view. Likewise, the liminal trajectories Bourdieu attributes to certain cultural producers are framed as biographical or structural anomalies rather than as manifestations of a distinct logic of practice. Mediodoxy therefore identifies not a position but a logic—one that systematizes the mechanisms through which domination is reproduced from the middle ground.

Furthermore, as Petzke's (2021) analysis of "symbolic revolutions" shows, Bourdieu offers no systematic account of a mediodoxic logic of practice. In his framework, externally generated field crises primarily trigger a shift from one orthodoxy to another, and transitional configurations between orthodoxy and heresy remain undertheorized. References to moderate heresy or to mediating figures such as Baudelaire indicate position types, not a stable intermediary logic. This theoretical gap renders a mediodoxic perspective necessary. Mediodoxy captures forms of internalized, often unintentional reproduction as well as cautious revision of symbolic orders that fit neither orthodox defense nor heretical rupture. In my formulation, mediodoxy operates as an administrative-enforcement practical logic that generates a double tension: It subtly stabilizes doxic schemata while simultaneously reproducing them through habitually sedimented dispositions. As such, it constitutes an intermediary logic through which symbolic orders are administered, partially problematized, or unconsciously reproduced, and it represents an analytic dimension largely absent in Bourdieu's own model.

In summary, the theoretical significance of mediodoxy lies in its function as a mediating logic within relations of domination, exemplified by its operation as an administrative-enforcement logic bridging dominant and dominated positions. Prior work has noted that

middle positions can contribute to the maintenance of doxa (e.g., Schneickert, Schmitz, and Witte 2020), yet such accounts identify positional effects rather than the mechanisms through which domination is reproduced from the middle ground. Mediodoxy specifies this missing logic. It conceptualizes the intermediary zone not as a structural location but as a dispositional configuration characterized by ambivalence, practical accommodation, and the internalized reproduction of classificatory schemes. Understanding mediodoxy in this way clarifies how this zone of tension is organized and how its mechanisms intersect with the empirical analyses that follow. In this sense, mediodoxy designates a double state of tension in transition: Actors in this state partly benefit from the existing doxic order while lacking the symbolic resources to challenge it openly, thereby stabilizing the very order they are negotiating. At the same time, unlike dominant actors, actors in this middle position do not possess sufficient symbolic capital to detach themselves from the rules or to question them openly. Here, the reference to the "plurality of upper-middle positions" (Schneickert et al. 2020:90) is instructive: These positions cannot be straightforwardly assigned to elite or orthodox locations but instead indicate gradations and functional distinctions within mediodoxy itself.

Mediodoxy also denotes a tension-laden intermediary configuration in which classificatory residues of the old order and emerging alternatives coexist within practice. The concept captures the simultaneity of being subject to inequality, developing a coping habitus, and inadvertently reproducing internalized classificatory schemes. These ambivalent dynamics may be partially redirected through shame, remorse, or moments of self-reflexivity, allowing for modest reorientation without a full rupture with doxa. This intermediary configuration operates as a mediating modality of domination: partly secured by doxic assumptions from which actors derive certain benefits yet constrained by insufficient symbolic capital to openly contest dominant structures. The analytic significance of the concept becomes visible once we examine how this zone organizes the mechanisms through which domination is enacted, normalized, and stabilized in everyday practice. In this sense, mediodoxy functions not merely as a position type but as an administrative-enforcement logic of practice through which symbolic domination is unintentionally reproduced in the middle ground.

Empirically, mediodoxy materializes through four core mechanisms: (1) the discursive and practical production of legitimacy; (2) practices of silence, both deliberate and tacit; (3) forms of unspoken acquiescence to dominant interpretive frameworks; and (4) the habitual normalization of existing power asymmetries. These four mechanisms materialize within the "cognitive, conative, and affective components of the habitus" (Wacquant 2014:8), as I analyze in the next section. Clarifying these mechanisms demonstrates how mediodoxy, as a form of symbolic-doxic domination, may itself reproduce discriminatory relations of inequality. This highlights the need to examine how mediodoxy not only mediates between orthodoxy and heresy but also stabilizes and legitimizes existing configurations of (symbolic) power.

THE EMPIRICAL LENS ON MEDIODOXY: THE INTERNALIZED, UNINTENDED REPRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY

I now examine the extent to which empirical engagement with the concept of mediodoxy enables the reconstruction of a functional form of symbolic-doxic domination that itself participates in the reproduction of discriminatory relations of inequality. Specifically, I investigate how mediodoxy not only mediates between orthodoxy and heresy but also reproduces, stabilizes, and legitimizes existing asymmetries of (symbolic) power. The first indications of the reconstructability of mediodoxy emerged from initial documentary interpretations[4]

(Bohnsack 2003; Bohnsack, Pfaff, and Weller 2010; Nohl 2017), after which I turned to Bourdieu's oeuvre to elaborate the intermediate logic of mediodoxy more systematically. These findings were not anticipated in the research design but instead resulted from an open, empirically driven approach consonant with the qualitative tradition (Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr 2021; Rosenthal 2011). Mediodoxy thus operates simultaneously as an empirically grounded and theoretically derived category.

Although both the research topic and the Jewish and Muslim interviewees constituted a specific group, the sampling strategy was designed for maximum diversification to provide as broad a contrastive framework as possible for case-analytical comparison. In creating the sample, I considered sociogenetic dimensions, such as gender, migration, age, and generation. The fieldwork and data collection phase concluded when I reached empirical saturation, understood as theoretical saturation (Strübing et al. 2018:88–89); this occurred after 23 interviews, 14 with Muslim participants and 9 with Jewish participants.[5] I paid particular attention to cross-case reconstruction, with the aim of generating process-analytically valid and generalizable typologies (Helfferich 2009:172–76).

Of the 23 interviews, I selected 8 for full case-level interpretation—4 with Jews and 4 with Muslims.[6] The narrative, problem-centered interviews (Nohl 2016; Witzel and Reiter 2012) followed a structured guide, deliberately leaving the determination of individual relevance to the interviewees. For each of the 8 cases, I produced independent case-internal diagrams, documenting both the perception of inequality and the constitution and development of coping dispositions and coping habitus. I selected cases based on age and gender to reconstruct the documentary meaning in its specific manifestations along these dimensions. The Jewish interviewees were in their early or late 20s, and the Muslim interviewees were in their late 20s, early 30s, or around 40. This composition made it possible to analyze the development of perceptual patterns and coping strategies in age- and gender-specific ways. For these 8 cases, I analyzed experiences of being affected and the resulting coping strategies both case-specifically and processually to reconstruct the different phases of a phase typology—understood as the habitus-transforming effects of antisemitic and anti-Muslim racist experiences. In documentary terms, I extracted these trajectories with regard to the perception of inequality and coping strategies, that is, I reconstructed the individual course of development in its case-specific context.

