For the social history of the present: Pierre Bourdieu as historical sociologist

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For the Social History of the Present : Bourdieu as Historical Sociologist

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It is typical to approach the work of Pierre Bourdieu through the analytic concepts he made influential: habitus, symbolic violence, field, capital, practice and so forth. This is not inappropriate, but it does risk making these appear as components in an abstract theoretical system rather than as working concepts shaped by the contexts in they were deployed. Bourdieu's work can also be described in terms of the wide range of topics he addressed: exchange relations, migrant labor, education, cultural hierarchies, social domination, art, and many more. Focusing on disparate topics has contributed, however, to a fragmentary reading of Bourdieu, connecting him to different subfields of sociology (or anthropology) rather than drawing on his work for help integrating social analysis.

To bring out the core of Bourdieu's analytic perspective it is helpful to see him as a historical sociologist. I obviously don't mean that he inhabited a subdisciplinary specialty. Nor is the point just that Bourdieu's concepts are useful to those doing historical analysis, though this is certainly true. I do not mean simply that several of his studies were based on historical research, though many were. I mean much more basically that social transformations – and their limits and unintended consequences – were core foci of his sociological project.

It is true that Bourdieu was not always explicit about the historical specificity of his work, especially in his early work. He left ambiguity about when his analytic concepts were meant as universal, as general to modernity or states or capitalism, or as specific to a particular context (Calhoun 1993). It is also true of course that Bourdieu was shaped deeply by an ethnographic approach and by a variety of philosophical and theoretical resources. Nonetheless, I will suggest, grasping the way historical transformations shaped his approach does much to clarify it.

Bourdieu's engagement with four specific social transformations shaped both his theory and his empirical approach:

(1) The way state power and market expansion and intensification produced a deracination or uprooting of "traditional" ways of life – specifically peasant life. Bourdieu explored how long-established practices and cultural systems worked in slow-changing societies in which neither state nor economy exerted a constant or differentiated influence, and then what happened to them in colonial Algeria, especially Kabylia, and in his own native region of the Béarn in the Pyrenees mountains of Southwest France.

(2) The creation of what other social theorists have called "modern" society by the differentiation of state and market power and more generally the making of fields. Bourdieu saw each field as a domain of relative autonomy marked off from others by its distinctive hierarchy, values, struggles, styles of improvising action, and forms of capital. He analyzed the genesis and structure of a wide range of fields from law and religion to art and literature, centrally in the 19th and the first part of the 20th centuries. Implicitly, he studied the production of a "fielded" society.

(3) The great economic expansion and welfare state project of the post-WWII era. Called in France les Trente Glorieuses (the thirty glorious years) this was a period that promised greater equality, opportunity, and social participation but also reproduced old inequalities in new contexts and structures and often legitimated them by apparent meritocracy and the logic of individual responsibility for social fate. Bourdieu emphasized the false promises of equality but also the real investments people made even in institutions that didn't live up to their promises.

(4) The massive attack on the state, or more precisely on the idea that the state should act centrally to achieve social welfare, that is often called neoliberalism. Though this had older roots it came to the center of attention in the 1990s, sometimes appearing as an American model imposed on Europe. Neoliberalism portended a destruction of social fields, especially those dependent on public support, and a violent reduction of the pursuit of different values to brutal market logic. This turned Bourdieu's attention more directly to what investment in different fields and the state itself had achieved, and what hopes they still offered – though also to the limits their frequent conservatism imposed on struggles for a better society.

I shall present these not in chronological order, as above, but in the order of Bourdieu's most sustained engagement with each – 1, 3, 2, 4 – though they overlap in his work. Algeria is the crucial starting point.

Algeria: Tradition, Uprooting, Old Practices and New Logics

In 1955, Bourdieu was sent to do military service in Algeria late in the era of French colonial rule. He stayed on to teach at the University of Algiers and became a self-taught ethnographer. Bourdieu did not simply study Algeria; he rather sought out its internal variants, regional and "minority" communities that were stigmatized and marginalized not only by French colonialism but also by the construction of Algerian national identity as modern and Arab in opposition to rural, tribal, and traditional. *Sociologie d'Algerie,* Bourdieu's first book, describes in some detail not only "Arabic-speaking peoples" (especially along the coast and in the central plain) but also Kabyles, Shawia, and Mozabites—each of which groups had its own distinct culture and traditional social order though both colonialism and market transformations were disrupting each and along with opposition to French rule pulling members of each into a new, more unified "Algerian" system of social relations.[1]

[1] Bourdieu, *Sociologie d'Algerie*, Paris: PUF, 1958.

Behind Bourdieu's studies of social change, thus, was an account of the traditional "other" to modernization, the less rapidly changing peasant culture and economy. It is informative to recall that the Kabyle were Durkheim's primary exemplars of traditional, segmentary social organization in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and thus already had a role in France as representative of a certain 'type' of the premodern.[2] But at the same time, the very term "Kabyle" (the name for the group Bourdieu studied most) is derived from the Arabic word for tribe, and marks a similar view from the vantage point of Arab modernity. It was an ascribed identity, a reminder of marginalization, even if it is now claimed. The Kabyle were dominated by France and by the dominant Algerians alike, yet they were being drawn into a new order, uprooted from traditional agricultural occupations and ways of life, working at a disadvantage in cities and struggling to keep communities together in the countryside. This double domination informed both Bourdieu's analyses of Algeria and his development of a theory of symbolic violence.[3]

Conducting research in Kabyle villages and with Berber-speaking labor migrants to the fast-growing cities of the Algeria's coastal regions, Bourdieu addressed themes from the introduction of money into marriage negotiations to cosmology and the agricultural calendar, and the economic crisis facing those who are forced into market relations for which they are not prepared.[4] Bourdieu proved himself an extraordinarily keen observer of the interpenetration of large-scale social change and the struggles and solidarities of daily life. Among other reasons, his native familiarity with the peasant society of Béarn gave him an affinity with the traditional agrarian societies of rural Algeria that were being destroyed by French colonialism.

With Abdelmalek Sayad, Bourdieu studied peasant life and participation in the new cash economy that threatened and changed it.[5] He studied the difficult situation of those who chose to work in the modern economy and found themselves transformed into its "underclass", not even able to gain the full status of proletarians because of the ethno-

[2] Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free Press, 1997; orig. 1912).

[3] At the same time, Bourdieu's account exaggerated and sometimes idealized the stability and autonomy of traditional Kabyle society in order to make a sharper contrast to the social upheavals of colonial Algeria. Indeed, his account was based on reconstructions articulated by Kabyles who were situated in a kind of "structural nostalgia" as they contemplated the relationship between their traditional ways of life and both forced resettlement by the French and the difficulties of life as urban labor migrants; on structural nostalgis see Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy*. London: Routledge, 1997; on this dimension of Bourdieu's account see Paul Silverstein, "Of Rooting and Uprooting: Kabyle Habitus, Domesticity, and Structural Nostalgia," *Ethnography* 2004).

[4] See *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, *Algeria 1960* and Bourdieu and Sayad, *Le Déracinement*.

[5] Bourdieu and Sayad, *Le déracinement, la crise de l'agriculture en Algerie*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1964. An exceptional scholar in his own right, Sayad remained a close friend and interlocutor of Bourdieu's until his death in 1998. See Emmanuelle Saada, "Abdelmalek Sayad and the Double Absence : Toward a Total Sociology of Immigration," *French Politics, Culture, and Society* 18 (2000) #1: 28-47; Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, "The Organic Ethnologist of Algerian Migration," *Ethnography*, 1 (2000) #2: 173-82.; Bourdieu's introduction to Sayad, *La double absence: Des illusions de l'émigré aux souffrances de l'immigré*. Paris: Seuil, 1999.

national biases of the French colonialists.[6] Yet at the same time, he found people unwittingly collaborating in their own disadvantages, reinforcing by misrecognition what was forced on them by circumstance.

Bourdieu initially represented the lives of the "original" inhabitants of Algeria in fairly conventional terms, echoing many aspects of the more critical end of the modernization theories of the day. Increasingly, though, he began to develop not only a challenge to the idea of benign modernization, but a much richer and more sophisticated analysis of how a traditional order could be created such that it reproduced itself with impressive efficacy without any conscious intention to do so, template for the reproduction, or exercise of power in its pursuit. This was made possible, Bourdieu argued, by the very organization of social practices, combining the symbolic and the material seamlessly in a "polythetic" consciousness, and inculcating practical orientations to actions in the young through experiences repeated in everyday life. The spatial organization of the household and the calendar of agricultural production, thus, were not only "cultural" choices or responses to material conditions, they were media of instruction organizing the ways in which the world appeared to members of the society and the ways in which each could imagine himself and improvise action.[7] This social order did not admit of divisions into different fields of activity with different specific forms of value or claims on the loyalties of members. Kinship, poetry, religion, and agriculture were not distinct, thus, as family, art, religion and the economy were in more "modern" societies. Kabyle could thus live in a *doxic* attitude, reproducing understanding of the world as simply the taken-for-granted way it must be, while the development of discrete fields was linked to the production of orthodoxies and heterodoxies, competing claims to right knowledge and true value.

