The Legacy of Pierre Bourdieu
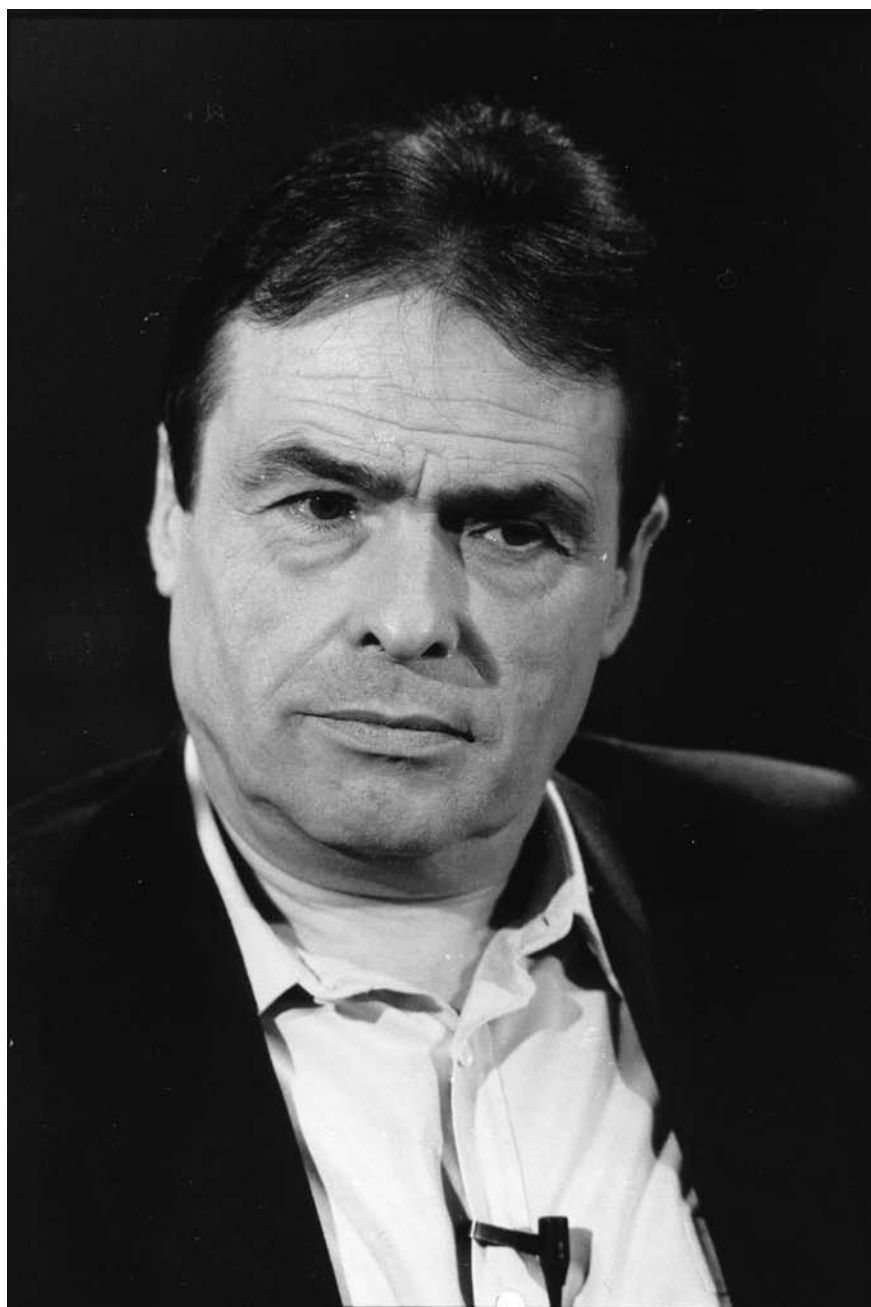
The Legacy of Pierre Bourdieu

Critical Essays

Edited by
Simon Susen and Bryan S. Turner

CONTENTS

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Lisa Adkins is Professor of Sociology at the University of Newcastle, Australia. Her contributions to Sociology fall into three main areas: the sociology of economic life (especially the sociology of postindustrial economies and the new political economy), social and cultural theory, and the sociology of gender and sexuality. Some key publications include *Revisions: Gender and Sexuality in Late Modernity* (Open University, 2002), *Feminism After Bourdieu* (edited with B. Skeggs, Blackwell, 2005), and a Special Issue (co-edited with Celia Lury) in the *European Journal of Social Theory* on the theme of 'What is the Empirical?' (2009). Her recent work focuses on changing temporalities of labour and value in contemporary capitalism.

Mauro Basaure is Assistant Professor at the Instituto de Humanidades, Universidad Diego Portales, in Santiago de Chile, and he is a member of the Groupe de Sociologie Politique et Morale at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, France. He received his PhD from the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt, Germany. He was previously at the University of Chile, where he studied sociology (1993–9) receiving his MA in political philosophy (2000–2). He was a Research Fellow at the Institute for Social Research, Frankfurt (2004–9), where he initiated the International Study Group for Critical Theory, and at the Lateinamerika Institut of the Freie Universität Berlin (2003). His areas of research and teaching include social theory, critical theory, contemporary French sociology and political philosophy. He recently edited *Erneuerung der Kritik. Axel Honneth im Gespräch* (New York, Frankfurt: Campus, 2009) (together with Jan Philipp Reemtsma and Rasmus Willig) and *Foucault et la psychanalyse* (Paris: Le Félin, 2009) (together with Emmanuel Gripay and Ferhat Taylan), and he published *Foucault y el psicoanálisis. Gramática de un malentendido* (Santiago: Cuarto Propio, 2011).

Mustafa Emirbayer is Professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He is the author of 'Manifesto for a Relational Sociology' (AJS 1997); his most recent articles include 'Bourdieu and Organizational

Analysis' (with Victoria Johnson) and 'What is Racial Domination?' (with Matthew Desmond).

Bridget Fowler is an Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Glasgow. She specialises in social theory, Marxist feminism and the sociology of culture. A long-term interest has been the thought of Pierre Bourdieu, whose ideas she has taken up in various books: *The Alienated Reader* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991); *Pierre Bourdieu and Cultural Theory: Critical Investigations* (Sage, 1997), and (edited) *Reading Bourdieu on Society and Culture* (Blackwell, 2000). She is at present applying Bourdieusian theory to the study of obituaries, addressing critically what is sometimes identified as the contemporary 'golden age of the obituary' (see Fowler, *The Obituary as Collective Memory,* Routledge, 2007).

Bruno Frère is Research Associate at the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (Belgium). He previously worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Cambridge, and he currently teaches at Sciences Po Paris and at the University of Liège. He received his PhD from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and has published on a variety of topics: political sociology, political philosophy, social theory, and the history of social sciences. He recently published a monograph on the history of social movements and alternative economy (*Le nouvel esprit solidaire*, Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 2009) and a book (with M. Jacquemain) on sociological theories in the late twentieth century (*Epistémologie de la sociologie, paradigmes pour le 21e siècle*, Bruxelles: De Boeck, 2008).

Bart van Heerikhuizen is Associate Professor in Sociology at the University of Amsterdam. Along with Nico Wilterdink, he wrote the market-leading 'Introduction to Sociology' textbook in the Dutch language (*Samenlevingen, inleiding in de sociologie.* Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1985), which is now in its sixth edition.

Hans Joas is Permanent Fellow at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS), University of Freiburg, and Professor of Sociology and member of the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. He is a regular member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, nonresident fellow of the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, and Vice President of the International Sociological Association (2006–10). Among his recent publications in English are *Do We Need Religion? On the Experience of Self-Transcendence* (2008), *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures* (with Wolfgang Knöbl, 2009), and the

two coedited volumes, *The Cultural Values of Europe* (with Klaus Wiegandt, 2008) and *Secularization and the World Religions* (with Klaus Wiegandt, 2009).