Five of the 23 cases revealed an unintended reproduction of exclusionary inequality, which I sought to substantiate empirically and explicate theoretically. The interview sequences presented in the following are therefore the only points in the material that although not quantitatively representative, provide empirical evidence for mediodoxy in the context of experiences of antisemitism and racism. Table 1 provides the anonymized names and sociodemographic data of the cases that form the basis of this analysis.

Related work by Boger (2023) demonstrates how even actors explicitly committed to anti-discrimination may remain blind to certain forms of inequality and thereby unintentionally reproduce inequities (see also Young and Sullivan 2016). Similarly, Weiß (2013), in a Bourdieusian study, highlights the persistence of racist residues among white-German antiracists. Both authors focus on activists directly engaged in anti-discrimination movements. By contrast, my study foregrounds the unintended reproduction of inequality via the experiential knowledge of Jews and Muslims affected by antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. The participants in my study—who possessed high levels of cultural capital and secure economic standing—revealed in their everyday practices the sedimented, unintended reproduction of inequality at the semantic level and in relation to implicit stocks of knowledge and the documentary meaning of their accounts. Hyper-reflexivity can be expected among politically engaged actors but far less so among everyday actors. The mediodoxic habitus

Table 1. Overview of the Empirical Basis.

No.	Name and Age	Background	Occupation/Education
1	Hüma Born 1996, age 26, woman	Born (living) in Germany, (headscarf-wearer), of Turkish descent, religious	Bachelor's and master's degree (psychology, counselor)
2	Yağız Born 1978, age 45, man	Born (living) in Germany, of Turkish descent, religious	Engineering, senior engineer at a U.S. tech company
3	Danat Born 1994, age 28, man	Born in Kaliningrad (Ashkenazi), lived in Kaliningrad for 8 years, then migrated to Germany, nonreligious	Bachelor's degree (business administration), senior employee in the private sector
4	Mila Born 1994, age 28, woman	Born in Eastern Europe (Ashkenazi), religious, (living) in Germany	Vocational school degree (training in the legal field)
5	Çiçek Born 1989, age 35, woman	Born (living) in Germany (non-headscarf-wearer), of Turkish descent, nonreligious	Secondary school degree (Realschule), engineer in the automobile sector

nonetheless entails a heightened form of reflexivity: Remorse arises, and the action becomes the object of retrospective, revisionist critique.

As Boger (2023:1–2) observes, this empirical phenomenon can be framed through the paradox of how "the (re-)production of discrimination" may arise within social movements that explicitly aim to combat discrimination yet inadvertently, that is, not "intentionally," reproduce discriminatory practices. Young and Sullivan (2016), through the concept of competitive victimhood, illustrate how groups may accentuate their own victim status in ways that legitimize inequality or undermine solidarity among minorities.

As argued previously, mediodoxy operates as a double state of tension in transition—an intermediary modality of domination that becomes visible through (1) the discursive and practical production of legitimacy, (2) practices of silence, (3) unspoken acquiescence to dominant interpretive frameworks, and (4) the habitual normalization of existing power asymmetries. This internalized administrative-enforcement structure is not an abstract formulation but is empirically instantiated in the vignettes that follow. Each case shows how the mediodoxy between orthodoxy and heresy materializes as a practical, dispositional logic embedded in the habitus of actors who are themselves affected by antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism.

In Hüma's account, mediodoxy materializes in the simultaneous legitimation and narrative degradation of racialized others coupled with her tacit uptake of classificatory schemes she does not explicitly endorse. Yağız exhibits similar mechanisms, naturalizing inherited distinctions even as he reframes them, reinforcing the symbolic boundaries he seeks to transcend. Mila juxtaposes an initial legitimation of culturalized difference with shame-induced reflexive revision, illustrating how mediodoxic dispositions can be partially reworked through biographic reflexivity. Danat's narrative reveals legitimation through silence and tacit consent—both immediate and retrospective—demonstrating how doxic structures persist at the level of embodied disposition even when actors disavow personal injury. Finally, Çiçek's silent acquiescence followed by acute remorse and explicit revision shows how mediodoxically sedimented dispositions generate affective tension within the habitus, enabling future reorientations of practice. Çiçek's desire to apologize and her subsequent commitment to intervene signal that the habitus, although structured by domination, remains capable of recalibration when experiential dissonance becomes biographically salient.

These cases demonstrate that mediodoxy is neither a theoretical abstraction nor a marginal anomaly but a recurring practical logic through which symbolic violence and racial domination are reproduced precisely because they remain unchallenged. At the same time, the affective registers of shame, regret, and emerging defiance indicate that mediodoxic habitus may undergo revision over time. Such micro-transformations do not overturn field structures, but they reveal actors' capacity to modify their practical sense and consequently, their habitus. These dynamics underscore the need to theorize mediodoxy not merely as an intermediate field position but as a habitual mode through which domination is reproduced and at moments, cautiously contested. Building on these insights, the following empirical reconstructions demonstrate how the unintended reproduction of inequality-structuring speech acts become manifest and how these acts can be reconstructed as mediodoxic positionings and habitus within the empirical material and interviewees' experiential knowledge.

The first sequence is drawn from the interview with Hüma. While recounting an incident experienced by her sister, she narratively reproduces—unintentionally and unconsciously—a specific form of racism (lines[7] 193–214):

> Then . . . my sister, about five or six years ago, was coming home from the train station, and there was this old woman—I think I told you this story before—and, excuse my language, but the woman farted at my sister and said: "This is how Muslims stink." . . . But I want to stress again, I don't live in [name of a German federal state with little migration]. I live in an area where the migration rate is so high that people don't even bother to learn German, partly because they can manage perfectly well without the German language. . . . So what I want to say is, I don't know why these racist experiences always happened to me, but as I said, I don't live in Timbuktu. All of this happened here, in [name of a German federal state with high migration]. And my sister, for example, she really confronted the woman and said: "You will apologize to me now or I will call the police." And the woman also said: "But the smell comes from you. This is how you stink." . . . And then my sister said: "No!" when she said Muslims stink, and then the woman really did apologize, but there were witnesses. My sister said: "I will call the police. You have to apologize to me, otherwise. . . " and the others also offered their support. I think one person even said: "Yes, I will stay," and so the woman finally apologized.