Recognizing that the traditional order was sustained not by simple inertia or the force of cultural rules, Bourdieu turned attention to the ways in which continuous human effort, vigilance towards 'proper' action that was simultaneously an aspect of effective play of the game, achieved reproduction. Analyzing the traditional Kabyle idea of honor (*nif*), for example, Bourdieu realized that this was both the focus of long-term investments (hence a form of cultural capital) and at risk in every interaction. *Nif* was constitutive for the very sense of self as a "man of honor" (and indeed profoundly gendered). Sustaining *nif* demanded a sense of appropriate timing, judgment not just following rules. This was a game peasants could play effectively in their villages. They were prepared for it not only by explicit teaching but also by learning from all their practical experiences—usually not explicitly but tacitly, deployed in proverbs and cultural analogies or embodied as "second nature" or habitus. The same people who could play the games of honor with consummate subtlety in peasant villages, however, often found themselves incapacitated by the games of rationalized exchange in the cities. Labor migration and integration into the larger state and market thus stripped peasant habituses of their efficacy and indeed made the very efforts that previously had sustained

[6] Bourdieu, *Sociologie d'Algerie*, Paris: PUF, 1958; Bourdieu, P., Darbel, A. Rivet, J-P. and Seibel, C. *Travail et travailleurs en Algerie*. Paris and The Hague: Mouton, this ed. 1995; orig. 1963.

[7] Both are reproduced in *Outline*. The analysis of the Kabyle house is one of the classics of structuralism. Originally written in 1963-4, it was first published in 1969 in an homage to Lévi-Strauss.

village life and traditional culture potentially counterproductive. Both the accumulated cultural capital and the sense of self were violently devalued.

More generally, most Berbers had at best weak preparation for participation in the 'modern' society of Algeria—notably the fields of economy and politics. Apparent opportunities were in fact undercut by when they did not deal with such inequalities of preparation to take advantage of them. At first, Bourdieu looked to education as a vehicle for equipping the marginal and dominated with the capacity to compete effectively in the new order. [8] Eventually, he saw education as more contradictory—providing necessary tools but only in a system that reinforced and legitimated subordination. Kablyes and other Berbers not only wound up dominated, but colluded in their own subjugation because of the ways in which they felt themselves to be different and disabled. Experience constantly taught the lesson that there was no way for "people like us" to succeed. Occasional exceptions were more easily explained away than the ubiquitous reinforcement that inculcated pessimism as habitus. Feeling fundamentally ill-equipped for the undertakings of Algeria's new "modern" sector, they transformed a fact of discrimination into a principle of self-exclusion and reduced ambition.

This was a theme to which Bourdieu returned in his studies of the village culture of Béarn in the 1960s. If his rural youth attuned him to certain aspects of Algerian experience, his analyses of Algeria opened his eyes to key dimensions of the world of his own youth, in which his family still lived. Bourdieu took up a variety of themes from matrimonial strategies to gender relations. Writing of bachelors at a rural village ball, he observed peasant men standing back from the dance, seemingly shy, unable or unwilling to approach attractive girls who had found work and new aspirations in the expanding economy of nearby cities. The bachelors literally embodied the contradictions of social change as they came to judge their own bodies as rough and clumsy by urban standards, not least the standards of women they might have wished to marry but who embraced new opportunities as well as new cultural styles.[9]

Bourdieu fused ethnography and statistics, theory and observation, to begin crafting a distinctive approach to social inquiry aimed at informing progressive politics through scientific production. In some ways, it may have helped to be self-taught because this encouraged Bourdieu to ignore some of the artificial oppositions structuring the social sciences—e.g., between quantitative and qualitative inquiry. Research also gave Bourdieu an approach to practical action at a time when he felt caught uncertainly between political camps. At one point he drew heavily on Fanon, for example, and then vehemently rejected the revolutionary politics that had initially attracted him, seeing it as

[8] For decades Bourdieu quietly supported students from Kabylia in the pursuit of higher education, a fact that speaks not only to his private generosity and sense of obligation, but to his faith that, for all their complicity in social reproduction, education and science remained the best hope for loosening the yoke of domination. He also helped Berber emigrants in Paris found a research center, "CERAM" (Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes Amazighes), and was a founder of a prominent support group for imprisoned and threatened Algerian intellectuals (CISIA, Comité de soutien aux intellectuels algériens).

[9] Bourdieu published several articles on these themes, and left a more extended, book-length treatment, *Le Bal des célibataires: crise de la société paysanne en Béarn* (Paris: Seuil, 2002) in press at his death.

naively and sometimes dangerously romantic.[10] Convinced that total revolution was impossible, but also that the French state was insupportable, Bourdieu sought—without complete success—an approach that would give adequate weight to the power of social reproduction without simply affirming it.

At the heart of Bourdieu's approach to practice lay the notion of "habitus". The concept is old, rooted in Aristotle's notion of bodily "hexis" and transmuted and transmitted by Thomas Aquinas in his approach to learning and memory. It is used by a range of modern thinkers including Hegel, Husserl, and Mauss. Norbert Elias had recovered the term to help grasp the transformations of manners in modern European history.[11] Bourdieu's concept was specifically more social and more bodily than, say, Husserl's usage which focused on the background understandings latent in any act. Though Husserl understood action (including perception) in individual and cognitive terms, he did stress the importance of dispositions and horizons of potential acts. Merleau-Ponty was a more proximate source for Bourdieu, who stressed the generative role of the habitus, the ways in which embodied knowledge transmutes past experience into dispositions for particular sorts of action, not only in familiar but less effectively also in new situations.

> The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor.[12]

Habitus is important to the project of understanding how a traditional society works – how honor is achieved and respect demonstrated, for example, in ways that can never be reduced to or reproduced by following rules. But it is not a concept limited to or definitive of traditional social order. In all settings people improvise new actions based on past learnings embodied as habits and seldom made explicit. And in times of transition some suffer difficulties in generating appropriate actions for new circumstances. If habitus is central to mastery – whether of a craft or of social games – it is also central to subordination. People learn from past experience, for example, to limit their own

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[10] See Bourdieu, "The Revolution in the Revolution." There is useful discussion in Jeremy Lane, *Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pluto, 2000.

[11] Bourdieu seems not to have been aware of Elias until much later. See Roger Chartier, "Social Figuration and Habitus," pp. 71-94 in *Cultural History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). Elias and Bourdieu share a variety of themes, tastes, and some other concepts, though there are also striking differences. Not the least of the latter is the extent to which Elias focused on long-term historical change, whereas Bourdieu, while dealing intensively with shorter-term processes of change often left questions of large-scale, epochal historical change implicit. See Calhoun, "Habitus, Field of Power and Capital: The Question of Historical Specificity," in *Critical Social Theory,* Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.

[12] *Logic of Practice,* p. 53.

aspirations. Habitus is an internalization of social structure and a capacity to generate creative responses. Even the responses that succeed in breaking with some dimensions of old structures or in adapting to new circumstances remain marked by learning that situates individuals in structures and shapes their trajectories through them. Habitus is a condition of doing anything and at the same a powerful factor in the reproduction of established patterns of action. Among other things, the habitus can lead to a naturalization and internalization of the inequalities also reproduced by symbolic violence.

With concepts like habitus and also symbolic violence and power, Bourdieu sought a way to move beyond the dualisms of structure and action, objective and subjective, social physics and social semiotics and especially to inject a stronger account of temporality (and temporal contingency) into social analysis.[13] His effort was not merely to forge a theoretical synthesis, but to develop the capacity to overcome some of the opposition between theoretical knowledge based on objectification of social life and phenomenological efforts to grasp its embodied experience and (re)production in action. Human social action is at once "structured" and "structuring," Bourdieu argued, indeed structuring *because* it is structured, with the socialized body as "analogical operator of practice." Habitus is internalized experience, embodied culture and history.

There exists, thus, no simple context-free or transhistorical 'solution' to the riddle of structure and agency. Rather, their mutual constitution and subsequent interaction must be worked out in analysis of concrete empirical cases. In his analyses of Algeria, Bourdieu is attentive to contemporary history – French colonialism, expanding markets, urbanization – but does not delve into the history of Kabylia. He allows it to appear largely as the traditional, unchanging other to the historical transition he studies.[14] This is not equally true in his studies of France, where he works by reconstituting, first, the social genesis and makeup of objective social worlds (fields) within which agents develop and operate, second, the socially constituted dispositions (habitus) which fashion the manner of thinking, feeling, and acting of these agents. This "double historicization" calls for field and habitus to be related in analysis of specific temporal processes and trajectories. Moreover, it must be complemented by the historicization of the analytic categories and problematics of the inquiring scholar. Only in this way can social scientists do the necessary, if hard, labor of "conquering and constructing social facts"—that is, of distinguishing the hidden forms and mechanisms of social reality from the

[13] Bridget Fowler (*Pierre Bourdieu and Cultural Theory.* London: Sage, 1977, p. 16) rather strangely sees the concept of practice as "associated with [Bourdieu's] conversion to structuralism" thus missing some of the other sources on which it drew-notably Marx and Marxism, but also a tradition from Aristotle through phenomenology--and the extent to which it marked an effort to transcend limits of structuralism.

[14] This is not to say that Bourdieu is unaware of earlier patterns of change, but rather that he emphasizes the attitude he would come to describe (following Aristotle) as *doxa*. This is the un-self-aware inhabitation of culture as taken-for-granted reality that is disrupted by heterodoxy. Orthodoxy may present itself as an attempt to return to earlier "tradition" but generally cannot re-establish the doxic attitude, it can only restate some contents in a contention with heterodoxy and an effort to enforce cultural conformity. See also Weber, 'The Social Psychology of the World Religions', in H.H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge. 1951; orig. 1915), p. 296, on the difference between tradition and traditionalism.

received understandings of previous academic knowledge, folk knowledge and the everyday preconceptions of "culture" more generally. On this basis, empirically-based reflexive analysis can also establish the social and epistemological conditions for both the objective and subjective perspectives themselves, and for avoiding the pitfalls of what Bourdieu later termed "the scholastic bias" – the tendency of social analysts to project their own (hermeneutic) relation to the social world into the minds of the people they observe.[15]

These studies helped forge Bourdieu's theory of practice and informed his entire intellectual trajectory, including both academic endeavors and his later political critique of neoliberalism. Near the end of his life, he wrote:

> As I was able to observe in Algeria, the unification of the economic field tends, especially through monetary unification and the generalization of monetary exchanges that follow, to hurl all social agents into an economic game for which they are not equally prepared and equipped, culturally and economically. It tends by the same token to submit them to standards objectively imposed by competition from more efficient productive forces and modes of production, as can readily be seen with small rural producers who are more and more completely torn away from self-sufficiency. In short, *unification benefits the dominant.*"[16]

Unification, of course, could be a project not only of the colonial state but also of national states, the European community, and the World Trade Organization.