Bruno Karsenti is Directeur d'études at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris and Director of the Marcel Mauss Institute. He has taught in the areas of political philosophy, epistemology, and the philosophy of the social sciences at the Universities of Lyon and Paris-Sorbonne. His most recent publications include *Politique de l'esprit. Auguste Comte et la naissance de la science sociale* (Paris: Hermann, 2006) and *La société en personnes. Études durkheimiennes* (Paris: Economica, 2006). He is Editor of two-book series, *Pratiques théoriques* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France) and *Raisons pratiques* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales).

Wolfgang Knöbl is Professor of Sociology at the Georg-August-University Göttingen. Together with Hans Joas, he wrote *Kriegsverdrängung. Ein Problem in der Geschichte der Sozialtheorie* (2008) and *Social Theory. Twenty Introductory Lectures* (2009). In 2007, he published *Die Kontingenz der Moderne. Wege in Europa, Asien und Amerika.*

Hans-Herbert Kögler is Professor of Philosophy and Chair of the Department of Philosophy at the University of North Florida, Jacksonville. A frequent guest-professor at the Alpe-Adria University in Klagenfurt, Austria, his work explores the hermeneutic foundations of social science and critical theory, theories of agency, language, and power, as well as intercultural understanding and cosmopolitanism. Major publications include *The Power of Dialogue: Critical Hermeneutics after Gadamer and Foucault,* (1999), *Michel Foucault* (2nd edition, 2004), *Kultura, Kritika, Dialog* (Prague, 2006), and the co-edited volume *Empathy and Agency: The Problem of Understanding in the Human Sciences* (2000). In 1997 the journal *Social Epistemology* dedicated a special issue to Kögler's 'Alienation as Epistemological Source: Reflexivity and Social Background after Mannheim and Bourdieu'.

Bowen Paulle is an Assistant Professor in Sociology at the University of Amsterdam. He is involved in policy ethnography centred around efforts to desegregate schools and is author of *Toxic Schools* (under contract, University of Chicago Press).

Andreas Pfeuffer studied sociology, history, and Latin, and is currently working as a Research Assistant at the Institute for Social Research in Hamburg, where he is involved in a comparative research project on public services in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. He has translated various works by

Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Castel, Michael Pollak, Serge Paugam, Luc Boltanski, and Laurent Thévenot into German.

Keijo Rahkonen is Adjunct Professor of Social Policy and Head of the Department of Social Research at the University of Helsinki. He is also Director of the research project 'Cultural Capital and Social Differentiation in Contemporary Finland: An International Comparison', which is funded by the Research Council for Culture and Society at the Academy of Finland. He has been Visiting Research Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science, UK, and at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. His recent publications include 'Bourdieu in Finland' (*Sociologica: Italian Journal of Sociology Online*, 2008) and 'Nordic Democracy of Taste? Cultural Omnivorousness in Musical and Literary Taste Preferences in Finland' (with Jukka Gronow and Semi Purhonen, in *Poetics: Journal of Empirical Research on Culture, the Media and the Arts*, 2010).

Derek Robbins is Professor of International Social Theory in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of East London. He is the author of *The Work of Pierre Bourdieu* (1991) and of *Bourdieu and Culture* (2000). He is also the editor of two four-volume collections of articles on Bourdieu in the Sage Masters of Contemporary Social Thought series (2000 and 2005) and of a three-volume collection of articles on Lyotard in the same series (2004). His *On Bourdieu, Education and Society* was published by Bardwell Press, Oxford, in 2006, and he was the editor of the Special Issue of *Theory, Culture and Society* on Bourdieu (Volume 23, Number 6, 2006). He is currently writing *The Internationalization of French Social Thought, 1950–2000* for publication by Sage.

Franz Schultheis is Professor of Sociology at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. He also taught at the Universities of Constance, Paris V, Neuchâtel, and Geneva. He is President of the Bourdieu Foundation and has edited many of Pierre Bourdieu's writings in German. He specialises in the sociology of labour, the sociology of social change, the sociology of popular culture, and the sociology of social structure. Amongst his recent publications are the following: Franz Schultheis, Berthold Vogel and Michael Gemperle (eds.) *Ein halbes Leben: Biographische Zeugnisse aus einer Arbeitswelt im Umbruch* (Konstanz: UVK, 2010) and Franz Schultheis, *Bourdieus Wege in die Soziologie* (Konstanz: UVK, 2007).

Yves Sintomer is Professor of Political Science at Paris 8 University, Guest Professor at Lausanne University, and Invited Researcher at Neuchâtel

University. He received his PhD in Social and Political Sciences from the European University Institute, Florence, and has a Habilitation to direct research (Paris 5 University). He studied at Paris 8, Paris 10, the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University Frankfurt, and at Harvard University. He was Deputy Director of the Marc Bloch Centre in Berlin, and he has held academic positions in various countries (Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Italy, and Spain). Together with Hans Peter-Müller, he co-edited *Pierre Bourdieu. Théorie et pratique* (Paris: La Découverte, 2006). He is author of *La démocratie impossible? Politique et modernité chez Weber et Habermas* (Paris: La Découverte, 1999). His work has been translated into thirteen languages.

Simon Susen is Lecturer in Social and Political Theory at Birkbeck College, University of London. He previously worked as a Lecturer in Sociology at Newcastle University (2008–10) and as a Lecturer in Sociology at Goldsmiths College, University of London (2007–8). He received his PhD from the University of Cambridge and studied sociology, politics, and philosophy at a range of international universities and research centres, including the University of Edinburgh, the Colegio de México, the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales in Mexico City, and the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. With John O'Neill and Bryan S. Turner, he is Editor of the *Journal of Classical Sociology*. He is author of *The Foundations of the Social: Between Critical Theory and Reflexive Sociology* (Oxford: Bardwell Press, 2007).

Bryan S. Turner is the Presidential Professor of Sociology at CUNY and Director of the Committee on Religion. He is concurrently the Director of the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies at the University of Western Sydney, Australia. He was the Alona Evans Distinguished Visiting Professor of Sociology at Wellesley College (2009–10), and in recent years he has held Professorships at the National University of Singapore and the University of Cambridge. Together with Engin Isin, he is Editor of the journal *Citizenship Studies*. He recently edited *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory* (2009), *The Routledge Handbook of Globalization Studies* (2009), and *The New Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion* (2010).

Loïc Wacquant is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, and Researcher at the Centre de sociologie européenne, Paris. A MacArthur Prize Fellow and the recipient of the 2008 Lewis Coser Award of the American Sociological Association, his interests span urban inequality and marginality, incarnation, the penal state, ethnoracial domination, and

social theory and the politics of reason. He is a co-founder and past editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Ethnography* and was a regular contributor to *Le Monde Diplomatique* from 1994 to 2004. His recent books include *Body and Soul: Notebooks of An Apprentice Boxer* (2004), *The Mystery of Ministry: Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics* (2005), *Das Janusgesicht des Ghettos* (2006), *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality* (2008), and *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity* (2009).

INTRODUCTION

Preliminary Reflections on the Legacy of Pierre Bourdieu

Simon Susen and Bryan S. Turner

Unsurprisingly, the Second World War had separate and distinctive consequences for different national traditions of sociology. After the War, the dominant and arguably most successful of the Western democracies emerged in North America, and its sociological traditions assumed a celebratory and often triumphalist perspective on modernisation. The defeat of the fascist nations – notably Germany, Italy, and Japan – seemed to demonstrate the superiority of Western liberal democratic systems, and North American sociologists took the lead in developing theories of development and modernisation that were optimistic and forward-looking. The examples are numerous, but we might mention Daniel Lerner's *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958) or S. M. Lipset's *The First New Nation* (1963). At the centre of this post-war tradition stood *The Social System* of Talcott Parsons (1951), which involved the notion that systems could continuously and successfully adapt to environmental challenges through the master processes of differentiation and adaptive upgrading. In many of his short essays, he analysed the problems of German and Japanese modernisation and saw the United States of America as a social system that had successfully adapted to the rise of industrial modernisation. In its assessment of modern society, Parsons's sociology avoided the pessimistic vision of early critical theory – epitomised in Adorno's analysis of mass society – because he looked forward to America as a 'lead society' in large-scale social development (see Holton and Turner, 1986).