Hüma recounts this episode in the mode of an empathetic listener, referring to her sister's experience in a way that can be interpreted as an imaginative act of identification with racism and as a form of secondary affectedness. In the narrated situation, her sister is leaving the train station when "an old woman" directs flatulence at her and accompanies it with the collective devaluation that Muslims "stink." This event comprises not only the racist speech act—"Muslims stink"—but also a physical act of degradation, a form of embodied contempt directed at Hüma's sister.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the simultaneity of verbal and physical aggression illustrates the synchronized enactment of racist practice as a form of symbolic violence. What is at stake here is not merely an insult but the imposition of classificatory schemes that naturalize Muslims as abject and inferior. The logic of doxa is evident: The aggressor's act presupposes as self-evident a collective stigmatization that devalues Muslims as such. Although Hüma's sister demands an apology, the perpetrator insists on her claim until the combined pressure of threatened legal sanction and the legitimizing presence of witnesses compels her to retract.

This episode documents, directly for Hüma's sister and indirectly for Hüma, that as headscarf-wearing women—and by extension, all those who are Muslim or read as such—they are subject to linguistic and bodily devaluation. The event demonstrates how symbolic domination is enacted through the everyday convergence of language, gesture, and social power and how only the invocation of external authority interrupts the reproduction of inequality.

In this sequence, the analytic focus is not on reconstructing the experience of racist victimization or the coping strategies derived from it. Rather, the critical issue is the moment at which Hüma makes a reference to "Timbuktu" and thereby unintentionally reproduces this cipher as an expression of internalized anti-Black racism. Although another sequence in Hüma's narrative (lines 401–04) documents a reflexively heightened sensitivity to other forms of racism—such as anti-Asian racism—this passage reveals the internalized and unintended reproduction of anti-Black racism in the cognitive component of her habitus. From a sequence-analytical perspective, the remark "As I said, I don't live in Timbuktu" follows directly after the description of the flatulence and verbal racism and is embedded in a spatial and migration-related depiction of the social environment. In this context, the invocation of "Timbuktu" activates—at the level of implicit knowledge—associations with uncleanliness, unethical behavior (flatulence), and stench; the phrase also constructs "Timbuktu" in contrast to Germany as an uncivilized, anti-modern, and backward place where the synchronized performance of racist practices appears routine. The reference thus situates itself within a colonial imaginary that invokes Africa in a devalued and exoticized manner as a site of otherness and marginality. This interpretive reconstruction demonstrates how racist patterns of interpretation and evaluation sedimented in implicit experiential knowledge manifest in automated narrative practices—even when unintended and even when accompanied by sensitivity to other forms of racism.

It is precisely in the narrative framing of this sequence and in Hüma's reflections on her own and society's positioning that a mediodoxic logic of practice becomes evident. In the mediodoxic mode of mediation, Hüma emphasizes, on the one hand, the ordinariness of diversity and multicultural practices in her environment; on the other hand, she does not relativize or trivialize the concrete experience of racism but explicitly names it—without, however, adopting a stance of radical rejection or withdrawal. Functionally, this narrative reproduces inequality in the form of anti-Black racism. This mediodoxic positioning contributes to the reproductive stabilization and legitimation of existing power asymmetries because it normalizes difference while enabling the unintended reproduction of symbolic domination.

Even if Hüma is not consciously aware of the connotation, her formulation reproduces anti-Black racism and reflects the doxic stock of knowledge, in Bourdieu's sense of doxa and symbolic domination. The reference to "Timbuktu" exemplifies how racialized structures of differentiation and devaluation persist in everyday language, even among those subject to racism. This sequence demonstrates the third logic of mediodoxy as the unintended reproduction of racism, which contributes to the legitimation of asymmetrical, racialized relations of power.

A sequence from Yağız's interview also points to a mediodoxic logic. When articulating the effects of his racist experiences and his continuous exposure to racism, a biologistic reproduction of racist interpretive patterns becomes visible—even when expressed in a seemingly distanced manner. Yağız (lines 383–95) reflects on the effects of racism as follows:

> All in all, I must say, it naturally led me to grapple with this question about my identity: "Who or what am I really?" So I must say, of course, one could also say that it had a positive aspect, in that it led me to reflect at all: "Okay, they are right, I am different." But then I came to the point where being different is not necessarily bad, and that it can even be, in certain respects, an advantage over—I would now say, pure-blooded people—because one can combine the advantages of two cultures and leave aside the aspects that one dislikes. So it gives you another perspective, another opportunity for enrichment, drawing from two cultures rather than just one. . . . Those, I would say, are the positive sides.

Yağız frames encounters with racism and the layering of racialized experiences as identity-related phenomena that shape and transform his self-understanding. In the process of realizing his difference—initially perceived as negative but later reinterpreted positively and understood as the product of continuous racial estrangement—he raises a socio-ontological question about his positioning within social space. Racism, as he explains, compelled him "to reflect" on his identity and ultimately affirm his identity-based difference. This affirmation points to the reflexive adoption of external categorizations and to the possibility of construing difference as a product of diversity.

Here, a fundamental ambivalence emerges: While the societal ascription of difference (and thus implicitly, a mechanism of exclusion) is internalized within the cognitive component of Yağız's habitus, it is simultaneously reinterpreted symbolically in positive terms. Semantically, when Yağız states that "being different is . . . an advantage over—I would now say, pure-blooded people—because one can combine the advantages of two cultures," he reproduces—at the very moment of this ambivalence—a biologistic-racist schema. As with Hüma, this occurs unintentionally and becomes evident in the automated flow of narration.

This ambivalence constitutes the mediodoxic character of his account, situated between orthodoxy and heresy. Yağız does not openly reject the stigmatizing designation of "being different" (orthodox boundary-making), nor does he radically negate it (heretical refusal). Rather, he appropriates it, modifies it, and transforms it into an affirmative self-image. He accepts difference as a social fact but undermines its negative valuation by reinterpreting it as a resource. This constitutes an implicitly transitory legitimation of existing power asymmetries. The central mediodoxic operation lies in the fact that Yağız does not fundamentally challenge the prevailing order of difference but instead seeks a positive interpretation through integration or individualization. In this way, the binary logic (different = deficient) is individualized and normalized but not deconstructed. Symbolic-doxic domination—the distinction between "pure-blooded" and "others" and the essentialization of "cultures"—remains intact, albeit embedded in an individual narrative of enrichment.