Les Trente Glorieuses: Education, Inequality and Reproduction

When Bourdieu returned to France, the post-war economic boom was in full swing. Urbanization was extremely rapid. Home ownership was on the rise. Personal consumption was expanding rapidly. Widespread ownership of cars, for example, offered both convenience and a sense of movement into the middle class and at the same time, expanded the distances within which village and small town residents could work. New hobbies like photography spread.[17] At the same time, the distinctive European welfare state model was being created; France was a leading exemplar. Social mobility and greater equality were promised. Expanding educational opportunities was a central part of the promise.

In 1964, in collaboration with Jean-Claude Passeron, Bourdieu published *The Inheritors*, the first of several ground-breaking studies of schools, cultural distinction and

[15] This is discussed in several places; for a general treatment see chapter 6, "The Scholastic Point of View," in *Practical Reason.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

[16] Pierre Bourdieu, "Unifying to Better Dominate," *Items and Issues*, winter 2001; orig. 2000 (forthcoming in *Firing Back*, New York: New Press, 2002.

[17] Bourdieu's study of photography is precisely of the "middle-brow" art of these hobbyists. He also studied museum attendance and other kinds of growing cultural engagement, though generally finding that despite expanding numbers stratification remained powerful. See Bourdieu, Pierre, Luc Boltaski, Robert Castel, J-C. Chamboredon, and D. Schnapper, *Photography: A Middlebrow Art*. Cambridge: Polity, 1965/1990; orig. 1965; Bourdieu, Pierre, Alain Darbel and Dominique Schnapper, *The Love of Art*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990; orig. 1966.

class division.[18] The theme was straightforward but powerful. Education appeared to be neutral and available on an open meritocratic basis, but in fact it reproduced class bias. It did this partly by embracing hierarchy and distributing success in ways that rewarded prior family accumulation and transmission of cultural capital. Schooling thus achieved its apparent meritocracy by an act of symbolic violence; it legitimized the prevailing social order by manipulating the categories through which it was produced and reproduced. Pedagogical work imposed a "cultural arbitrary" but made it appear neutral or universal. Familiarity with bourgeois language for example translated into differences in performance on academic tests. Read in English narrowly as texts in the sociology or anthropology of education, *The Inheritors* and *Reproduction* were also more general challenges to the French state; Bourdieu saw the sociology of education not simply as a specialized pursuit but at the very core of sociology because of the insight it offered into the reproduction of inequality in modern societies as they came to rely more and more on both credentials reflecting specialized training and the certification of high levels of attainment of canonical general knowledge - culture.

In France, the national education system stood as perhaps the supreme exemplar of the pretended seamless unity and neutrality of the state in its simultaneous roles as representative of the nation and embodiment of reason and progress. Bourdieu showed not merely that it was biased (a fact potentially corrigible) but that it was in principle biased. This was read by some as a blanket condemnation; Bourdieu was seen nearly as anti-schooling. Bourdieu's disappointment was in fact more complicated. He worried later that this loose reading of his work encouraged teachers simply to adopt lax standards in order not to be seen (or see themselves) as the agents of symbolic violence. Poor teaching or weak standards did not eliminate class inequality, after all. In fact, it reduced the extent to which schools could provide students with a chance to overcome inherited, familial differences in cultural capital.

Bourdieu's early work on Algeria suggests that he started out with a conviction that reformed educational institutions and access could provide the dominated and marginalized with effective resources for political and economic participation. They might remedy the poor preparation of ex-peasants for the new commercial society and post-colonial politics. If only they could be organized to provide fair, open, and effective access to high value cultural goods, he implied in concert with many educational reformers, then educational institutions could be the crucial means for improving society. By the mid-1960s, however, he saw educations failing to play this role.[19] This was not narrowly a failing of schools, however, but a contribution of the educational field to the field of power more generally – a contribution organized in part by the ways in which schools and teachers related to the overall organization of cultural hierarchy, markets, and especially the state. Schools were organized not merely to teach, after all, but to perform

[18] Bourdieu, Pierre and J.-C. Passeron, *The Inheritors*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973; orig. 1964; Bourdieu, Pierre and J.-C. Passeron, *Reproduction: In Education, Culture, and Society*. Beverly Hills: Sage, 1971; orig. 1967.

[19] See Robbins, *The Work of Pierre Bourdieu*, ch. 4. Grenfell, Michael 2004 *Pierre Bourdieu: Agent Provocateur*. New York: Continuum.

selection and exclusion. They simultaneously maintained and disguised the class structure. This was an issue that Bourdieu addressed in a range of further works including books on higher education and of course *Distinction*, his great study of the hierarchical organization of cultural taste. Education did not have to be merely a process of reproduction; but it would take self-conscious reform, reform aided by the reflexive view sociological research provided, to change this outcome. This, of course, would also require political will.

Bourdieu's views of the educational system reflected the disappointed idealism of one who had invested himself deeply in it, and owed much of his own rise from provincial obscurity to Parisian prominence to success in school. As he wrote in *Homo Academicus*, he was like someone who believed in a religious vocation then found the church to be corrupt. "The special place held in my work by a somewhat singular sociology of the university institution is no doubt explained by the peculiar force with which I felt the need to gain rational control over the disappointment felt by an 'oblate' faced with the annihilation of the truths and values to which he was destined and dedicated, rather than take refuge in feelings of self-destructive resentment."[20] The disappointment could not be undone, but it could be turned to understanding and potentially, through that understanding, to positive change.

Educational institutions were central to Bourdieu's concern, but his sense of disappointment and his critical analyses both reached widely. All the institutions of modernity, including the capitalist market and the state itself, share in a tendency to promise far more than they deliver. They present themselves as working for the common good, but in fact reproduce social inequalities. They present themselves as agents of freedom, but in fact are organizations of power. They inspire devotion from those who want richer, freer lives, and they disappoint them with the limits they impose and the violence they deploy.

In educational institutions, particular systems of categories, contents, and outcomes are presented as necessary and neutral (and one senses Bourdieu's outrage at professors who can't see the system reflexively and critically even while he explains their complacency and incapacity). Forming the taxonomic order of both the way academics think and the way the system is organized, these impressively protect against internal critique and therefore against successful reform and improvement.

> The homology between the structures of the educational system (hierarchy of disciplines, of sections, etc.) and the mental structures of the agents (professorial taxonomies) is the source of the functioning of the consecration of the social order which the education system performs behind its mask of neutrality.[21]

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[20] *Homo Academicus,* p. xxvi. Bourdieu's disillusionment with the educational system was not simply an immediate response to his experience at the École Normale, though that was certainly among its roots. See accounts in Jeremy Lane, Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Introduction. London: Pluto, 2000; and Craig Calhoun, "Pierre Bourdieu," pp. 696-730 in George Ritzer, ed.: *The Blackwell Companion to the Major Social Theorists*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 3rd ed. 2011.

[21] Bourdieu, "The Categories of Professorial Judgment," in English edition of *Homo Academicus.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988; orig. 1978.

In short, the educational system is a field. It has a substantial autonomy, which it must protect, and a distinctive form of capital which depends on that autonomy for its efficacy. It is internally organized as a set of transposable dispositions and practical taxonomies that enable participants to understand their world and to take effective actions, but which also produce and reproduce specific inequalities among them and make these appear natural. These can be challenged—as indeed Bourdieu challenged them by analyzing them—but it should not be thought that they could be easily changed by a simple act of will. And it is externally productive, providing the larger field of power with one of its most powerful legitimations through the process of the conversion of educational capital into more directly economic, political, or other forms.

This happens, like much else, through the dialectic of incorporation and objectification.[22] The education system depends on the inculcation of its categories as the mental structures of agents and on the simultaneous manifestation of these as material structures of organization. This enables the production of objective effects that do not cease to be objective and materially powerful simply by pointing to the subjective moments in their creation. It is true that there is "symbolic aggression observable in all examination situations" (and Bourdieu goes to great lengths to document and analyze such things as the terms teachers use in commenting on examination papers) but it is not true that this is explicable simply as the psychological attitude of individual agents. Rather, it is a disposition inculcated by agents' own trajectories through the educational field (as students as well as teachers) and both reproduced and rendered apparently neutral by its match to the categories of organization and value in the field as a whole.

More generally, the social order is effectively consecrated through the educational system because it is able to appear as neutral and necessary. In one of Bourdieu's favorite metaphors for describing his own work, Mao's notion of "twisting the stick in the other direction", he turned the structuralist analysis of taxonomies in another way by mobilizing it for a critical account of the logic of practice.[23] In the context of les trentes glorieuses, this was central to showing how certain organizations of inequality could produce compliance rather than protest, and to exposing the false promises of visions that a rising tide lifts all boats – which helped his work contribute in due course to protest. For Bourdieu it was especially important to analyze the idealization of culture because it figured centrally in French nationalism and the legitimation of both state power and market expansion. De Gaulle first established France's Ministry of Culture in 1959, appointing André Malraux to head it and charging it with both celebration of high culture and production of a cohesive account of Frenchness through an inventory of the heritage each locality brought to the whole. When Bourdieu undertook to demonstrate that culture was not a realm of simple disinterested ideals but rather one that operated on the base of

[22] *Outline,* p. 72; *Logic of Practice,* ch. 3, and esp. p. 56.