It is also the case that, in general terms, North American sociologists did not show much interest in European sociology, especially with regard to its more critical and negative assessments of modern capitalism. Parsons, of course, translated Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and published the first English version in 1930, but he did not focus on Weber's bleak and pessimistic view of the iron cage. He did not perceive

the figure of Nietzsche behind Weber. Subsequently, Parsons's reception of Weber was much criticised by writers who sought to 'de-Parsonise' Weber. Later, in 1947, Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills brought out *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, which showed an increased interest in Weber's writings on the state, bureaucracy, power, and authority. Although other North American sociologists – such as Lewis Coser in his *Masters of Sociological Thought* (1971) – were appreciative of the European legacy, most North American sociologists looked to their own traditions, in particular to the Chicago School, pragmatism, and symbolic interactionism. Their 'founding fathers' were Mead, Park, and Thomas, rather than Marx, Weber, and Durkheim.

This gap between a critical-pessimistic Western European sociology and a progressive-optimistic North American sociology persists to a significant extent today. To take one example, Jeffrey C. Alexander has been at the forefront of the study of the European tradition, but his recent work *The Civil Sphere* (2006) has a characteristic positive conclusion based on the view that various social movements in North American history – notably the women's movement and the civil rights movement – as well as the incorporation of the Jewish community into North American public life testify to the success, flexibility, and robustness of political liberalism in general and American liberalism in particular. There has been a long tradition of critical writing in North American sociology; yet, naturally enough, its focus has been on migration and immigrants, the 'racial' divide, the civil rights movement, and US imperialism in Latin America. By contrast, in European sociology after the mid-twentieth century, the Left was preoccupied with both empirical and conceptual problems that emerged from the legacy of Marxism, such as social class and class consciousness, the role of the state in capitalism, and the role of ideology in class societies – to mention only a few. While 1968 had an impact on both sides of the Atlantic, its meaning in the European context was somewhat different (Sica and Turner, 2005). As shall be explained in the chapter on Pierre Bourdieu's treatment of religion, one clear difference between Western European and North American sociology can be described as follows: whereas Western European sociologists – such as the British sociologist Bryan Wilson – mapped the steady decline of religion in the modern world in the secularisation thesis, North American sociologists were inclined to record the resilience of religion and its essential contribution to the North American way of life, as in the works of Talcott Parsons, Will Herberg, Liston Pope, and Gerhard E. Lenski.

Across the Atlantic, although Britain had emerged successfully from the Second World War, European Anglophone sociology was not especially optimistic or triumphant. The British Empire, which had been in decline since the end of the Victorian period, was finally pulled apart by the war effort, and even the Commonwealth survived only as a fragile reminder of the past. Under

the guidance of Harold Macmillan, Britain began to abandon its imperial relationship with its colonies and accepted Macmillan's view of 'the wind of change blowing through the [African] continent', expressed in his famous speech of 1963. Mainstream British sociology was realistic and reformist, rather than optimistic and utopian. In fact, it could be regarded as the parallel of Keynesian economics in focusing on issues around social insurance. Once more, Macmillan had perhaps been prescient in recognising the dawn of modern consumerism in his 1959 election campaign slogan: 'Most of our people have never had it so good'. This mood of gradual reconstruction was captured in sociology by key figures such as Thomas H. Marshall and Richard M. Titmuss, who wrote influential works on social citizenship and welfare reform. Their influence was originally confined to Britain, where the LSE was the dominant institution in the social sciences. Other influential figures within this reformist framework were Michael Young and Peter Willmott, who published their famous investigations of family life in the London East End in the 1950s.

British social science had been blessed by a wave of migrant intellectuals in the twentieth century, particularly by the Jewish refugees who arrived in the 1930s and later, such as Ilya Neustadt and Norbert Elias, both of whom played a major role in creating what became the famous 'Leicester School' (Rojek, 2004). In political philosophy, the dominant figure was Isaiah Berlin, who was fundamentally critical of Marxism and distrustful of sociology, and indeed of any theory that promoted the idea of historical determinism or of the causal priority of 'society' over the 'individual'. By the late 1960s, other émigrés became influential, especially John Rex, who developed conflict theory along Weberian lines, and Ralf Dahrendorf, who combined Weber and Marx in his famous *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (1959). Both thinkers were deeply critical of Parsons and more generally of North American sociology. Rex's *Key Problems in Sociological Theory* (1961), which contained an important criticism of functionalism, became a basic textbook of undergraduate British sociology. Other critical assessments were delivered by Tom Bottomore (1965) in *Classes in Modern Society* and by David Lockwood (1964) in his article 'Social Integration and System Integration' and, much later, in his book *Solidarity and Schism* (1992). British sociology in the 1960s came to be identified with various radical movements, such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the anti-Apartheid campaign. This political mood of criticism and activism was reflected in Alan Dawe's powerful article 'The Two Sociologies', which was published in the *British Journal of Sociology* in 1970 and in which he argued that Parsons's systems theory ruled out agency and was based on a conservative conception of society. With the principal exception of Roland Robertson, few British sociologists were receptive to North American sociology in general and to Parsonian sociology in particular.

In France, the impact of war was much more profound, and in the post-war period the country was socially polarised and politically divided. The French Left accused many national institutions and traditions of effectively playing the role of the unwelcome and unchanged remainders of Vichy France, while Marxism, as the predominant ideology of the French Communist Party, had a strong impact on post-war French sociology and philosophy. French intellectuals grappled more than most with the issues of politics and ethics to question the relationship of the individual to society and the ultimate bases of ethical responsibility. Jean-Paul Sartre exercised enormous influence over these debates through his lectures at the École normale supérieure, through newspapers such as *Les Temps modernes*, and through the Communist Party. Aspiring French intellectuals had to weigh themselves against the legacy of Sartre. As a consequence, questions about humanism, the self, and power became dominant issues, notably in the works of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu (Luxon, 2008).

France, unlike Britain, became involved in two major and unsuccessful colonial wars, one in Vietnam and one in Algeria. Whereas Britain abandoned its colonial past without protracted colonial conflicts, France was divided and traumatised by its attempts to secure its presence in Indo-China and North Africa. British colonial struggles in Suez and clashes with native anti-colonial movements such as Mau Mau were, unlike the war in Algeria, relatively short-lived. The result was that Marxist sociology played a far more dominant role in French intellectual life than was the case in Britain and North America. In the post-war period, sociological debate was shaped by key figures such as Louis Althusser (1969 [1965]) and Nicos Poulantzas (1978 [1978]), both of whom developed innovative readings of Karl Marx that were designed to replace 'bourgeois sociology'. While Raymond Aron (2002) was a major figure in both politics and French intellectual life, he had few disciples and did not create a school. In addition, his work has been important in political, rather than in sociological, theory. At a later stage, Michel Foucault (1980) emerged as another significant figure with an international audience.

While French sociology has had enormous influence beyond France, the outside world has had little impact on French sociology and philosophy. Foucault, for example, was largely ignorant of the work of Max Weber, despite certain similarities in their interests and approach: for instance, one can see a parallel between Weber's writings on 'personality and life orders' and Foucault's writings on 'subjectivity and disciplinary orders'. And, of course, both thinkers were heavily influenced by Nietzsche. Few French sociologists worked abroad or seriously engaged with Anglo-American sociology. Exceptions include not only Foucault and Aron, but also Raymond Boudon (1980 [1971]), who worked with Paul Lazarsfeld and Michel Crozier. The only significant French

interpretation of Parsons was provided by François Bourricaud (1981 [1977]) in *The Sociology of Talcott Parsons*. French social scientists carved out a rich tradition of their own, but it remained largely sealed off from the rest of the world. In epistemological terms, they were often sceptical about, or hostile towards, Anglo-Saxon traditions based on empiricism or positivism, and in political terms they were often hostile to Anglo-Saxon liberalism. The leading figures of French intellectual life were resolutely anti-American, Sartre being a primary example. Boudon and Aron are the exceptions to this norm. Interestingly, they were both appreciative of Alexis de Tocqueville's interpretation of American democracy. Aron included de Tocqueville in his *Main Currents in Sociological Thought* (1965), and Boudon published a study of de Tocqueville in English. Conversely, it was some time before Americans recognised the value of French sociological work – for example, the importance of Crozier's *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon* (1964 [1963]) and of Bourdieu and Passeron's *The Inheritors* (1979 [1964]).