Ultimately, this account reveals the stabilization of the order of difference. The mediodoxic position takes up the societal discourse of difference without breaking it, instead reproducing and stabilizing it at a new, seemingly empowering level. The idea of "drawing from two cultures" remains confined within the logic of cultural separation and essentialism, thereby contributing to the reproduction of the underlying symbolic order of differentiation and domination. Mediodoxy is revealed here insofar as Yağız does not fundamentally challenge the dichotomous distinction between "us" and "them" (or between the "pure-blooded" and the "mixed") but positions himself within the tension of both categories. In doing so, he processes the symbolic violence of differentiation not as a problem but as an opportunity—thus further normalizing and legitimizing asymmetrical relations of power.

Yağız's account provides an example of mediodoxy as a third, mediating logic of practice: Difference is affirmed, the order of domination is stabilized, and symbolic-doxic domination, despite its positive reinterpretation, continues to operate. In line with the conception

of mediodoxy developed in this article, the sequence demonstrates how symbolic-doxic domination is reproduced within the habitualized interpretive frameworks and stocks of knowledge of those directly affected by racism.

A mediodoxic logic can also be reconstructed in the following sequence from Mila's interview. Mila reflects on the influence of her accumulated experiences of antisemitism and describes how she initially developed a socially induced hatred toward a particular group—a group that encompassed both her close circle of friends and the protagonists of her antisemitic victimization. However, because she shared a conjunctive experiential space with members of this group, this hatred was subsequently revised. As Mila (lines 319–30) recounts:

> So I would say, for a brief moment of course, there was also a bit of hatred toward this person or toward this culture or this religion. But to be honest, because I grew up with Muslims, that feeling quickly faded again, because I know exactly what these people are really like, and in my view, the people who said such things or made such remarks are simply not intelligent enough, not intelligent people. Apparently, their knowledge is insufficient, and I think only stupid people can say such things, because I also have friends who, for example, are completely different. And they actually have more background knowledge, and they are interested in it as well.

At issue here is the way antisemitic experiences shaped Mila. She first articulates that "a bit of hatred toward this person [and] this culture or this religion" arose in her, pointing to a Muslim family through whom she had encountered antisemitism. This reaction illustrates a pattern embedded in her experiential knowledge—the internalized logic of group differentiation as sedimented in the antisemitic and anti-Muslim field of power. The boundary-making along collective lines ("this culture or this religion") underscores the symbolic-doxic force of the social field, which structures categorizations along established axes of difference.

On the one hand, Mila suffers from antisemitic attitudes and remarks voiced by Muslims; on the other hand, her circle of friends also includes many Muslims. Mila's initial response and her first coping strategy in confronting antisemitism took the form of a defensive stance against both the individual and their "culture [and] religion." In this framing, cultural background, socialization, religious worldview, and upbringing are marked as the causes of antisemitism. Yet precisely these aspects—because her circle of friends consists of Muslims from the same cultural and religious milieu—prompt her to relativize her initial rejection. If the mediodoxic habitus denotes a double state of tension in transition that manifests as an administrative and enforcing apparatus of domination, Mila's immediate corrective response can be read as a form of hyper-reflexivity. This reflexive moment enables her, both despite and because of her remorse, to register a tension between an initial act of generalization aligned with doxa and a differentiating form of remorse rooted in the constitution of her habitus through socialization in Muslim contexts. Mila's socialization, "growing up with Muslims," counteracts her early inclination toward a generalized stance.

When the "bit of hatred" toward the Muslim group, as an immediate response to antisemitic victimization, gives way to a more differentiated attribution, a mediodoxic logic generated through the layering of experience becomes apparent. This mediodoxic stance involves a generalized devaluation of an entire "culture" and "religion" as well as the reproduction—within implicit experiential knowledge—of anti-Muslim structures of inequality. Yet this stance is subsequently tempered through a distancing, differentiating self-revision grounded in Mila's own socialization and positive interreligious contact: "Because I grew up with

Muslims, that feeling quickly faded again, because I know exactly what these people are really like." Here, Mila resists essentialist group attributions by invoking intercultural closeness and positive experience.

Mila's interpretation that antisemitic "remarks" are made by people lacking "intelligence" functions as both a euphemizing mode of repression and an expression of secondary, structural antisemitism in which learned antisemitic patterns are unconsciously bracketed. This unconscious bracketing of her own victimization paves the way for the mediodoxic reproduction of symbolic domination. This position mediates between personal experiences and internalized schemas of differentiation as Mila draws the line between "intelligent" and "stupid" people rather than interrogating collective power structures and habitualized classificatory schemes as the underlying causes of discrimination.

Consequently, Mila strips those who articulate antisemitic views of competence by questioning their intellect ("not intelligent people," "only stupid people can say such things"). Through this form of moral-intellectual distinction, Mila relocates the problem to the level of individuals rather than (any longer) the level of culture or religion as a whole. Although Mila critically reflects on and partially deconstructs dominant differentiation schemas, her discourse of knowledge and intelligence remains within a normative, socially accepted logic that identifies stupidity as the cause of discrimination.

Mila's mediodoxic positioning thus appears in the mode of mediation. The affective initial reaction—"of course there was also a bit of hatred toward this person or toward this culture or this religion"—is not left unexamined but is subsequently revised, without, however, fundamentally deconstructing the underlying differentiation schemas. Symbolic-doxic domination manifests here insofar as experiences of difference are not grasped as expressions of field logics or structural forces but are instead displaced onto the deficits of individuals. This displacement contributes to the stabilization and legitimation of existing power asymmetries because the socially shared interpretive pattern of ignorance as the root cause of discrimination remains unquestioned rather than being traced back to structural, field-immanent conditions.

The first movements of Mila's habitus become visible in moments of irritation. When the mediodoxic logic of action and semantics surfaces, what emerges is not only the internalized and unintended reproduction of inequality but also its immediate revision—processes that open an analytic window onto the formative conditions of the habitus itself. Mila's case illustrates this dynamic particularly clearly: The conative component of her habitus, shaped through long-standing conjunctive socialization with Muslim peers, embodies both a sense of belonging to this group and an internal differentiation of its internal heterogeneity. At the moment when she adopts a generalizing, orthodox framing of this group, thereby reproducing anti-Muslim inequality, as an affectively charged response to injury, habitualized impulses linked to heretical remorse and to her intimate familiarity with the group intervene and exert a countervailing, revising force. In this sense, the mediodoxic habitus exemplified here through Mila unites two otherwise incompatible orientations and materializes as a mediodoxic logic of practice: an experiential sedimentation of accumulated encounters with inequality and of the lived experience of being subject to it.