[23] Bourdieu complained about the misunderstanding of those who seized on the analytic devices he took up from one or another established approach, missing the fact that he was already exaggerating in order to twist the stick in the other direction, and then labeled his approach by the strategically deployed concept—perhaps most famously the idea of 'strategy' itself that he used as a way of injecting dynamism into structuralist analysis; *Pascalian Meditations*, p. 63; see also Bourdieu, "Concluding Remarks," pp. 263-75 in C. Calhoun, E. LiPuma and M. Postone, eds.: *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Polity and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

its own economy, albeit one that reversed certain evaluative premises of the "business" economy, this was not simply an exercise in value-neutral sociology of culture but a politically salient engagement with continuing transformations in French society.[24]

Bourdieu's studies of education were thus part of a broader approach to culture, power, and inequality. Informed also by a series of empirical studies of art and artistic institutions starting in the 1960s,[25] this line of work is most widely known through *Distinction*, Bourdieu's monumental study of the social organization of taste. The politics and historical context of this body of work are not always clear. It is work that comes to terms with historically transformed structures of class inequality, and explores the potential for new kinds of struggles over inequality. These could include direct action like strikes but also necessary would need to include struggles over classification.

Distinction is an analysis of how culture figures in social inequality and how the pursuit of distinction or differential recognition shapes all realms of social practice. It is also an effort to "move beyond the opposition between objectivist theories which identify the social classes (but also the age or sex classes) with discrete groups, simple countable populations separated by boundaries objectively drawn in reality, and subjectivist (or marginalist) theories which reduce the 'social order' to a sort of collective classification obtained by aggregating the individual classifications or, more precisely, the individual strategies, classified and classifying, through which agents class themselves and others".[26] Bourdieu develops, thus, an argument that struggles over classification are themselves important and largely ignored aspects of class struggle, though also struggles that must include questioning conventional, inherited definitions of class. Here Bourdieu is not only bringing in Weberian attention to prestige, but addressing the changes in structures of inequality wrought by credentialism, professionalization of work, the delivery of state welfare services – and the list would eventually include questions of citizenship and the status of immigrants.

Bourdieu drew from structuralism many specifics of his argument that classification is materially efficacious. But classification is, for Bourdieu, an exercise of political power and potentially challengeable by a political—and also cultural—struggle. In a sense he offered a more precise and empirical account of the production of hegemony than Gramsci – or than Althusser's notion of ideological state apparatuses. This is not the impersonal "power" of Foucault, but a more directly transitive power, wielded by agents in defense of their interests and support of their projects. As Bourdieu was fond of pointing out, the root of 'categorize" also means to accuse and deployment of categories was often an act of symbolic violence.

[24] "The Field of Cultural Production, or: The Economic World Reversed." Pp. 29-73 in The Field of Cultural Production (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993; orig. 1983.
[25] Bourdieu, Alain Darbel and Dominique Schnapper, *The Love of Art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990; orig. 1966; Bourdieu, Luc Boltanski, Robert Castel, Jean-Claude Chamboredon and Dominique Schnapper, *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990; orig. 1965.
[26] *Distinction,* p. 489.

Distinction, however, is also a response to Kant's Third Critique (and to subsequent philosophical disquisitions on judgment).[27] Much as Durkheim had sought to challenge individualistic explanation of social facts,[28] so Bourdieu sought to uncover the social roots and organization of all forms of judgment. Kant's argument had sought an approximation in practical reason to the universality available more readily to pure reason. He had seen this as crucial equally to artistic taste and political opinion. But he had imagined a standpoint of disinterested judgment from which practical reason (and critique) might proceed. Bourdieu clearly accepted the analogy between art and politics, but not this idea of disinterest or of a place outside social struggles from which neutral knowledge might issue. If he shared this critique of ostensible neutrality with Foucault and other poststructuralists, he differed importantly in arguing that knowledge not only buttresses the hierarchies of the social world but also can be an effective part of the struggle to change that world, even if it is never produced from a standpoint outside it. The world-as-it-is-perceived issues out of and bolsters the world-as-it-is, a struggle over classification may actually change the world, and—this was crucial for Bourdieu—that struggle need not be simply a matter of power but can be through science a matter of knowledge which transcends mere power even if it does not escape struggles over power and recognition altogether. In short, we needn't go down the ostensibly Nietzschean path towards a choice between simple embrace of the will to power or a futile resistance to it. On the contrary, "there is, as Nietzsche pointed out, no immaculate conception; but nor is there any original sin – and the discovery that someone who discovered the truth had an interest in doing so in no way diminishes his discovery."[29]

If philosophy and art—and at least to some extent science[30]--operate with a denial of interest, economics and less academic discourses about economic matters clearly embrace interest. But they operate with a presumption of neutrality and objectivity that renders them vulnerable to a closely related critique. For if the cultural world is the economic world reversed, as Bourdieu famously put it[31], it is also true that liberal economics turns precisely on the denial of cultural significance, the positing of "interests" as objective, and the perception of economic systems as matters of necessity rather than products of choice and power (and therefore potentially to be improved by struggle). There is no disinterested account of interests, no neutral and objective standpoint from which to evaluate policy, not even academic economics.[32] But this doesn't remove economic matters from science, it simply extends the demand for a truly reflexive social science, and for an overcoming of the oppositions between structure and action, objective and subjective to economics and economic analysis. The economy has no more existence separate from or prior to the rest of society than do art or philosophy.

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[27] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1987; orig. 1790.
[28] Notably in *Suicide,* New York: Free Press, 1976; orig. 1895.
[29] *Pascalian Meditations*, p. 3.
[30] Bourdieu, "The Specificity of the Scientific Field and the Social Conditions of the Progress of Reason," *Social Science Information,* 14 (1975), #6: 19-47 and *Les usages sociaux de la science*. Paris: INRA Editions, 1997.
[31] Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, or: The Economic World Reversed," pp. 29-73 in *The Field of Cultural Production.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1993; orig. 1983.
[32] See Andrew Sayer, "Bourdieu, Smith and disinterested judgment," *Sociological Review* 47 (1999) #3: 403-31.

It is not merely 'necessity', to which we may only adapt, any more than artistic creativity is simply 'freedom' with no social base.

Fields and Forms of Capital

Bourdieu was hardly anti-culture. The point of exposing the misrecognition of its character was not to debunk it but to make possible radically different social relations to it. Just as Marx argued that capitalism produced wealth that it could not effectively distribute to all its participants, so Bourdieu argued that artists produce work of great value. Likewise, science and education do in fact produce and reproduce knowledge. But in the social structures of modern society, they do so inseparably from inequalities in capacity and opportunity to appropriate that knowledge:

> Economic power lies not in wealth but in the relationship between wealth and a field of economic relations, the constitution of which is inseparable from the development of a *body of specialized agents*, with specific interests; it is in this relationship that wealth is constituted, in the form of capital, that is, as the instrument for appropriating the institutional equipment and the mechanisms indispensable to the functioning of the field, and thereby also appropriating the profits from it.[33]

It would make no sense to start socialism—or any more egalitarian society—by willfully abolishing all the material wealth accumulated under capitalism and previous economic systems. But it would be necessary to transform the system of relations that rendered such wealth as capital and distributed it unequally. Knowledge constitutes a specific form of capital, a kind of resource deployed by those with power in relation to specific fields—legal, medical, academic. But knowledge need not be organized this way.

Simply to attack modernity is to engage in "self-destructive resentment". Rather, the best way forward lies through the struggle to understand, to win deeper truths, and to remove legitimacy from the practices by which power mystifies itself. In this way, one can challenge the myths and deceptions of modernity, enlightenment, and civilization without becoming the enemy of the hopes they offer. Central to this is renewed appreciation of both the autonomy and distinctive character of the scientific field and of the contributions it can make to public discourse:

> It is necessary today to reconnect with the 19th century tradition of a scientific field that, refusing to leave the world to the blind forces of the economy, wished to extend to the whole social world the values of the (undoubtedly idealized) scientific world (Bourdieu 2001: 8).

Bourdieu's exploration of the operation of different forms of power blossomed into a full-fledged model of the relations between economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital in the deployment of strategies of class reproduction. This perhaps reached its

[33] Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Trans. R. Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 184-5; see also Bourdieu, *Les structures sociales de l'économie.* Paris: Seuil, 2000.

fullest development in his study of the *grands écoles* and the political and economic power structure of the elite professions.[34]

As Bourdieu's analysis of the limits of *les trente glorieuses* matured, he became increasingly engaged in the analysis of social fields. This led him to questions about the historical genesis and structure of such fields. This was basic to further development of his account of the different forms of capital and their convertibility and led him to deeper historical inquiry. In addition to the book-length works on education and art, Bourdieu published shorter but still extensive studies of the religious, scientific, philosophical, and juridical fields.[35] In these and other investigations, he laid the basis for a general theory of "fields" as differentiated social microcosms operating as spaces of objectives forces and arenas of struggle over value that refract and transmute external determinations and interests. This became increasingly a theory of the distinctive nature of modern society as "fielded" society, organized by the ways in which fields worked internally, related to each other, and mediated the influences of state and market.