While it may be argued that French sociology was intellectually isolated from the outside world, it is crucial to acknowledge one curious – and in many respects problematic – exogenous influence: the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Despite Heidegger's active and complicit involvement in German fascism, he was profoundly influential in post-war French thinking – particularly in philosophy. Heidegger's 'anti-humanism' was influential in the intellectual development of Foucault; and Jacques Derrida, deeply influenced by Heidegger, came to his defence over the persistent accusations of his fascist commitment. In an interview in *Ethos* in 1983, Foucault confessed that '[his] entire philosophical development was determined by [his] reading of Heidegger' (see Didier Eribon's *Michel Foucault*, 1992 [1989]: 30). Sociology was a late development in the French university system, and many academics who became sociologists had been trained in philosophy. Consequently, philosophy has played a much more significant role in Francophone than in Anglophone sociology. It is certainly the case that the often hidden and disguised influence of Heidegger is one of the distinctive features of French sociology.

The differences between Anglophone and Francophone – as well as between North American and Western European – academic traditions are, to a large extent, the outcome of vastly dissimilar experiences of mass warfare, occupation, and liberation. These historical differences between North American and West European sociological traditions continue to produce important forms of divergence in research traditions. North American sociology is supported by a powerful professional body, namely the American Sociological Association; sociology in France and Britain, by contrast, has been more fragmented, devolved, and to some extent even marginalised within the university system. In Britain, sociology remains overshadowed by history departments and historical research, which is reflected in the fact that it has mainly flourished

in new universities such as Essex, Lancaster, and Warwick, rather than in the traditional ones. The field of North American sociology is large; national sociology groups in Europe are small. North American sociology is supported by large grants; much European sociology is done with small grants and often depends on observational studies producing qualitative data (Masson, 2008). Although one can list these institutional differences, the divisions between Anglophone and Francophone sociology appear to be the products of long-standing political ideologies and cultural values. This is the socio-historical context within which one has to understand the work of Pierre Bourdieu and the paradigmatic framework within which to discuss his legacy.

Bourdieu was born in Southwest France on 1 August 1930. After training at the École normale supérieure, he was a conscript in the French military in the early years of the Algerian War of Independence (1956–8), but eventually gained a post as an assistant at the University of Algiers. He later published three books relating to his Algerian experiences. These works continue to evoke deep interest in his ethnographic methods, and Bourdieu has been identified subsequently as a 'post-colonial thinker' (see *The Sociological Review – Special Issue: Post-Colonial Bourdieu*, 2009). Unlike that of many previous French sociologists, Bourdieu's work has had a wide and diverse reception. It has played an important part in the 'somaesthetics' developed by Richard Shusterman, who has combined Bourdieu's treatment of practice and habitus with the notion of practice in American pragmatism, notably in his *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (1992) and, to some extent, in his volume *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader* (1999). Bourdieu – in particular since the publication of *Distinction* (1984 [1979]) – has had a major impact on cultural sociology, while his work on the logic of practice has deeply influenced what we may call 'the turn to practice' in anthropology and history. He has had an equally significant role in the development of the sociology of the body (see, for instance, Shilling, 2004; Turner, 1996). In a recent study, Bourdieu's reflexive sociology has been cross-fertilised with Habermas's critical theory (Susen, 2007). In the United States, Bourdieu's work has been promoted and defended, especially by his disciple, Loïc Wacquant, and other major readers have introduced Bourdieu to an American audience – in particular, through the publication of Calhoun, LiPuma, and Postone's edited volume *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives* (1993). There is also little doubt that, in Britain, Bourdieu's work has had a significant impact on the development of the sociology of education – especially Bourdieu and Passeron's *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (1990 [1970]). In British social theory, this aspect of Bourdieu's reception has been thoroughly analysed by Derek Robbins.

It may appear that Bourdieu's sociology is a successful bridge between the Western European 'critical' tradition and the North American

'professionalised' tradition. In our view, however, this bridge is fragile. Obviously, Bourdieu was largely a product of the forces we have identified in our Introduction. Bourdieu, notably in his political views, was stridently anti-American, particularly in his *The Weight of the World* (1999 [1993]). He was unambiguously a public intellectual of the Left, critical of neoliberal economics in global terms and of French domestic policy (for example, towards immigrants). Various chapters in this study of Bourdieu (see esp. chapters 2 and 3) underline the influence of Marx on Bourdieu's thinking. While Bourdieu was significantly influenced by Marx and Durkheim, he was not particularly receptive to American social science, despite the obvious similarities between his ideas about agency and practice and American pragmatism. And while French philosophy was openly influenced by Heidegger, Bourdieu launched an attack on Heidegger's work and the profound impact of his writings in *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger* (1991 [1988]) (see also Bourdieu, 1975). Bourdieu was also influenced, if only to a limited extent, by Weber (see esp. chapter 5). Turner, for instance, examines Bourdieu's deployment of Weber in the sociology of religion (see chapter 10).

Ironically, Bourdieu was, to some extent, the intellectual product of a particular field with its specific cultural capital; in this sense, his sociology was profoundly 'French': his interest in and engagement with Algeria, his sensitivities to migration in general and Muslim migration in particular, his awareness of the competition over political and economic power between Paris and the French regions, and his – at least implicit – anti-Americanism. Yet, Bourdieu also emphasised that *réflexivité* – conceived of as a self-critical position – was an integral component of his own sociological work, and he was conscious of cultural, institutional, and disciplinary boundaries and their tangible impact on the circulation of ideas in the modern world. Was Bourdieu's work able to transcend the French field? And where does his legacy lie? To what extent did he span the divide between classical sociology (Marx, Durkheim, and Weber) and contemporary sociology? Did he cross or provide a bridge between Western European and North American sociology? It is the task of this collection of critical essays to respond to these and similar questions. The volume contains fifteen chapters. The wide range of topics covered in these chapters is indicative of the complexity that characterises Bourdieusian thought in at least five respects.

First, Bourdieu's work is *multithematic*. Bourdieu produced a large number of books and articles on a broad range of topics in various areas of research: cultural sociology, political sociology, economic sociology, the sociology of class, the sociology of gender, the sociology of education, the sociology of language, the sociology of religion, the sociology of power, the sociology of experience, the

sociology of time, the sociology of space, and the sociology of knowledge and science – to mention only some of the key research areas in which his sociological writings are situated. The multithematic nature of Bourdieu's oeuvre is indicative of his commitment to the idea that critical social scientists should resist tendencies towards the specialisation of research programmes, the invention of autopoietic research languages, the creation of inward-looking research communities, the institutionalisation of self-referential research units, and the construction of power-driven research empires.

Second, Bourdieu's work is *multidisciplinary*. Given that Bourdieu was a philosopher by training and a sociologist by choice, a multidisciplinary view of things became an integral part of his intellectual development from an early stage. To be exact, there seems to be a consensus in the literature that Bourdieu's work can be considered as multidisciplinary on three levels: in terms of its multidisciplinary *roots*, in terms of its multidisciplinary *outlook*, and in terms of its multidisciplinary *impact*. There can be little doubt that the three disciplines that have played the most important role both in Bourdieu's intellectual development and in his intellectual influence are philosophy, anthropology, and sociology. Some commentators would rightly insist that other disciplines from the human and social sciences need to be added to this list – in particular, economics, politics, linguistics, semiotics, psychoanalysis, and cultural and historical studies, as well as literature, music, and art history. The multidisciplinary – and, indeed, transdisciplinary – nature of Bourdieu's oeuvre is indicative of his firm conviction that critical social scientists should seek to overcome artificial and counterproductive boundaries between epistemically and institutionally separated disciplines.