Turning to Danat, the analytic focus in the following sequence concerns how a form of inequality is unintentionally reproduced through practices of normalization. In his introductory remarks, Danat (lines 18–33) states:

> I only noticed it [antisemitism] on the margins. . . . But if I can put it this way, although I come from [name of a large German city], where it is more or less partly present, I managed well with it, in the sense that I never had to hide it, but . . . it never personally affected

> me,… except maybe a bit during the Corona period, when I felt personally attacked because of all the classic stuff about Jewish domination, the kind of things you hear. But personally, on the street, no. Not at work either. At school there were jokes, of course, but yes, there were jokes, but those people are still my best friends to this day.… Even 10 years later we all went on vacation together—the guys! There weren't many of us in our class, but it was more like everyone provided the biggest target. I was the only foreigner in the group, so… correspondingly, I got the Jewish jokes, and with the guys, yeah, one of them was fat, another—whatever—it went something like that with us. It wasn't like I went home sad afterwards.

Danat initially minimizes his antisemitic experiences: "I only noticed it on the margins." This framing can be read as an indication of the habitualized normalization of antisemitism. His comment that "I never had to hide it, but… it never personally affected me" reflects a mediodoxic self-positioning: On the one hand, he acknowledges the possibility of being affected, and on the other, he keeps such experiences at a distance. This oscillation between recognition and misrecognition, problematization and normalization, exemplifies mediodoxic mediation. Danat admits to moments of affectedness ("felt personally attacked" during the pandemic), yet he relativizes the broader social significance of these moments, ultimately relegating them to the background by emphasizing communal belonging and group cohesion ("the guys"). In this way, Danat's mediodoxic stance frames antisemitic forces within the field not as problematic but as ordinary features of group dynamics. Such normalization obscures objective power asymmetries and reproduces symbolic-doxic domination by construing discrimination as "fun," "jokes," or the offering of "targets."

Particularly instructive from a praxeological and sociology-of-knowledge perspective is the sequential positioning of his remark: "So correspondingly, I got the Jewish jokes, and with the guys, yeah, one was fat, another—whatever—it went something like that with us." This statement semantically equates antisemitic jokes with jokes about body weight, highlighting the internalization of fatphobia as another form of social inequality. Such jokes function as mechanisms of stigmatization, exclusion, and discrimination against those who fail to conform to hegemonic body ideals.

By placing antisemitic jokes and "fat jokes" on the same plane ("it went something like that with us"), Danat reproduces two distinct forms of inequality as normalized elements of group interaction within the conative component of his habitus. The group sustains this practice by collectively relativizing discriminatory experiences. Such normalization prevents recognition of these incidents as genuine experiences of exclusion, transmitted and reinforced through language and "jokes." In this way, the mediodoxic logic reproduces fatphobia as an everyday youth practice. Here lies the symbolic-doxic potential of mediodoxy: It removes such forms of discrimination from societal problematization, thereby reproducing the corresponding structures of inequality—in the case of fatphobia, a body-based discrimination (Shilling 2003).

The apparent normality of such intragroup "jokes" both expresses and reproduces inequality. Mediodoxy as an administrative-enforcement practical logic can thus be understood as a mediating role of domination. Discrimination is reframed as mere group banter. In this sense, the mediodoxic position not only mediates between orthodoxy (which explicitly devalues and normalizes) and heresy (which explicitly problematizes) but also, as Danat's implicit experiential knowledge suggests, contributes to the reproduction and legitimation of particular inequalities. Mediodoxy thus functions as symbolic-doxic domination that stabilizes asymmetrical relations within the field by rendering them invisible and normalizing them as group practice.

Finally, we turn to Çiçek's account, which illustrates how a mediodoxic position is legitimized and reproduced through silence—not only as sedimented experiential knowledge but also as practical action. In the moment of a racist act enacted by a German woman, Çiçek does not intervene but remains passive, thereby, albeit unintentionally, contributing to the legitimation and reproduction of racist practice. Her subsequent narration provides a vivid example of a decisive everyday moment in which implicit social structures and personal values come into conflict, potentially prompting a reevaluation of one's conduct (lines 77–91):

> And um, I had to once—well, it was like this, I was in a shopping-mall and there were these um car-buggies for children and you had to wait your turn until one was available, and then a German woman came . . . and um a Turkish woman with a headscarf basically followed her the whole time to get the buggy. And I was standing at the place where you could rent the cars, and then the German woman came back with the buggy and then she looked at me and then at the woman with the headscarf, and then she said, "No, you're not getting it!"—to the woman with the headscarf—and then she just handed it to me. . . . That was such a um, such a sad event that I experienced, and then my mistake, or rather my son was crying so terribly because he really wanted it,[8] and at that moment I didn't act properly. I deeply regret not giving the buggy to the woman, but my son cried so much, and we had already waited 15 to 20 minutes, so I took the buggy. Later I regretted it deeply. I still carry that regret with me, because in front of that German woman's eyes—she had been watching you [the headscarf-wearing woman] so long, waiting—I couldn't say, "It's yours," because my child was crying. I wish I had given it to her. Maybe one day I will see her again and apologize.

Çiçek's narration details a seemingly mundane situation in a shopping-mall but one that reveals broader social and collective dimensions. Her account focuses on interpersonal tensions and implicit prejudices that emerge in ostensibly trivial encounters. By situating the episode temporally and spatially, Çiçek begins with the description of waiting for a children's car-buggy. This structure underscores the ordinariness and rule-governed nature of the situation, which acquires a conflictual dynamic through the discriminatory act of a "German woman" and the passivity of a "Turkish woman with a headscarf."

Çiçek consciously notes the headscarf-wearing woman waiting. When the "German woman" returns the buggy, she first looks at Çiçek and then at the woman with the headscarf to decide who should receive it. The headscarf-wearing woman had been waiting longer, so by the ordinary rules of the situation, she should have been next. Yet looking directly at her, the German woman declares: "No! You're not getting it!" This statement constitutes verbal racism and is an exclusionary practice, denying the woman access to the buggy because of her headscarf. Çiçek perceives this as an injustice, a deliberate discrimination against the "Turkish woman with a headscarf" by the "German woman." The episode points to the implicit dynamics of racism rooted in collective stereotypes and prejudices. Çiçek's detailed description of the woman's gaze highlights how embodied-performative dimensions of interaction reproduce powerful and injurious mechanisms. The convergence of verbal racism, bodily hexis, and exclusionary practice forms an experiential matrix that continues to preoccupy Çiçek.