If Bourdieu's interest in his early studies of education was in the way an established field was adapted to a new context, and reorganized to reproduce inequality, increasingly his gaze turned to the ways in which fields developed and took on their characteristic structures. This took Bourdieu into the study of longer-term historical transformations – as the modern French religious field was shaped by a long Catholic history, the Protestant Reformation, the creation of a state church and secular opposition to it. In this connection, he introduced the notion of "structuration" (later appropriated by Anthony Giddens) to call attention to the fact that cultural and social structures were always incompletely solidified and thus potentially changing.[36] Fields represent Bourdieu's specification of what Weber called the different value-spheres of modern society. But he sees these as always objects and sites of struggle.

The existence of a field stems first and foremost from a claim to a distinctive kind of value – and to a distinctive capacity to provide that value to society more generally. This capacity implies field-specific knowledge and other resources – capital - and it implies a division of labor among fields. Lawyers should govern matters of justice, scientists matters of truth, priests access to salvation and real-estate agents the sale of homes. The implicit premise of every field is that it needs autonomy since outsiders lacking its specific knowledge will not be able to judge the quality of internal production. Outsiders buying medical services pay more for the labor of those held in high regard by other doctors; absent this field-specific hierarchy they might pay less but risk substandard care. Succeeding in such a claim to autonomy, Bourdieu argued, is the "critical phase" in the emergence of a field.[37]

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[34] Bourdieu, *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996; orig. 1989.

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[36] See "Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field", *Comparative Social Research*, vol. 13 (1991), pp. 1-43, orig. 1971.

[37] Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996; orig. 1992; pp. 47ff

The external autonomy is linked to an internal hierarchy where esteem is often the immediate basis for standing, but greater command of the field's specific sort of good is the underlying basis. Fields are thus in certain ways conservative, but not entirely so. Each harnesses the efforts of its members to the production of its distinctive sort of good because that is the main way in which they can get ahead in the race for field-specific distinction, capital. Of course, there may well be inequality in excess of meaningful differences in actual provision of the good the field values. More basically, the definition of each field embodies a cultural arbitrary – a historically achieved demarcation that did not have to exist in that form. These can be challenged; their seeming necessity can be unmasked. But at the same time, fields are productive; they organize the actual delivery of distinctive goods. To abolish them without providing a new structure for the provision of important goods would be devastating.

Fields claim monopolies. These may be protected by the state – through licensing, examinations, funding, or other procedures. A state church enforces the monopoly of a particular set of theological and ritual specialists on the provision of the goods of religion within that country. Each monopoly is quite precisely a limit on market transactions – and the devaluation of field-specific goods that would take place if the "best" or dominant versions were not distinctively rewarded. Of course these limits are variable; it is easier to enter some fields than others. But each field maintains at least autonomy from reduction to unmediated markets, often with the aid of the state. But as Protestants, Jews, or Muslims may seek to evade state imposed Catholic religious monopolies so buyers of alternative medicines seek to evade medical monopolies, and homeowners putting out their own advertisements seek to evade the monopolies of the real estate profession. Those dominant within a field also need to convert their field-specific capital into money (the universal solvent) or perhaps directly into other sorts of capital through something closer to barter arrangements – as parental status may help children get into more selective schools. But they need this conversion to be mediated by the field's own status hierarchy. Within every field there are some more attentive to external arbiters of value or providers of resource – the state or market actors – and others more focused on the "pure" form of the field's specific value. Valuing "art for art's sake" is thus crucial to the existence of a field of art, even if it may sometimes be hard to convert the "symbolic" capital of fellow-artists' esteem into case.

Historically, thus, fields represent successful projects to organize effort and aspirations into the pursuit of specific values and rewards related to those values. They are not necessarily fair and the pursuit of field-specific standing may distort the distribution of socially valued goods – as Bourdieu argument was the case in education.

"A capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 101). Yet, successful lawyers and successful authors both, for example, seek to convert their own successes into improved standards of living and chances for their children. To do so, they must convert the capital specific to their field of endeavor into other forms. In addition to material property (economic capital), families may accumulate networks of connections (social capital) and prestige (cultural capital) by the

way in which they raise children and plan their marriages. In each case, the accumulation has to be reproduced in every generation or it is lost.

Capital is Bourdieu's term for resources that structure what is possible for different individuals or groups to do, and that form the "stakes" of social struggles. Capital comes in different forms – social, symbolic, and cultural as well as materially economic. Who you know can be a resource just like a bank account, and some people network very consciously to build social capital. Material, economic capital is especially important in modern societies – though so are educational credentials. Different forms of capital are convertible, as for example rich parents can buy their children education at expensive universities. Public institutions (like schools or museums) and cultural values (like beauty or justice) work to limit immediate dominance of economic capital over all other kinds. Nonetheless, capitalism (in Marx's sense of a system in which accumulation of wealth based on the conversion of human labor into commodities becomes an end in itself) is for Bourdieu a tendency in modern life that threatens to dominate. But people still accumulate other sorts of capital, sometimes by explicitly rejecting economic values, as an artist may gain symbolic credit for demonstrating devotion purely to aesthetics and popularizing his work for sales. Because of the importance of capital, inequalities are basic to social life. Capital is both necessary for individual action and built into the structure of collective action so that people are embedded in competition and accumulation even without conceptualizing them as such or forming conscious intentions.

There are two senses in which capital is converted from one form to another. One is as part of the intergenerational reproduction of capital. Rich people try to make sure that their children go to good colleges—which, in fact, are often expensive private colleges (at least in America). This is a way of converting money into cultural capital (educational credentials). In this form, it can be passed on and potentially reconverted into economic form. The second sense of conversion of capital is more immediate. The athlete with great successes and capital specific to his or her sporting field – prestige, fame - may convert this into money by signing agreements to endorse products, or by opening businesses like car dealerships or insurance agencies in which celebrity status in the athletic field may help to attract customers.

Bourdieu's deepest work on fields, as well as his most sustained historical research, focused on literature and was capped by *The Rules of Art*, an investigation of the symbolic revolution wrought in literature by Flaubert, Baudelaire and others.[38] Bourdieu's greatest unfinished work is probably its companion study, a sociogenetic dissection of Manet and the transformation of the field of painting in which he played a pivotal role. Both center on the organization of cultural production in the late 19th century era when the French state also took on its modern form (secularizing definitively, establishing its monopoly and standardization of education, and so forth).

It is worth focusing on *Rules of Art* in more detail. In it Bourdieu addresses the point at which the writing of "realistic" novels separated itself simultaneously from the

[38] Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996; orig. 1992.

broader cultural field and the immediate rival of journalism. He takes up the specific empirical case of Gustave Flaubert and his career in relation to the constitution of the field as such and the broader patterns implicit in it. The emphasis on Flaubert was, among other things, a riposte to and (often implicit) critical engagement with Sartre's famous largely psychological analysis. *The Rules of Art* contested the view of artistic achievement as disinterested, and a matter simply of individual genius and creative impulses. It showed genius to lie in the ability to play the game that defines a field, as well as in aesthetic vision or originality.

Flaubert was the mid-19th century writer who, more than anyone else with the possible exception of Baudelaire, created the exemplary image of the author as an artistic creator working in an autonomous literary field. The author was not merely a writer acting on behalf of other interests: politics, say, or money. A journalist was such a paid writer, responsible to those who hired him. An author, by contrast, was an artist. This was the key point for Flaubert and for the literary field that developed around and after him. What the artistic field demanded was not just talent, or vision, but a commitment to "art for art's sake". This meant producing works specifically for the field of art.

Writers like Flaubert and Baudelaire made strong claims for the value of their distinctive points of view. This has encouraged the analysis of their products as simply embodiments of their psychological individuality. On the other hand, they wrote "realistic" novels, engaging the social issues of their day from poverty to the Revolution of 1848. This has encouraged others to focus on the ways in which they reflected one or another side in those issues, interpreting them, for example, as social critics or as voices of the rising middle class. Bourdieu showed how this misses the decisive importance of the creation of a field of literature as art. This meant, first, that when Flaubert or Baudelaire wrote about the issues of their day, they claimed the distinctive authority of artists. Indeed, they helped to pioneer the idea that artists might offer a special contribution to social awareness that reflected precisely their "disinterestedness"—in other words the fact they were not simply political actors. Secondly, though, Bourdieu showed that this appearance of disinterestedness is misleading. It is produced to the extent that artists are motivated by interests specific to the artistic field and their place within it, and not merely serving as spokespeople for other social positions. In other words, artists are disinterested in the terms of some other fields precisely because of the extent to which they are interested in the field of art. The autonomy of this field is thus basic to the production of artists in this sense.

Painting as a modern artistic field is defined by the difference between producing "art for its own sake" and producing art for the sake of religion, as in medieval decorations of churches, or for the sake of memory and money, as in some portraiture (Bourdieu 1983/1993). The new more autonomous approach does not mean that the painter stops wanting food, or fame, or salvation—though he may not consciously recognize how much he is driven by these desires. Rather, what it does is orient his creative work specifically to the field of art, and to the standards of judgment of others in that field. The artist in this sense doesn't just produce more of what the market wants, but endeavors to create works that embody his own distinctive vision and place in the field. He seeks recognition from other artists, and in his work marks off his debts to but also distinctions from them. It is because it becomes a field in this way, oriented to an internal

communication and accumulation of specifically artistic capital, that the production of art becomes partially autonomous from popular and even elite tastes. Art may guide tastes (not just be guided by them), or it may operate outside the world of everyday tastes, but it may not be reduced to them. This liberates art from determination by its immediate social context, but it does not liberate artists from all interests in achieving distinction or accumulating capital. On the contrary, they are driven to innovate (rather than just reproducing the masterworks of a previous generation), and to innovate in ways that derive much of their form from the existing state of communication in the art field. The artistic habitus, thus, enables a regulated improvisation, working with the symbolic materials at hand to express at once the artist's original vision and the artist's individual claims on the field of art. Because the art field is autonomous, its works can only be understood by those who master its internal forms of communication. This is why ordinary people find much modern art hard to understand, at least until they take classes or read the guiding statements offered by museum curators. From the mid-19th century, art could become increasingly abstract partly because it was the production not simply of beauty, or of a mirror on the world, but of a communication among artists. This communication was driven simultaneously by the pursuit of distinction and of art for art's sake.