Third, Bourdieu's work is intellectually *eclectic*. Bourdieu drew on a number of intellectual traditions in his writings. Although one runs the risk of being overly schematic when classifying these traditions and relating the name of Bourdieu to other influential thinkers, it seems appropriate to suggest that the following intellectual traditions (and thinkers associated with these traditions) are particularly important to Bourdieu's oeuvre: in *philosophy*, metaphysics and German idealism (Leibniz, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel), phenomenology (Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty), existentialism (Pascal, Heidegger, and Sartre), ordinary language philosophy (Wittgenstein, Austin, and Searle), Marxist philosophy (Althusser), and the philosophy of science (Canguilhem, Popper, and Kuhn); in *anthropology*, structuralist anthropology (Mauss and Lévi-Strauss) and symbolic anthropology (Geertz); and, in *sociology*, materialist sociology (Marx), functionalist sociology (Durkheim), interpretive sociology (Weber), micro-sociology (Mead, Garfinkel, and Goffman), and constructivist sociology (Berger and Luckmann). In other words, there is a long list of different intellectual traditions on which Bourdieu drew in his writings. As is widely acknowledged in the literature, Bourdieu's

work not only offers an original synthesis of the 'Holy Trinity' of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber but also illustrates the continuing relevance of their writings to contemporary issues in social and political analysis. The three canonical cornerstones of sociological research – that is, Marxian, Durkheimian, and Weberian thought – are just as crucial to Bourdieu's oeuvre as three of the most influential disciplines in the history of the humanities and social sciences: philosophy, anthropology, and sociology. The eclectic nature of Bourdieu's writings reflects his willingness to engage with different – and, in many respects, competing – currents of social and political thought, indicating his persuasion that critical social scientists should dare to break with canonical patterns of research by cross-fertilising the conceptual tools and theoretical presuppositions of rival intellectual traditions.

Fourth, Bourdieu's work is both *empirically grounded and theoretically informed*. It is no secret that Bourdieu, as he stressed on several occasions, was committed to combining empirical and theoretical research in his own work. More specifically, Bourdieu sought to contribute to overcoming the gap between empirically anchored and practically engaged research, on the one hand, and conceptually driven and theoretically oriented research, on the other. From a Bourdieusian standpoint, truly reflexive social research cannot rely on an artificial division of labour between those who engage primarily in the collection of quantitative or qualitative data 'on the ground' and those who immerse themselves exclusively in the elaboration of sophisticated conceptual frameworks 'from the desk'. Reflexive social research is not simply about either doing ethnological tourism – '*with* the object of study' – through the embodied experience of real life, or embracing a position of philosophical transcendentalism – '*above* the object of study' – through the disembodied experience of scholastic life. In other words, the pursuit of critical social research is not about creating a gulf between data collectors and number crunchers, on one side, and conceptual architects and system builders, on the other. Rather, it is about combining the empirical and the theoretical components of social science and thereby demonstrating their interdependence. If one claims to be committed to the idea of critical social science in the Bourdieusian sense, one must seek to overcome the counterproductive divide between empirical and theoretical research. As a *philosophe* by training and a *sociologue* by choice (Hacking, 2004: 147; Susen, 2007: 246), Bourdieu was convinced that 'research without theory is blind, and theory without research is empty' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 162, italics removed). The fact that his writings are not only guided by sophisticated philosophical frameworks but also substantiated by a large variety of empirical studies illustrates that Bourdieu sought to practise what he preached. The empirically grounded and theoretically informed nature of Bourdieu's oeuvre proves his commitment to the view that methodologically

rigorous observation and conceptually refined interpretation must go hand in hand if one aims to study the functioning of society in a genuinely scientific manner.

Fifth, Bourdieu's work is *politically committed*. Particularly towards the end of his career, Bourdieu was concerned with establishing a fruitful link between his sociological studies, which were aimed at providing a *deconstructive* grasp of reality, and his various political engagements, which were oriented towards having a *constructive* impact upon society. In this sense, Bourdieusian thought is clearly committed to the Marxist dictum that '[t]he philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it' (Marx, 2000/1977 [1845]: 173). From a Bourdieusian perspective, the social sciences in general and sociology in particular have a normative commitment not only to providing an insightful and critical *understanding* of human reality but also, more importantly, to having a positive and transformative *impact* on the material and symbolic organisation of society. Hence, a critical interpretation of reality should make use of the scientific tools developed by sociology and thereby seek to contribute to the emancipation of society. Precisely, an emancipatory science – in the Bourdieusian sense – needs to confront three essential tasks: first, to *uncover* the underlying mechanisms that perpetuate the reproduction of material and symbolic relations of social domination (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 14–15); second, to '*universalise* the conditions of access to universality' that generate material and symbolic processes of social emancipation (Bourdieu, 1994: 233, italics added); and, third, to *engage* in a '*Realpolitik* of reason' (Bourdieu, 2001: 32, italics in original), thereby mobilising the empowering resources of critical rationality and making use of them for the consolidation of an emancipatory society. The political nature of Bourdieu's oeuvre is an unambiguous sign of his belief that critical sociologists should not only engage in the scientific study of the relational construction of reality but also aim to have a transformative impact upon the historical development of society.

The fifteen chapters of the present volume illustrate – on different levels and with different emphases – the importance of the aforementioned concerns.

First, similarly to Bourdieu's own work, the selection of essays published in the present volume is *multithematic*. Themes covered in this book range from Bourdieu's cultural sociology (Joas/Knöbl, Rahkonen, and Susen), Bourdieu's political sociology (Basaure, Robbins, and Sintomer), Bourdieu's economic sociology (Adkins), Bourdieu's sociology of language (Kögler), and Bourdieu's sociology of religion (Bourdieu/Schultheis/Pfeuffer and Turner) to Bourdieu's sociology of power (Fowler and Paulle/van Heerikhuizen/ Emirbayer), Bourdieu's sociology of experience (Frère and Karsenti), Bourdieu's sociology of time (Adkins), and Bourdieu's sociology of knowledge

and science (Robbins, Sintomer, and Wacquant). Unsurprisingly, there is some significant overlap between the thematic foci of these chapters. As much as this overlap is symptomatic of the breadth and depth of Bourdieu's oeuvre, it illustrates the difficulty attached to any attempts to divide his various contributions into key thematic areas. In light of the multithematic complexity of Bourdieusian thought, it may be impossible, and indeed pointless, to pigeonhole his main contributions.

Second, following *l'esprit ouvert* that runs through Bourdieu's writings, the volume is *multidisciplinary*. Even if we accept that all disciplinary boundaries are somewhat artificial and that, as Bourdieu points out, they can have counterproductive effects, we cannot deny that the three disciplinary pillars of Bourdieusian thought – philosophy, anthropology, and sociology – are omnipresent in the following chapters. Although, in the broadest sense, all of the contributions to this volume represent critical studies in social and political thought, they fall into these three main disciplines. We may explore Bourdieu's *philosophically* inspired accounts of the age-old preoccupation with the relationships between history and society (Fowler), being and society (Karsenti), language and society (Kögler), reason and society (Sintomer), faith and society (Turner), polity and society (Robbins), recognition and society (Basaure), resentment and society (Rahkonen), aesthetics and society (Susen), or time and society (Adkins). We may focus on Bourdieu's *anthropologically* motivated analyses of the civilisational functions of culture (Joas/Knöbl), religion (Bourdieu/Schultheis/Pfeuffer and Turner), habitus (Frère), individual and collective experiences (Karsenti), or historical development (Karsenti and Wacquant). And, in fact, we may appreciate the relevance of Bourdieu's *sociologically* grounded studies of a number of themes in literally every chapter: practice and society (Joas/Knöbl), capital and society (Fowler), the body and society (Karsenti), knowledge and society (Wacquant), relationality and society (Bourdieu/Schultheis/Pfeuffer), taste and society (Rahkonen), power and society (Paulle/van Heerikhuizen/Emirbayer), culture and society (Susen), intersubjectivity and society (Basaure), religion and society (Turner), habitus and society (Frère), communication and society (Kögler), politics and society (Robbins), the public sphere and society (Sintomer), or economy and society (Adkins). The wide-ranging disciplinary relevance of Bourdieusian thought to anthropology, philosophy, and sociology, which manifests itself in the diverse thematic foci of this volume, illustrates the fact that Bourdieusian thought transcends canonical boundaries not only in terms of its multidisciplinary roots and outlook but also in terms of its transdisciplinary impact on different areas of research in the humanities and social sciences.