Because her son was "crying" at the moment of enactment—likely out of impatience to use the buggy immediately—Çiçek yielded and thereby implicitly confirmed the racist behavior of the German woman. Precisely in this moment, the mediodoxic mode of administration within the conative component of her habitus becomes visible in the form of silence.

Çiçek's nonintervention preserves her own situational privilege—she retains access to the buggy—and confers practical legitimacy on the German woman's act of exclusion. In Bourdieusian terms, Çiçek's silence constitutes a routine enactment of symbolic violence and complicity: It affirms the doxic boundaries structuring the interaction and permits the discriminatory classification to stand uncontested. Such acquiescence does not arise from endorsement of the dominant order but from a practical sense attuned to the immediate pressures of the situation. Yet the effects are consequential: By accepting the benefit conferred upon her, Çiçek inadvertently participates in the reproduction of domination, granting the perpetrator's hierarchical positioning a momentary but potent field-specific validity. In this way, mediodoxy operates as a mediating logic through which inequality is sustained not via explicit assent but through the subtle, everyday labor of silence, privilege, and practical accommodation.

Çiçek's shift into Turkish when recounting the episode signals the primordial dimension of her experience. This primordiality indicates a habitual trigger that continues to shape her. Her admission, "I did not act properly in that moment," conveys a lasting regret that continues to weigh on her. Çiçek's regret and reflection reveal her recognition that this situation represented an opportunity to correct the perceived imbalance. She realizes that her action—driven by everyday pressures and familial needs—was not in accord with her inner values.

The situational dynamics of this incident thus affect not only the headscarf-wearing woman as the immediate victim but also Çiçek herself. Çiçek confirms the exclusion through her behavior, and she violates the ordinary rules of fairness, thereby reinforcing the structure of inequality. In the moment, the child's crying functions as a rationale for accepting and participating in the implicitly racist logic of orthodoxy. Only afterward do self-doubt, regret, and shame arise within the affective component of Çiçek's habitus, articulated through critical self-reflection. That Çiçek still carries this regret points to the habitual incorporation of the experience, sedimented in her position as complicit and persisting as a lasting cognitive and practical disposition. Her retrospective self-criticism—"in front of that German woman's eyes—she [the headscarf-wearing woman] had been watching you for so long, waiting—I could not say, 'It's yours'"—underscores the symbolic domination of racist practices silently tolerated by bystanders. At the same time, this incident highlights Çiçek's own prioritization of situational-pragmatic interests over the principle of anti-discrimination. Her statement, "maybe one day I will see her again and apologize," signals a future-oriented position that inscribes itself into the affective component of her habitus.

Thus, Çiçek legitimizes and reproduces a mediodoxic logic through her silence—operating not only as sedimented experiential knowledge but also as a practical enactment. By failing to intervene in a deconstructive or corrective manner at the moment of the racist act committed by a German woman, Çiçek—albeit unintentionally—contributes to the legitimation and reproduction of racist practice. This incident provides empirical evidence of mediodoxic positionings and logics of practice: On the one hand, they operate as mediating forms, and on the other, they function as legitimating moments in the reproduction of existing racialized and inequality-structured social orders.

In summary, the interpretively reconstructed sequences provide empirical evidence for mediodoxy as a third logic of practice and experiential knowledge, manifesting in the cognitive, affective, and conative components of the mediodoxic habitus. These sequences reveal distinct forms of the unintended reproduction of discrimination and inequality by those who themselves are affected by antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. Mediodoxic logic operates here as an internalized mechanism—possibly constituted through a permanent yet often unreflected-upon condition of being affected. This mechanism mediates between orthodoxy and heresy (heterodoxy), but it also reproduces, stabilizes, and legitimizes discriminatory

moments of inequality both within the implicit experiential knowledge that guides practice and at the level of perception and action. Even those who are directly affected by discrimination may reproduce it. This reproduction unfolds through language and sedimented experiential knowledge, where the logic of mediodoxy operates across action, perception, and disposition.

DISCUSSION: MEDIODOXY AS A THIRD LOGIC OF PERCEPTION AND PRACTICE

Theoretically, mediodoxy can be understood as a problem of mismatch—either a lack of congruence between habitus and field or a broader structural disproportion. In such circumstances, it becomes difficult to establish a rule-governed regularity of practice that "can provide for all the possible conditions of its execution" (Bourdieu 2000:162). The habitus retains a creative potential, allowing for "some degree of play or scope for interpretation" (Bourdieu 2000:162). Socially privileged actors can more easily "abandon oneself to the automatisms of practical sense" (Bourdieu 2000:163), yet those "who occupy awkward positions" are compelled "to bring to consciousness that which, for others, is taken for granted, because they are forced to keep watch on themselves and consciously correct the 'first movements' of a habitus" (Bourdieu 2000:163). As Bourdieu (2000:160) notes, the habitus "has degrees of integration which correspond in particular to degrees of 'crystallization' of the status occupied"; in cases of contradictory positions within the field, one often observes people "torn by contradiction and internal division, generating suffering."

Among the interviewees in this study, experiences of antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism generated both misalignments between habitus and field and structural disproportions that produced uncertainties of orientation. In these "zones of uncertainty" (Bourdieu 2000:157)—and as the expression of a suffering-induced process—exposure to antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism produced unintended effects: either the reproduction of inequality or the temporary legitimation and stabilization of doxa. These effects can be interpreted as mediodoxic positioning and logic between orthodoxy and heresy. Because these cases also display tendencies toward immediate correction of practice and perception, they reveal the possibility of revision within such ambivalence.

Drawing on five interview sequences, I showed how mediodoxic mechanisms emerge between orthodoxy and heresy through conscious and unconscious reproductions of inequality that unfold within the cognitive, affective, and conative components of the habitus. Hüma exhibited an epistemic blind spot toward anti-Black racism ("Timbuktu"), reproduced unintentionally in the flow of narration and left unrecognized. Her account illustrates the internalization of anti-Black racism as well as a mediodoxic logic of practice that at the semantic level, reproduces, legitimates, and stabilizes it. In the cases of Mila (hatred directed toward religion and culture) and Yağız ("pure-blooded"), mediodoxy appears as both conscious reproduction and reflexive revision of racist semantics. These sequences illuminate their experiential knowledge while situating mediodoxy as both a reproductive logic and a mediating dynamic between orthodoxy and heresy.