When we set out to understand the "creative project" or distinctive point of view of an artist like Flaubert, therefore, the first thing we need to grasp is his place in and trajectory through the field of art (or the more specific field of literature as art). This, Bourdieu recognizes, must seem like heresy to those who believe in the individualistic ideal of artistic genius. It is one thing to say that sociology can help us understand art markets, but this is a claim that sociology is not just helpful for but crucial to understanding the individual work of art and the point of view of the artist who created it. Bourdieu takes on this task in an analysis simultaneously of Flaubert's career, or his own implicit analysis of it in the novel *Sentimental Education*, and of the genesis and structure of the French literary field. In doing so, he accepts a challenge similar to that Durkheim (1897) took in seeking to explain suicide sociologically: to demonstrate the power of sociology in a domain normally understood in precisely antisociological terms.

At its center of Bourdieu's analysis lies the demonstration that Flaubert's point of view as an artist is shaped by his objective position in the artistic field and his more subjective position-takings in relation to the development of that field. For example, it is important that Flaubert came from a family that was able to provide him with financial support. This enabled him to participate fully in the ethic (or interest) of art for art's sake while some of his colleagues (perhaps equally talented) were forced to support themselves by writing journalism for money. This is different from saying simply that Flaubert expressed a middle class point of view. In fact, it suggests something of why middle and upper class people who enter into careers (like art) that are defined by cultural rather than economic capital often become social critics. Their family backgrounds help to buy them some autonomy from the immediate interests of the economy, while their pursuit of distinction in a cultural field gives them an interest in producing innovative or incisive views of the world. In other words, the objective features of an artist's background influence his work not so much directly as indirectly through the mediation of the artistic field.

Within that field, the artist occupies a specific position at any one point in time, and also a trajectory of positions through time. The position of an individual artist is shaped by the network of relationships that connect him to (or differentiate him from) other artists and by his position in the hierarchies of artistic producers defined both by the external market and the internal prestige system of the field. The actual position the artist occupies, however, is only one among a universe of possible positions. He could have made different friends and enemies, could have used his talent better or worse at earlier times, could have traveled abroad rather than staying in Paris. In this sense, the artist's biography (including both the objective resources he starts with and the uses he makes of them) describes a trajectory through the space of objective positions in the field (which itself may be developing and changing). This trajectory is produced partially by choices and by the way the artist played the game, as well as by material factors. At the same time, as we saw in considering the habitus, the way the artist plays the game is itself shaped by the objective circumstances he has experienced. As he sets out to produce any new work, the artist starts from an objective position in the field, and also engages in new "position-takings". That is, he chooses consciously or unconsciously from among the range of possible moves open to him.

In line with Bourdieu's overall approach, what we see here is the deep way in which subjective and objective dimensions of fields and practices are bound up with each other. "Paradoxically," he writes, " we can only be sure of some chance of participating in the author's subjective intention (or, if you like, in what I have called elsewhere his 'creative project') provided we complete the long work of objectification necessary to reconstruct the universe of positions within which he was situated and where what he wanted to do was defined" (Bourdieu 1992/1996: 88). One important way in which the field as a whole shapes the work of a Flaubert, say, is by granting him the freedom to innovate, and to construct a vision of the world that is not immediately constrained by economic logic or political power. In other words, the artist gains his freedom in relation to his broader social context precisely by accepting the determinations that come with investment in the artistic field. "The posts of 'pure' writer and artist, like that of 'intellectual', are institutions of freedom, which are constructed against the 'bourgeoisie' (in the artist's terms) and, more concretely, against the market and state bureaucracies (academies, salons, etc.) through a series of ruptures, partially cumulative, which are often made possible only by a diversion of the resources of the market—hence of the 'bourgeoisie'—and even of state bureaucracies." That is, the pure writer needs resources from somewhere. "These posts are the end point of all the collective work which has led to the constitution of the field of cultural production as a space independent of the economy and politics; but, in return, this work of emancipation cannot be carried out or extended unless the post finds an agent endowed with the required dispositions, such as an indifference to profit and a propensity to make risky investments, as well as the properties which, like income, constitute the (external) conditions of these dispositions" (Bourdieu 1992/1996: 257).

In this sense, the artist is not so much "disinterested" as "differently interested". The illusion of disinterest is produced by the way economic and cultural dimensions of modern societies are ideologically opposed to each other. The field of cultural production is defined as the economic world reversed (Bourdieu 1993, ch. 1). It is one of the central contributions of Bourdieu's theory, however, to show that this is a misrecognition, and

the opposition is really between different forms of capital. Directly economic capital operates in a money-based market that can be indefinitely extended. Cultural capital, by contrast, operates as a matter of status, which is often recognized only within specific fields (here again, Bourdieu follows Weber).

Contesting Neoliberalism: Sociology in Action

Bourdieu did not develop any detailed account of "the economy" as such, partly because his concerns lay elsewhere and partly because he questioned whether any such object existed with the degree of autonomy from the rest of social life that conventional economics implied.[39] His account of the different forms of capital, thus, involved no account of capitalism as a distinctive, historically specific system of production and distribution. This was perhaps implied by his treatment of the corrosive force of markets in Algeria and by his critique of neoliberal economic policies. In each case the more inclusive, larger-scale organization of economic life also entailed a greater reduction of other values to economic ones (and a specification of economic values as those of private property). "Economism is a form of ethnocentrism," Bourdieu wrote. It removes the elements of time and uncertainty from symbolically organized exchange; it desocializes transactions leaving, as Bourdieu follows Marx (and Carlyle) in saying, no other nexus between man and man than "callous cash payment". It treats pre-capitalist economies through the categories and concepts proper to capitalism.[40] Among other things, this means introducing what Bourdieu calls "monothetic" reason, in which analysts imagine that 'social' can only mean or actors only intend one thing at a time. Precapitalist thought in general, and much ordinary thought even in capitalist societies is, Bourdieu suggests, polythetic, constantly deploying multiple meanings of the same object. "Practice has a logic which is not that of the logician."[41] It puts symbols and knowledge together "practically," that is, in a philosophically unrigorous but convenient way for practical use.

Bourdieu devoted a good deal of effort to challenging such economism. But he did this not to suggest an alternative view of human nature in which competition did not matter so much as an alternative view of the social world in which other kinds of "goods" and relationships were the objects of investment and accumulation. This led him into the influential idea of different partially convertible forms of capital: notably cultural, social, and symbolic.

> The social world can be conceived as a multi-dimensional space that can be constructed empirically by discovering the main factors of differentiation which account for the differences observed in a given social universe, or, in other words, by discovering the powers or forms *of capital* which are or can become efficient, like aces in a game of cards, in this particular universe, that is, in the struggle (or

[39] See Bourdieu *Les structures sociales de l'économie,* which takes up but moves well beyond arguments about 'embeddedness' following Polanyi.
[40] *Logic of Practice*, pp. 112-3.
[41] *Logic*, p. 86. Compare Pascal's most famous line, "The heart has its reasons, of which reason is ignorant."

> competition) for the appropriation of scarce goods of which this universe is the site. It follows that the structure of this space is given by the distribution of the various forms of capital, that is, by the distribution of the properties which are active within the universe under study--those properties capable of conferring strength, power and consequently profit on their holder. ... these fundamental social powers are, according to my empirical investigations, firstly *economic* capital, in its various kinds; secondly *cultural* capital or better, informational capital, again in its different kinds; and thirdly two forms of capital that are very strongly correlated, *social* capital, which consists of resources based on connections and group membership, and *symbolic* capital, which is the form the different types of capital take once they are perceived and recognized as legitimate.[42]

Economic capital is that which is "immediately and directly convertible into money."[43] Educational credentials (cultural capital) or social connections (social capital) can only be converted indirectly, through engagement in activities that involve longer-term relationships: employment, family and marriage, etc. Different social fields create and value specific kinds of capital, and if economic capital has a certain primacy for Bourdieu, it is not dominant in all fields and its role may in varying degree be denied or misrecognized.

Bourdieu's analytic focus is more on showing that what economism takes as the universal characteristic of human nature—material, individual self-interest—is in fact historically arbitrary, a particular historical construction. "A general science of the economy of practices," thus, would "not artificially limit itself to those practices that are socially recognized as economic." It would "endeavor to grasp capital, that 'energy of social physics' in all of its different forms, and to uncover the laws that regulate their conversion from one into another."[44] Capital is analogous to energy, thus, and both to power. But, "the existence of symbolic capital, that is, of 'material' capital misrecognized and thus recognized, though it does not invalidate the analogy between capital and energy, does remind us that social science is not a social physics; that the acts of cognition that are implied in misrecognition and recognition are part of social reality and that the socially constituted subjectivity that produces them belongs to objective reality."[45]

Science—including sociology and anthropology—was for Bourdieu a practical enterprise, an active, ongoing practice of research and analysis (*modus operandi*), not simply a body of scholastic principles (*opus operatum*). It was no accident that he titled

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[42] "What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 32 (1987): 1-18, quotation from pp. 3-4.