Third, resembling the Bourdieusian approach itself, the volume is intellectually *eclectic*. The book seeks to do justice to the fact that Bourdieu

drew on a range of intellectual traditions and on a variety of thinkers whose works are associated with these traditions. Far from covering all of the intellectual schools and paradigmatic trends that influenced Bourdieu's oeuvre, the collection of essays published in the present volume has three main foci. The first set of essays traces the roots of Bourdieu's thought in classical sociology by closely examining his intellectual connections with the writings of the *founding figures of sociology*, that is, with the works of Marx (Fowler and Karsenti), Durkheim (Wacquant), and Weber (Bourdieu/Schultheis/Pfeuffer). The second set of essays is mainly concerned with Bourdieu's relation to *modern social philosophy*, in particular with regard to the works of Nietzsche (Rahkonen), Elias (Paulle/van Heerikhuizen/Emirbayer), Adorno (Susen), and Honneth (Basaure). The third set of essays explores the relevance of Bourdieu's writings to key issues debated in the *contemporary social sciences*, such as the continuous presence of religion (Turner), the transformative power of social movements (Frère), the emancipatory potential of language (Kögler), the political legacy of 1968 (Robbins), the socio-historical significance of the rise of the public sphere (Sintomer), and – particularly important in the current climate – the social consequences of economic crisis (Adkins). The wide range of topics covered in the present volume indicates that it would be a mistake to associate Bourdieu's work exclusively with one particular theme and, in so doing, disregard the fact that intellectual eclecticism constitutes an essential feature of Bourdieu's oeuvre, not only in terms of its roots and points of reference, but also in terms of its overall impact on the contemporary social sciences.

Fourth, in line with one of Bourdieu's deepest convictions, the volume pays tribute to the fact that his work is both *empirically grounded and theoretically informed*. The essays in this book are yet another illustration of the fact that Bourdieu can be praised for practising what he preached in that, in his sociological writings, he was firmly committed to overcoming the divide between 'the empirical' and 'the conceptual', 'the concrete' and 'the abstract', 'the actual' and 'the nominal', and 'the practical' and 'the theoretical'. To be sure, most of the following chapters have a 'theoretical' focus, since they are primarily concerned with the legacy of Bourdieu's work in contemporary social and political thought. Nevertheless, what manifests itself in the contributions to this volume is the fact that we can only make sense of Bourdieu's oeuvre if we consider his conviction that critical social analysis needs to be both empirically grounded and theoretically informed as a central normative position. Indeed, the whole of Bourdieu's famous critique of scholastic thought was motivated by the view that it is the *skholè* – a situation characterised by freedom from necessity – which leads scholastic thinkers to produce scholastic thought, that is, thought which fails to reflect upon the social conditions of its own existence (Bourdieu, 1997: 9, 15, 22, 24, 131, and 143; Susen, 2007: 158–167). According

to Bourdieu, scholastic thinkers 'remain trapped in the scholastic dilemma of determinism and freedom' (1997: 131) because their privileged position in the social space permits them to ignore the homological intertwinement of field and habitus. We can look at Bourdieu's fruitful synthesis of the works of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber (chapters 2–5) and his concern with classical sociological categories such as 'social struggle', 'social facts', and 'social understanding'. We can explore Bourdieu's engagement with modern German social philosophy – for instance, with regard to the works of Nietzsche, Elias, Adorno, and Honneth (chapters 6–9) – and his sociological development of concepts such as 'taste', 'power', 'culture', and 'recognition'. And, of course, we can assess the usefulness of Bourdieu's oeuvre for making sense of key issues in the contemporary social sciences, in particular with regard to the sociological significance of religion, language, political change, public debate, and economic transformations (chapters 10–15). All of these themes, which are thoroughly examined in the present volume, were studied by Bourdieu through a fruitful combination of solid empirical data and sophisticated theoretical frameworks. For, as he insisted, only insofar as we do justice to the fact that critical social research needs to be both empirically grounded and theoretically informed can we claim to produce social-scientific knowledge.

Fifth, the contributions to this volume illustrate – some directly, some indirectly – that Bourdieu's sociology is *politically committed*. From a Bourdieusian standpoint, however, sociology can only be politically committed if it is devoted to both providing a critical analysis of social relations and having a transformative impact upon the daily reproduction of power relations. To a greater or lesser extent, Bourdieu's normative commitment to the political nature of reflexive sociology is reflected in each of the chapters of this volume. We shall conclude this Introduction by briefly elaborating upon this political dimension and its relevance to the arguments developed in the following contributions.

In the introductory chapter, Joas and Knöbl remind us of the importance of Bourdieu's experiences in Algeria during a formative time in which Bourdieu gained direct access to the social and political complexities of Algerian colonial and postcolonial realities. In the second chapter, Fowler elegantly shows that, given that he was committed to some of the key presuppositions of historical materialism, Bourdieu not only borrowed powerful conceptual tools and useful methodological frameworks from Marxist social analysis, but he also recognised that the critical study of power relations is pointless if it is not aimed at the emancipatory transformation of social relations. In the third chapter, Karsenti argues, in accordance with both Marx and Bourdieu, that the 'game of theory' is worth nothing if it fails to engage with the 'reality of practice' and that, due to our bodily immersion in a contradictory

society, there is no such thing as an innocent form of subjectivity. In the fourth chapter, Wacquant, on the basis of a comparative analysis of the works of Durkheim and Bourdieu, contends that the existence of seemingly ineluctable social facts cannot be dissociated from the existence of relatively arbitrary social norms: the social conditions that appear independent of our will are historically specific arrangements that can and often have to be changed through our will. This position ties in with the thematic focus of the fifth chapter: when interviewed by Schultheis and Pfeuffer, Bourdieu asserts that society can be regarded as an ensemble of relatively arbitrary relations between people and groups of people, whose existence is necessarily shaped by the spatiotemporal specificity of a given cultural reality and by field-differentiated codes of practical legitimacy.

The sixth chapter, written by Rahkonen, seems to suggest that, ultimately, Nietzsche's *Wille zur Macht* and Bourdieu's *Wille zum Geschmack* together form the socio-ontological foundation of our *Wille zur Welt*. Paulle, van Heerikhuizen, and Emirbayer demonstrate in the seventh chapter that if our lives are contingent upon the homological interplay between habitus and field, and therefore upon a constant struggle over different forms of capital, the taken-for-grantedness of social relations is necessarily impregnated with the interest-ladenness of power relations. In the eighth chapter, Susen offers a comparative analysis of Adorno's critique of the culture industry and Bourdieu's account of the cultural economy; the obvious political challenge to be confronted in light of the deep pessimism that permeates both Adornean and Bourdieusian thought is to explore the extent to which there is room for empowering forms of culture within disempowering forms of society. In the ninth chapter, Basaure invites us to take on some difficult tasks from which emancipatory forms of sociology cannot hide away – namely the tasks of giving a voice to the voiceless, of making the unrecognised recognisable, and of shedding light on individual and collective experiences of suffering and disrespect caused by a lack of social recognition and access to social resources.