By contrast, Danat's unintended reproduction of fat-shaming is never revised, even retrospectively. His experiential knowledge leads to a persistent blindness within the logic of mediodoxy, one that endures unchallenged. Here, mediodoxy functions as a cohesion-producing mechanism and as a form of symbolic violence sedimented within structures of perception and disposition. Finally, Çiçek's account demonstrates the action-guiding force of mediodoxic logic. In the shopping-mall incident, Çiçek's silent acquiescence to the racist exclusion enacted by a white German woman affirms that exclusion. By passively accepting

the buggy, Çiçek reproduces symbolic violence in the very moment of practice. Her subsequent remorse constitutes a socio-analytically informed self-reflection that retrospectively seeks revision, but the mediodoxic logic remains operative in the moment of action.

The empirical analyses demonstrate how mediodoxic mechanisms operate as a recurrent logic of practice, marked by the tension between in situ reproduction and retrospective reflexivity. This empirically grounded pattern finds a deeper theoretical resonance in Du Bois's early analyses of racial domination. Du Bois highlights the paradox that those subject to discrimination may, under conditions of structural constraint, also participate, often unintentionally, in its reproduction. His observation in *The Philadelphia Negro* (Du Bois 1967:347) that it is paradoxical "to see a people so discriminated against sometimes add to their misfortunes by discriminating against themselves" implies the phenomenological-experiential dilemma that mediodoxy theorizes. Du Bois diagnoses this paradox, but he does not specify the dispositional or field-structural mechanisms through which ambivalent complicity is generated. Mediodoxy builds on and advances this insight by rendering analytically and theoretically explicit the patterned logic of practice through which domination persists, not despite ambivalence but through it.

This alignment becomes even clearer in *The Souls of Black Folk*, where Du Bois ([1903] 2007:12) describes the "inevitable self-questioning, self-disparagement, and lowering of ideals" that accompany life under conditions of contempt and exclusion. This affective and cognitive fracture resonates with Bourdieu's (2008:100) notion of the cleft habitus as "inhabited by tensions and contradictions" (see also Akram 2023:78), generated when actors occupy structurally misaligned positions within the field. Mediodoxy can be understood as a patterned, dispositional form of precisely this tension: a habitualized oscillation between orthodoxy and heresy that sediments ambivalence, generates practical hesitation, and internalizes symbolic violence. What appears in Du Bois's formulation as psychic struggle is here conceptualized as a distinct logic of practice—one that maps the connection between structural domination and the micro-genesis of dispositions.

Building on this foundation, the notion of a mediodoxic habitus extends Du Bois's insights by identifying the structured patterning of ambivalence within actors' practical sense. Whereas Du Bois compellingly evokes the experiential texture of double consciousness—its oscillation, insecurity, and internal division—mediodoxy specifies the mechanisms through which such ambivalence crystallizes into durable dispositions: the internalization of classificatory schemes, the routinization of silence and acquiescence, and the practical compromises necessitated by asymmetric fields. In this light, the "atmosphere of contempt and hate" that Du Bois ([1903] 2007:12) describes constitutes the field in which mediodoxic dispositions are formed, reproduced, and occasionally reworked through shame, remorse, and reflexive revision. The Du Boisian lineage underscores that mediodoxy is not an idiosyncratic elaboration of the Bourdieusian framework but part of a broader genealogy of theorizing how domination persists through the ambivalent participation of the dominated. Situating mediodoxy within this intellectual horizon highlights its analytic and theoretical scope: It captures a mode of practical complicity long observed empirically yet not systematically conceptualized as a distinct logic of perception, emotion, and action.

A further conceptual resonance emerges when mediodoxy is placed in dialogue with Fanon's analyses of colonial domination. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon ([1952] 2008) identifies a paradoxical dynamic in which the colonized subject becomes at once the target and the inadvertent reproducer of domination, a dynamic that gestures toward but does not theorize the mechanisms I elaborate through mediodoxy. Fanon's account of the (racial) epidermal schema, through which the colonized learn to perceive themselves through the classificatory gaze of the colonizer, anticipates the ambivalent internalization of symbolic

boundaries that mediodoxy formalizes as a dispositional mechanism. Fanon's ([1952] 2008:82) account of discovering himself as "an object in the midst of other objects" can be read, from the vantage point of mediodoxy, as a phenomenological rendering of what I conceptualize as a double state of tension in transition: an oscillation between partial adherence to the doxic order and a muted, often inhibited impulse toward heretical contestation.

Where Fanon ([1952] 2008) foregrounds the psychic and embodied fractures induced by domination—self-questioning, self-disparagement, and aspiration for recognition on unequal terms—mediodoxy specifies how such fractures become patterned within the habitus as durable dispositions. The affective ambivalence Fanon describes becomes, in mediodoxic terms, a logic of practice: the internalization of classificatory schemes, the routinization of silence and acquiescence, and the practical compromises forged under asymmetric conditions. Fanon's phenomenological account thus intimates but does not systematically elaborate the complicity dynamic that mediodoxy renders explicit as a mechanism of domination. The condition in which the Black individual is "enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority" such that "both behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation" (Fanon [1952] 2008:42) constitutes the very field in which mediodoxic dispositions are formed, reproduced, and at times, reworked through shame, remorse, and reflexive revision. Bringing Fanon into dialogue with Bourdieu demonstrates that mediodoxy is not (solely) an idiosyncratic refinement of a Bourdieusian perspective but part of a broader tradition of theorizing ambivalent complicity under domination.

CONCLUSION: MEDIODOXY AND THE REPRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY

The analysis presented here introduced mediodoxy as a third logic of practice and experiential knowledge, situated between orthodoxy and heresy in Bourdieu's habitus and field theory. Bourdieu's conceptual triad of doxa, orthodoxy, and heresy provides a powerful framework for understanding consensus, rupture, and contestation, yet his own field analyses—ranging from *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu 1988) to *The Rules of Art* (Bourdieu 1996)—contain only scattered indications of intermediate positions. Building on these hints, I elaborated mediodoxy as a conceptual extension: a mode of practice in which actors neither fully ratify doxic consensus nor radically negate it but instead occupy a middle ground that mediates, adapts, and—crucially—unintentionally reproduces relations of domination.

The empirical reconstructions demonstrate how mediodoxic positionings become manifest in everyday accounts of Jews and Muslims affected by antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. Hüma's reference to "Timbuktu," Yağız's invocation of "pure-blooded" identity, Mila's ambivalent distinction between "intelligent" and "stupid" perpetrators, Danat's normalization of antisemitic jokes as equivalent to "fat jokes," and Çiçek's silent acquiescence all point to practices in which inequality is neither openly endorsed nor directly resisted but sedimented and legitimized through narrative, perception, and action. In each case, symbolic domination operates not only through external imposition but also through the affected actors' own participation in reproducing classificatory schemes that stigmatize them.