[43] Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in John G. Richardson, ed., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwood, 1986, pp. 241-58.p. 243.

[44] Bourdieu and Wacquant, *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, p. 118. The reference in quotes is to *Logic*, p. 122, "the capital accumulated by groups, which can be regarded as the energy of social physics, can exist in different kinds."

[45] *Logic*, p. 122.

his book of epistemological and methodological preliminaries *The Craft of Sociology*.[46] The craft worker is always a lover of knowledge; the craft itself is precisely a store of knowledge, yet it is never fully discursive and available for explicit transmission as such. Masters teach their skills by example and coaching, knowing that know-how cannot be reduced to instructions, and never escapes its situated and embodied character. Like *habitus*, "the rules of art" is a phrase that signifies practical knowledge, learning-by-doing, tacit understanding, like the knowledge of cooking embodied in a grandmother's demonstrations and guidance rather than a cookbook. Art can never be reduced to following set rules and yet to say it is without coherence, strategy or intention or not based on social organized and shared knowledge would be to misunderstand it utterly. Neither is science simply the value-free expression of "truth." It is a project, but one organized, ideally, in a social field that rewards the production of verifiable and forever revisable truths—including new truths and new approaches to understanding--and not merely performance according to explicit rules and standards.[47] It is a project that depends crucially on reason as an institutionally embedded and historically achieved capacity, and therefore refuses equally the rationalistic reduction of reason to rules, simple determinism's unreasoned acceptance of the status quo, and the expressive appeal to insight supposedly transcending history and not corrigible by reason.

At the same time, Bourdieu was actively engaged with historical struggles and transformations. He was political throughout his career, though only from the 1990s did he make a primary focus of public activities like marches and the writing of polemical essays. Part of what changed was his openness to a style from which he had distanced himself, decrying the example Sartre set of a "general intellectual" with opinions on everything. But another part of what changed was the context. Bourdieu say the rise of neoliberalism as a basic challenge to the era of the welfare state and economic expansion he had spent most of his career analyzing. The new context and new issues – like the plight of undocumented workers - made protest politics compelling. The failure of the socialist party to rise to the new challenges made them necessary.

In resistance to neoliberalism and related public issues like the rights of immigrants, Bourdieu shifted his personal style of engagement. He marched; he signed petitions; he wrote polemical essays (more than before).[48] But despite the stylistic shifts, Bourdieu's political actions were fully consistent with and understandable in terms of his scientific sociology (see Wacquant 2005). Bourdieu's challenge to threatened collapse between political and economic – and indeed, scientific and economic - fields in the 1990s and early 2000s is of a piece with his rejection of a collapse between academic and political fields in 1968 and both are informed by his theory of quasi-autonomous social

[46] Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Chamboredon and Jean-Claude Passeron, *The Craft of Sociology*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991 ; orig. 1968. If it was an accident that this was Bourdieu's book of 1968, it was nonetheless meaningful, for his response to the crisis of the university was in part to institute a better, more democratic but also professional pursuit of sociological knowledge. See Robbins, *The Work of Pierre Bourdieu*, ch. 5.

[47] Suggested in "The Specificity of the Scientific Field," and discussed at more length in *Pascalian Meditations*.

[48] See XXXX for evidence that this wasn't altogether new despite the suggestion of many of Bourdieu's critics that his campaigns of the late 1990s marked a complete reversal.

fields and by his analysis of the disruption of traditional life and marginalization of former peasants in Algeria.

Bourdieu's analyses thus lay the basis for an empirical science that would address the practices of knowledge at the same time as it produced knowledge of social practice. The issue remained central in his challenge to neoliberalism:

> The implicit philosophy of the economy, and of the rapport between economy and politics, is a political vision that leads to the establishment of an unbreachable frontier between the economic, regulated by the fluid and efficient mechanisms of the market, and the social, home to the unpredictable arbitrariness of tradition, power, and passions.[49]

This "frontier" is reinforced by both academic preconceptions and folk understandings, and structures the apparently objective categories and findings of economic analysis.[50] As the habitus internalizes history and makes it seem natural, so do the categories of academic thought. The production of knowledge structured by such presupposed categories undergirds the failure to take seriously the social costs of neoliberalism, the social conditions on which such an economy depends, and the possibilities of developing less damaging alternatives.

Bourdieu drew on his earlier analyses of how the culturally arbitrary (and often materially unequal) comes to appear as natural and fair to inform his critique of the imposition of neoliberal economic regimes. Rhetoric and specific patterns of social relations and state action were deployed to make it seem necessary to abandon the gains of long social struggles in order to compete with Asia, to integrate with Europe, or to benefit from new technologies. Imposition of the "American model" of dismantling or reducing state institutions was given the appearance of false necessity. And so Bourdieu took care to emphasize another side from his earlier arguments during les trentes glorieuses. He insisted that institutions like education do provide opportunities for ordinary people even while in their existing form they reproduce distinctions like that of ordinary from extraordinary.[51]

In order to contest neoliberal orthodoxy and the paradoxical collapse of much poststructuralism into it, we need to inquire into the very construction of "the social"—that is, of human life understood relationally. Bourdieu's theory is not the last word on this, but it is a crucial starting point for investigating how the social is built and rebuilt in everyday practice, and how the basic categories of knowledge are embedded in this. Bourdieu's work at its most basic is a challenge to false oppositions: the interested and disinterested, the individual and the collective, and the socio-cultural and the economic.

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[49] "L'imposition du modèle américain et ses effets," *Contre-feux 2*, pp. 25-31; p. 29-30.

[50] Bourdieu's understanding of the historical process by which this tacit understanding of market society was established was close to—and indebted to—that of Karl Polanyi. See, e.g., *The Great Transformation*, New York: Rinehart, 1944.

[51] See Bourdieu, "The essence of neoliberalism," *Le Monde diplomatique (English edition)*, December, 1998: 1-7.

"A presupposition which is the basis of all the presuppositions of economics" is that "a radical separation is made between the economic and the social, which is left to one side, abandoned to sociologists, as a kind of reject"[52] This in turn undergirds "a political vision that leads to the establishment of an unbreachable frontier between the economic, regulated by the fluid and efficient mechanisms of the market, and the social, home to the unpredictable arbitrariness of tradition, power, and passions.[53] Economics is able to claim a falsely asocial (and acultural) individual subject, and the social (including culture) is posited as the non-economic realm (the realm at once the economically unimportant and of the pure aesthetic--never a true commodity but claimable only after the fact as an economic good). When the production of knowledge is structured by such presupposed categories, failure to take seriously the social costs of neoliberalism, the social conditions on which such an economy depends, and the possibilities of developing less damaging alternatives is almost inevitable.

Indeed, it was as a social scientist that Bourdieu in the last years of his life turned to analyze the impacts of neoliberal globalization on culture, politics, and society. "The social sciences, which alone can unmask and counter the completely new strategies of domination which they sometimes help to inspire and to arm, will more than ever have to choose which side they are on: either they place their rational instruments of knowledge at the service of ever more rationalized domination, or they rationally analyse domination and more especially the contribution which rational knowledge can make to *de facto* monopolization of the profits of universal reason."[54] Though he was accused of simply adopting the mediatic throne Sartre and Foucault had occupied before—and certainly he never fully escaped from that mediatic version of politics--he offered a different definition of what a "public intellectual" might be. Citing the American term, he wrote of "one who relies in political struggle on his competence and specific authority, and the values associated with the exercise of his profession, like the values of truth or disinterest, or, in other terms, someone who goes onto the terrain of politics without abandoning the requirements and competences of the researcher".[55] He contrasts such a "specific intellectual" to the "general intellectual" (Sartre was the obvious model) who spoke on all matters claiming a right conferred more by personal eminence or authenticity than by professional expertise or perspective. If the tradition of Zola legitimates intellectual as political forces in France, it was nonetheless important to recognize the difference between simply claiming a new sort of aristocratic-clerical right to speak in public, and bringing analyses with specific scholarly bases into public debate.

Bourdieu was famous long before the struggle against neliberal globalization of the 1990s. In June 1968, some students had actually carried copies of his book, *The Inheritors*, onto the barricades. But Bourdieu had stayed more or less apart from that

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[52] Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance,* p. 31. Bourdieu's emphasis was especially on the separation of the economic from both the social and the cultural, but the opposition of the latter two can also be equally pernicious, as in specious ideas of division of labor between sociology and anthropology in the US, or the construction of "sociology of culture" within American sociology—rather than, say the "cultural sociology" of central Europe.

[53] Bourdieu, *Contre-feux II.* Paris: Raisons d'Agir, 2001, pp. 29-30.

[54] *Pascalian Meditations,* p. 83-4.

[55] Bourdieu, *Contre-feux II*, p. 33.

struggle, turning his attention to scientific—albeit critical--research. Some of this research produced *Homo Academicus*, a book partly about the relationship between the university microcosm and the larger field of power in 1968, but the book appeared over fifteen years later.[56] One reason Bourdieu was not a vocal public activist in 1968 was that he did not think the crucial issues of power and inequality were well-joined in the struggles of that year. Neither their romanticism nor the predominant versions of Marxism appealed to him, and he resisted especially leftist tendencies to collapse the scientific and political fields. Moreover, he worried that naïve overoptimism encouraged actions that would set back rather than advance the causes of liberation and knowledge. Not least of all, there was a superabundance of symbolically prominent intellectuals in 1968. By the early 1990s this was no longer so. Sartre and Foucault were both dead, and a number of others had abandoned the public forum or simply appeared small within it.