In the tenth chapter, Turner illustrates that, given that religious practices and belief systems have far from disappeared in modern society, critical sociologists are obliged to reflect upon the normative relationship between secular and religious modes of relating to and making sense of the world. In the eleventh chapter, Frère rightly insists that even if we conceive of people primarily as 'homological actors', who are relatively determined by the various positions they occupy in different social spaces, we need to account for the fact that humans have the capacity to invent and reinvent their place in the world by constantly working and acting upon it. Taking into consideration that, as Kögler elucidates in the twelfth chapter, linguistic interactions are always asymmetrically structured because they are inevitably permeated by power

relations, a critical sociology of language needs to explore the extent to which linguistically articulated claims to epistemic validity represent relationally constituted claims to social legitimacy. From Robbins's textual analysis, developed in the thirteenth chapter, it becomes clear that, for Bourdieu, social science and political action have to go hand in hand: a *raisonnement sociologique* that compels us to confront the reality of social domination is, at the same time, a *raisonnement politique* that invites us to contemplate the possibility of social emancipation. As Sintomer explains in the fourteenth chapter, Bourdieu's concept of critical reason is ultimately a form of political reason: just as research without theory is blind and theory without research is empty, politics without critique is edgeless and critique without politics is pointless. Finally, as Adkins convincingly argues in the fifteenth chapter, in Bourdieu's writings we can find powerful resources to make sense not only of the current economic crisis but also of the silent shift from the modern paradigm 'time is money' to the late modern dictum 'money is time': the temporalisation of practice is intimately interrelated with the politicisation of time and, hence, with the restructuring of social life.

We have taken the possibly unusual step of providing an Afterword, which offers the reader a synoptic view of the chapters. We have included this Afterword in part because the chapters, while addressing a common theme, are both diverse and complex. The Afterword contains a clear and concise summary of the overall objectives of this collection. Readers may want to consult both the Introduction and the Afterword before launching into the core of this volume.

Acknowledgements

References

Alexander, Jeffrey C. (2006) *The Civil Sphere*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Althusser, Louis (1969 [1965]) *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.
Aron, Raymond (2002) *Le marxisme de Marx*, Paris: Fallois.
Aron, Raymond, Richard Howard and Helen Weaver (1965) *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*, trans. Richard Howard and Helen Weaver, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
Back, Les, Azzedine Haddour and Nirmal Puwar (eds.) (2009) *The Sociological Review – Special Issue: Post-Colonial Bourdieu* 57(3).
Bottomore, T. B. (1965) *Classes in Modern Society*, London: Allen & Unwin.
Boudon, Raymond (1980 [1971]) *The Crisis in Sociology: Problems of Sociological Epistemology*, trans. Howard H. Davis, New York: Columbia University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1975) 'L'ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 5–6: 109–156.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1976) 'Le champ scientifique', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 8–9 [2–3]: 88–104.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1977 [1972]) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1984 [1979]) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1991 [1988]) *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*, trans. Peter Collier, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Terry Eagleton (1992) 'Doxa and Common Life', *New Left Review* 191: 111–121.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1994) *Raisons pratiques. Sur la théorie de l'action*, Paris: Seuil.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1997) *Méditations pascaliennes*, Paris: Seuil.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1999 [1993]) *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, trans. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson [et al.], Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2000) 'Mit Weber gegen Weber: Pierre Bourdieu im Gespräch', in Pierre Bourdieu, *Das religiöse Feld. Texte zur Ökonomie des Heilsgeschehens*, herausgegeben von Franz Schultheis, Andreas Pfeuffer und Stephan Egger, übersetzt von Stephan Egger, Konstanz: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, pp. 111–129.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2000 [1997]) *Pascalian Meditations*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2001) *'Si le monde social m'est supportable, c'est parce que je peux m'indigner'. Entretien avec Antoine Spire*, Paris: Éditions de l'Aube.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Jean-Claude Passeron (1979 [1964]) *The Inheritors: French Students and their Relation to Culture*, trans. Richard Nice, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Jean-Claude Passeron (1990 [1970]) *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. Richard Nice, 2nd Edition, London: Sage.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Loïc Wacquant (1992) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourricaud, François (1981 [1977]) *The Sociology of Talcott Parsons*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Calhoun, Craig, Edward LiPuma and Moishe Postone (eds.) (1993) *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Coser, Lewis A. (1971) *Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas in Historical and Social Context*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Crozier, Michel (1964 [1963]) *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, London: Tavistock.

Dahrendorf, Ralf (1959) *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Dawe, Alan (1970) 'The Two Sociologies', *The British Journal of Sociology* 21(2): 207–218.

Eribon, Didier (1992 [1989]) *Michel Foucault*, trans. Betsy Wing, London: Faber.

Foucault, Michel (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited by Colin Gordon, translated by Colin Gordon [et al.], Brighton: Harvester Press.

Hacking, Ian (2004) 'Science de la science chez Pierre Bourdieu', in Jacques Bouveresse and Daniel Roche (eds.) *La liberté par la connaissance: Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002)*, Paris: Collège de France, Odile Jacob, pp. 147–162.

Holton, Robert John and Bryan S. Turner (1986) *Talcott Parsons on Economy and Society*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Lerner, Daniel (1958) *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, with the collaboration of Lucille W. Pevsner and an introduction by David Riesman, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Lipset, Seymour Martin (1963) *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective*, New York: Basic Books.

Lockwood, David (1964) 'Social Integration and System Integration', in George K. Zollschan and Walter Hirsch (eds.) *Explorations in Social Change*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 244–257.

Lockwood, David (1992) *Solidarity and Schism: 'The Problem of Disorder' in Durkheimian and Marxist Sociology*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Luxon, Nancy (2008) 'Ethics and Subjectivity: Practices of Self-Governance in the Late Lectures of Michel Foucault', *Political Theory* 36(3): 377–402.

Marx, Karl (2000/1977 [1845]) 'Theses on Feuerbach', in David McLellan (ed.) *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, 2nd Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 171–174.

Masson, Philippe (2008) *Faire de la sociologie. Les grandes enquêtes françaises depuis 1945*. Paris: La Découverte.

Parsons, Talcott (1951) *The Social System*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Poulantzas, Nicos (1978 [1978]) *State, Power, Socialism*, trans. Patrick Camiller, London: NLB.

Rex, John (1961) *Key Problems of Sociological Theory*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Rojek, Chris (2004) 'An Anatomy of the Leicester School of Sociology: An Interview with Eric Dunning', *Journal of Classical Sociology* 4(3): 337–359.

Shilling, Chris (2004) 'Physical Capital and Situated Action: A New Direction for Corporeal Sociology', *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 25(4): 473–487.

Shusterman, Richard (1992) *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Shusterman, Richard (ed.) (1999) *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Sica, Alan and Stephen P. Turner (2005) *The Disobedient Generation: Social Theorists in the Sixties*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Susen, Simon (2007) *The Foundations of the Social: Between Critical Theory and Reflexive Sociology*, Oxford: Bardwell Press.

Turner, Bryan S. (1996) *The Body and Society*, London: Sage.

Weber, Max (2001/1930 [1904–05]) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, London: Routledge.

CHAPTER ONE

Between Structuralism and Theory of Practice: The Cultural Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu[1]

Hans Joas and Wolfgang Knöbl
Translated by Alex Skinner[2]

Bourdieu's work was deeply moulded by the national intellectual milieu in which it developed, that of France in the late 1940s and 1950s, a milieu characterised by disputes between phenomenologists and structuralists. But it is not this national and cultural dimension that distinguishes Bourdieu's writings from those of other 'grand theorists'. Habermas and Giddens, for example, owed as much to the academic or political context of their home countries. What set Bourdieu's approach apart from that of his German and British 'rivals' was a significantly stronger linkage of theoretical and empirical knowledge. Bourdieu was first and foremost an empirical sociologist, that is, a sociologist who developed and constantly refined his theoretical concepts on the basis of his empirical work – with all the advantages and disadvantages that theoretical production of this kind entails. We shall have more to say about this later. Bourdieu is thus to be understood primarily not as a theorist but as a cultural sociologist who systematically stimulated the theoretical debate through his empirical work.