Mediodoxy thus illuminates a paradox at the heart of symbolic violence: One can be directly subject to discrimination while simultaneously reproducing, through language, silence, and implicit knowledge, the very logics that sustain it. Unlike orthodoxy, which actively ratifies the doxa, and unlike heresy, which openly contests it, mediodoxy functions as a mediating practice that stabilizes the existing order by normalizing its categories and rendering its exclusions ordinary. In this sense, mediodoxy is both a form of complicity and

a strategy of accommodation—an attempt to secure legitimacy and belonging within fields structured by asymmetrical relations of power.

Theoretically, this argument extends Bourdieu's (1993:47) account of how domination works with the "complicity of the dominated." The contribution of mediodoxy is to specify the everyday mechanisms of this complicity: not only in the routinized reproduction of doxa but also in the ambivalent, half-reflexive practices through which actors negotiate their position in social space. Where orthodoxy and heresy represent polar strategies, mediodoxy designates the vast middle ground in which domination is reembedded—less through the conscious defense of existing structures than through the practical compromises of those navigating them.

In addition to mediodoxy as a logic of practice, the findings also suggest the possibility of a mediodoxic habitus, parallel to what Bourdieu identifies as orthodox and heretical (heterodox) habitus ("habitus of the dominated" [Bourdieu 1998:121] or "the dominated habitus" [Bourdieu 2001b:39]). These are defined by their characteristic functions: The orthodox habitus seeks to preserve privilege, whereas the heretical habitus propels symbolic revolutions and field-specific transformations. Similarly, the empirical cases analyzed here point to the crystallization of a mediodoxic habitus—one that is neither simply transitory nor episodic but habitually sedimented through the recurrent experience of antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. This mediodoxic habitus operates as both an intermediary and reproductive structure of disposition: It orients actors to navigate contradictions between field and habitus, and in so doing, it reproduces classificatory schemes even as it allows for partial revisions. Rather than a transitory mode of ambivalent practice, this habitus is best understood as a durable, socially patterned disposition, a third habitualized logic forged in the experience of discrimination itself.

This perspective has implications for the sociology of racism and antisemitism. Research has extensively documented the persistence of discriminatory orthodoxies and the emergence of heterodox countermovements. Less attention, however, has been paid to the middle positions through which discrimination is normalized, legitimized, and sedimented even by those most directly affected. By tracing mediodoxic practices in interview narratives, this study highlights how symbolic domination is reproduced not only through the actions of the dominant but also through the ambivalent strategies of the dominated—strategies that may simultaneously resist, accommodate, and reproduce inequality.

Beyond this, the concept of mediodoxy offers important points of connection for the sociology of knowledge and for intersectional analyses of how actors experience other structures of inequality—such as anti-Black racism or antiziganism (anti-Romani racism). In this sense, mediodoxy opens a novel research perspective to comparatively examine actor-centered intersections of inequality at the very level of research design. Here, too, mediodoxic logic, emerging from the enduring condition of being subject to a given structure of inequality, generates moments of reproduction of that inequality, particularly when engagement with it remains unreflexive.

Extending Emirbayer and Desmond's (2015) insights, mediodoxy also provides fertile avenues for ethnographic traditions, offering a new lens through which to analyze the racial field of the United States as well as a sensitizing perspective for interrogating the racialized field of Europe across its diverse nation-states. Such an approach would allow the European fields of racism and antisemitism to be examined not only in terms of orthodox colonizers and heterodox colonized but also through the additional dimension of mediodoxy, deepening the analysis. Both historically oriented inquiries and sociology-of-knowledge–praxeological approaches are conceivable within the framework of mediodoxy.

In conclusion, mediodoxy offers both a theoretical refinement of Bourdieu's field and habitus theory and an empirically grounded contribution to the study of racism and

antisemitism. The concept underscores that symbolic (racial) domination is not sustained solely at the poles of orthodoxy and heresy but also in the middle ground where actors reproduce inequality unintentionally in efforts to manage their position in the field. Recognizing this third logic of practice allows us to see how domination persists not only through the imposition of classificatory schemes but also through their everyday appropriation and rearticulation by those subject to them. By making visible the mechanisms of this unintended reproduction—and by conceptualizing mediodoxy not only as a logic of practice but also as a habitualized mode of disposition—social theory gains a critical tool for historicizing, dereifying, and ultimately unsettling the conditions under which inequality becomes ordinary.

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NOTES

1. Given that Bourdieu presents his theory as a general social theory of universal dynamics, he treats orthodoxy, heresy, and habitus as analytic concepts (Witte 2014:234).
2. "In the same fashion, in the judgment condemning *Les Fleurs du Mal*, we read that Baudelaire is guilty of a 'crude realism which offends modesty' and leads to 'the arousal of the senses'" (Bourdieu 1996:75).
3. In an essay, Bourdieu (1993:73) speaks of an "(intermediate) position in the hierarchy of disciplines" when analyzing the literary field and referring to the "habitus of a philologist."
4. An established body of research demonstrates the compatibility of the documentary method with qualitatively reconstructive studies conducted in conjunction with Bourdieu's theoretical tools (Akram 2023:201; Hillebrandt 2011:228; Philipps and Mrowczynski 2021; Schneickert, Schmitz, and Witte et al. 2020:169).
5. Interviews were conducted between October 2022 and February 2023. To ensure accessibility and flexibility, I offered both in-person conversations and online interviews via Zoom (Gray et al. 2020). The specific format was determined in consultation with the interviewees, according to their preferences and time constraints.
6. This approach draws on Schütze's (2016) narrative analysis. All case-internal narratives concerning antisemitic and anti-Muslim racist experiences were extracted and interpretively reconstructed. I then compared these interpretations with the interviewees' subjective stocks of knowledge to reconstruct a chronological schema of contexts and individual perceptions of inequality and to situate the coping practices documented in the material in relation to these contexts and perceptual patterns. These analytic strategies were intended to render the habitus processually concrete within and across cases, particularly with respect to collective orientations surrounding the experience of antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. In this process, I exploratively identified in five cases an unintended reproduction of exclusionary inequality (see also Kaya 2025).

7. Throughout this section, line numbers refer to the raw data, the transcripts of the recorded interviews that constitute the empirical foundation of this study.
8. From this point, Çiçek shifts into Turkish. For reasons of clarity and condensation, I provide the direct translation. The switch into Turkish is analytically significant for the documentary interpretation, which is why I explicitly reference the passage as it was originally articulated in Turkish.

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