Basic to Bourdieu's interventions as a public intellectual, in this sense, was the importance of creating the possibility of collective choice where the dominant discourse described only the impositions of necessity. In the context of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, for example, Bourdieu challenged the idea that the choices of European citizens were limited to passivity before the horrors of ethnic cleansing or support for the American-led NATO policy of high-altitude bombing.[57] More prominently, especially from the early 1990s, Bourdieu worked to protect the achievements of the social struggles of the twentieth century -- pensions, job security, open access to higher education and other provisions of the social state -- against budget cuts and other attacks in the name of free markets and international competition. In the process, he became one of the world's most famous critics of neoliberal globalization.[58] He challenged the neoliberal idea that a specific model of reduction in state action, enhancement of private property, and freedom for capital was a necessary response to globalization (itself conceived as a quasi-natural force).

Calling this the "American model" annoyed Americans who wished to distance themselves from government and corporate policies. The label nonetheless captured a worldwide trend toward commodification, state deregulation, and competitive individualism exemplified and aggressively promoted by the dominant class of the United States at the end of the 20th century. Bourdieu identified this American model with five features of American culture and society which were widely proposed as necessary to successful globalization in other contexts: (1) a weak state, (2) an extreme development of the spirit of capitalism, and (3) the cult of individualism, (4) exaltation of dynamism for its own sake, and (5) neo-Darwinism with its notion of self-help.[59]

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[56] Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus,* op. cit.
[57] See, e.g., *Interventions,* pp. 279-80.
[58] Bourdieu published a host of essays collected in *Acts of Resistance*, *Firing Back,* and *Interventions.* Bourdieu's essays were only a part of his struggle "against the tyranny of the market". He gave speeches and interviews, appeared on the radio and at public demonstrations, launched a non-party network of progressive social scientists called *Raisons d'agir* (Reasons to act), and helped to forge links among intellectuals, cultural producers and trade-union activists.
[59] Bourdier, *Contre-feux II,* pp. 25-31.

Whatever the label, Bourdieu meant the view that institutions developed out of a long century of social struggles should be scrapped if they could not meet the test of market viability. Many of these, including schools and universities, are state institutions. As he demonstrated in much of his work, they are far from perfect. Nonetheless, collective struggles have grudgingly and gradually opened them to a degree to the dominated, workers, women, ethnic minorities, and others. These institutions and this openness are fragile social achievements that open up the possibility of more equality and justice, and to sacrifice them is to step backwards, whether this step is masked by a deterministic analysis of the "market" or a naked assertion of self-interest by the wealthy and powerful. This does not mean that defense must be blind, but it does mean that resistance to neoliberal globalization, even when couched in the apparently backward-looking rhetoric of nationalism, can be a protection of genuine gains and indeed, a protection of the public space for further progressive struggles.

Bourdieu was concerned above all that the social institutions that supported reason—by providing scholars, scientists, artists, and writers, with a measure of autonomy--were under unprecedented attack. Reduction to the market threatened to undermine science; reduction to the audience-ratings logic of television entertainment threatened to undermine public discourse. "If one wants to go beyond preaching, then it is necessary to implement practically … the *Realpolitik* of reason aimed at setting up or reinforcing, within the political field, the mechanisms capable of imposing the sanctions, as far as possible automatic ones, that would tend to discourage deviations from the democratic norm (such as the corruption of elected representatives) and to encourage or impose the appropriate behaviors; aimed also at favouring the setting up of non-distorted social structures of communication between the holders of power and the citizens, in particular though a constant struggle for the independence of the media."[60] The problem was not internationalization as such. Bourdieu himself called forcefully for a new internationalism, saw science as an international endeavor, and founded *Liber*, a European review of books published in six languages. The problem was the presentation of a particular modality of "globalization" as a force of necessity to which there was no alternative but adaptation and acceptance.

In his own life, Bourdieu recognized, it was not merely talent and effort that propelled his extraordinary ascent from rural Béarn to the Collège de France, but also state scholarships, social rights, and educational access to the closed world of "culture." This recognition did not stop him from critical analysis. He showed how the classificatory systems operating in these institutions of state, culture, and education all served to exercise symbolic violence as well as and perhaps more than to open opportunities. But he also recognized the deep social investment in such institutions that was inescapably inculcated in people whose life trajectories depended them: "what individuals and groups invest in the particular meaning they give to common classificatory systems by the use they make of them is infinitely more than their 'interest' in the usual sense of the term; it is their whole social being, everything which defines their own idea of themselves…"[61]

[60] *Pascalian Meditations*, p. 126.
[61] *Distinction*, p. 478.

Neoliberal reforms, thus, not only threaten some people with material economic harms, they threaten social institutions that enable people to make sense of their lives. That these institutions are flawed is a reason to transform them (and the classificatory schemes central to their operation and reproduction). It is not a basis for imagining that people can live without them, especially in the absence of some suitable replacements. Moreover, the dismantling of such institutions is specifically disempowering, not only economically depriving. That is, it not only takes away material goods in which people have an "interest", it undercuts their ability to make sense of their social situation and create solidarities with others.

A central strength of global capitalism is its ability to control the terms of discourse, and most especially, to present the specific emerging forms of globalization as both inevitable and progressive. Consider the force of this message in the rhetoric of the European Union and the advocates of a common currency. Globalization appears as a determinant force, an inevitable necessity to which Europeans must adapt; capitalism appears as its essential character; the American model is commonly presented as the 'normal' if not the only model. Yet European unification is held to be liberal, cosmopolitan, and progressive.[62] To assert as Bourdieu did that the specific pattern of international relations—like relations within nations—is the result of the exercise of power is to open up the game, to remove the illusion of necessity. To reveal the power being wielded and reproduced when apparently open political choices are structured by a symbolic order organized to the benefit of those in dominant positions, whether or not they are fully aware of what they do, is to challenge the efficacy of doxic understandings. These are basic acts of critical theory, and both consistent with and informed by Bourdieu's work since his early Algerian studies.

Conclusion

Bourdieu's approach was to rethink major philosophical themes and issues by means of empirical observation and analyses rooted in "a practical sense of theoretical things" rather than through purely theoretical disquisition.[63] Only relatively late, in *Pascalian Meditations,* did he offer a systematic explication of his conception of social knowledge, being, and truth. In this book, he started once again with the premise that the knowledge produced by social analysts must be related to the conditions of intellectual work and to the peculiar dispositions fostered by the scholastic universe. He laid out his philosophical anthropology, in which human action is guided not by "interests" but by the struggle for practical efficacy and pursuit of recognition, whose form will be determined by particular locations in collective and individual histories. He clarified his agonistic view of the social world, anchored not by the notion of "reproduction" but by that of

[62] Bourdieu, "The Myth of 'Globalization' and the European Welfare State," pp. 29-44 in *Acts of Resistance.* Also, Calhoun, "The Democratic Integration of Europe: Interests, Identity, and the Public Sphere," in M. Berezin and M. Schain, eds., *Remapping Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, forthcoming; "The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism," in Daniele Archibugi, ed. *Debating Cosmopolitics*. London: Verso, 2002.
[63] Brubaker, "Social Theory as Habitus," Pp. 212-234 in C. Calhoun, E. LiPuma, and M. Postone, eds.: *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

struggle (itself internally linked to recognition). And he showed why epistemic--as distinguished from narcissistic—reflexivity mandates a commitment to "historical rationalism," and not relativism.

"Historical rationalism" was a theme from Bourdieu's teachers Bachelard, Vuillemin, and Canguilhem (who also shaped many others of his "poststructuralist" generation including Foucault and Derrida). Bourdieu's debt to it helps us see why, even while he was an important master of structuralist analysis, he also rejected the structuralist refusal of history. Bourdieu was not a theorist of deep epistemic ruptures (like Foucault in 1966). Rather he wrestled with the complexities of partial transformation and partial reproduction; with the multiple, ubiquitous temporalities of social life; and with the embeddedness of knowledge itself in historical practice.

Bourdieu's distinctive concepts were developed largely as tools with which to grasp these transformations, resistance to each, and the possibilities each opened up. He drew on important intellectual influences from Marx, Weber, and Durkheim through Mauss, Merleau-Ponty, and Lévi-Strauss.

Bourdieu's work on Algeria stresses the tension between the relatively undifferentiated traditional order and development conceived as transition to a society in which the economic field had a kind of differentiated autonomy. His later arguments against neoliberal globalization, by contrast, focus on the threats posed by dedifferentiation, a loss of autonomy by fields other than the economy. There are common threads: crucially, the lack of preparation of large segments of the population for the new conditions and the introduction of new inequalities without systems of social reciprocity to mitigate their effects. But Bourdieu does not offer a strong account of how and why economic capital should have its distinctive powers, and to what extent these are specific to or take a distinctive form in societies that can be called "capitalist".[64] Perhaps it is simply the one-sided focus on certain sorts of social practices and values—those designated properly economic in capitalism—that both constitutes capitalism and makes it powerful (as well as dangerous).

Bourdieu's public interventions were, however, firmly rooted in his sociological analyses. Indeed, it was his theory of social fields—honed in studies of the religious field, the legal field, and the field of cultural production--that informed his defense of the autonomy (always only relative) of the scientific field from market pressure. His theory of the multiple forms of capital—cultural and social as well as economic—suggested that these were indirectly convertible but if they were reduced to simple equivalence cultural and social capital lost their specificity and efficacy. And his early studies in Algeria showed the corrosive impact of unbridled extension of market forces.

[64] See Calhoun, "Habitus, Field, and Capital."