Pierre Bourdieu was born in 1930 and is therefore of the same generation as Habermas and Luhmann. The fact that Bourdieu came from a modest background and grew up in the depths of provincial France is extremely important to understanding his work. Bourdieu himself repeatedly emphasised the importance of his origins: 'I spent most of my youth in a tiny and remote village of Southwestern France […]. And I could meet the demands of schooling only by renouncing many of my primary experiences and acquisitions, and not only a certain accent [...]' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 204). Despite these clearly unfavourable beginnings, Bourdieu was to succeed in gaining entry to the leading educational institutions in France, a fact of which many people became aware when he was elected to the famous

Collège de France in 1982. This classic case of climbing the social and career ladder, the fact that Bourdieu had no privileged educational background to draw on, helped legitimise his pitiless take on the French education and university system and on intellectuals in general – a group he investigated in numerous studies over the course of his career. He thus made use of the classical sociological notion of the outsider – the 'marginal man' – in order to lay claim to special and, above all, critical insights into the functioning of 'normal' society.

> In France, to come from a distant province, to be born south of the Loire, endows you with a number of properties that are not without parallel in the colonial situation. It gives you a sort of objective and subjective externality and puts you in a particular relation to the central institutions of French society and therefore to the intellectual institution. There are subtle (and not so subtle) forms of social racism that cannot but make you perceptive [...]. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 209)

Yet, Bourdieu's path to the production of a sociology of French cultural institutions and to sociology more generally was anything but straightforward or self-evident – a state of affairs with which we are familiar from the biographies of other major social theorists, such as Habermas and Luhmann, who also took some time to settle on a career in sociology. A highly gifted student, Bourdieu studied at the *École Normale Superieure* in Paris, where he took philosophy – the most prestigious subject in the French disciplinary canon. He initially seems to have wanted to concentrate on this subject, given that he subsequently worked as a philosophy teacher in provincial France for a brief period, as is usual for those who go on to have an academic career in the humanities in France. But Bourdieu was increasingly disappointed by philosophy and developed an ever-greater interest in anthropology, so that he ultimately became a self-taught, empirically oriented, anthropologist, and later sociologist. This process of turning away from philosophy and towards anthropology and sociology was partly bound up with Lévi-Strauss's concurrent rise to prominence. With its claim to a strictly scientific approach, structuralist anthropology began to challenge philosophy's traditional pre-eminence within the disciplinary canon. Bourdieu was drawn towards this highly promising and up-and-coming subject. Structuralism's anti-philosophical tone held much appeal for him (see Joas and Knöbl, 2009 [2004]: 339–370) and often appeared in his own work – for example, when he takes up arms against philosophy's purely theoretical rationality.

It is important, however, to be aware of the fact that Bourdieu's path to anthropology and sociology was also determined by external factors: he was stationed in Algeria during the second half of the 1950s while completing his military service. There, in the undoubtedly very difficult circumstances of the

war of independence, he gathered data for his first book, a sociology of Algeria (Bourdieu, 1958) – in which he came to terms intellectually with his experiences in this French colony (see Robbins, 1991: 10 ff.). In this setting, he also carried out field research among the Kabyle, a Berber people of northern Algeria, which led to the publication of a number of anthropological monographs and essays that, in collected and eventually expanded form, appeared as a book entitled *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977 [1972]). This work, published in French in 1972, and then expanded greatly for the English (and German) translation, became tremendously famous and influential because Bourdieu departed from the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, in whose footsteps he had originally followed, and developed his own set of concepts, which held out the promise of a genuine theoretical synthesis.

At around the same time as these basically anthropological studies, Bourdieu began to utilise the theoretical insights they contained to subject *French* society to sociological analysis – particularly its cultural, educational and class system. With respect to the socially critical thrust of his writings, the work of Marx was, in many ways, his model and touchstone, and a large number of essays appeared in the 1960s which were later translated into English – for example, in *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art* (1990 [1965]). In these studies, Bourdieu and his co-authors attempt to describe the perception of art and culture, which varies so greatly from one class to another, and to elucidate how class struggle involves contrasting ways of appropriating art and culture. Classes set themselves apart by means of a very different understanding of art and culture and thus reproduce, more or less unintentionally, the class structures of (French) society. Bourdieu elaborated this thesis in a particularly spectacular way in perhaps his most famous work of cultural sociology, *La distinction. Critique sociale du jugement* (English title: *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, 1984 [1979]).

Bourdieu's subsequent publications merely complemented or completed a theoretical research orientation set at an early stage. In terms of *cultural sociology*, two major studies have become particularly important: *Homo Academicus* (1988 [1984]), an analysis of the French university system, particularly the crisis it faced towards the end of the 1960s, and *Les règles de l'art* (English title: *The Rules of Art*, 1996 [1992]), a historical and sociological study of the development of an autonomous art scene in France in the second half of the nineteenth century. Alongside these works, Bourdieu also published a steady flow of writings that fleshed out his *theoretical* ambitions, *Le sens pratique* (English title: *The Logic of Practice*, 1990 [1980]) and *Meditations pascaliennes* (English title: *Pascalian Meditations*, 2000 [1997]) being the key texts in this regard. But even in these basically theoretical studies, it is fair to say that he expands on the conceptual apparatus presented in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977 [1972])

only to a limited degree; above all, he defends it against criticisms. It is almost impossible, however, to discern any theoretical *development* here. Bourdieu's theory thus distinguishes itself from that of other grand theorists. To deploy the language of the building trade, not only the foundation walls, but also the overall structure and even the roof were in place very quickly, while the later theoretical work related solely to the facade and décor. Ever since it was developed in the 1960s, his theory has thus remained basically the same.

It was solely Bourdieu's identity or role that seemed to change significantly over the course of time. While Bourdieu was always politically active on the left, this generally took a less spectacular form than in the case of other French intellectuals, occurring away from the light of day and basically unnoticed by most people. The fact that he pursued such activities away from the limelight was partly bound up with his frequently expressed critique of high-profile French intellectuals à la Jean-Paul Sartre, who frequently overshot the bounds of their specialisms and claimed a universal competence and public responsibility to which they were scarcely entitled. Yet, Bourdieu abandoned such restraint from the 1990s (at the latest) until his death in 2002. He increasingly emerged as a symbolic figure for critics of globalisation in this period and was almost automatically made the kind of major intellectual he had never wished to be. His book, *La Misère du Monde* (English title: *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, 1999 [1993]) was conceived as a kind of empirical demonstration of the negative effects of globalisation in different spheres of life and cultures. One has to give Bourdieu credit for having avoided a purely pamphleteering role to the very last. He was too strongly oriented towards empirical research, and his Durkheim-like ambition to strengthen the position of sociology within the disciplinary canon of France and to set it apart from other subjects – especially philosophy and social philosophy – was too strong for him to take on such a role. Bourdieu, so aware of power, had an ongoing interest in developing the kind of *empirical* sociological research which he favoured at an institutional level, as demonstrated in his role as editor of the journal *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, which he founded in 1975 and which was accessible to a broad readership (on Bourdieu's intellectual biography, see the interview in Bourdieu, 1990 [1987]: 3–33).

Our account of Bourdieusian theory will proceed as follows. First, we shall take a closer look at his early work, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977 [1972]), which is of particular theoretical relevance as it features the basic elements of his arguments. Though we shall frequently draw on explanations and more precise formulations from subsequent works, our key aim is to lay bare why, and with the help of which ideas, Bourdieu tackled certain problems at a relatively early stage (1). Always bearing this early work in mind, and while

presenting Bourdieu's key concepts, we shall then critically examine the model of action advocated by Bourdieu and the problems it entails (2). We then go on to present the overall architecture of Bourdieusian theory and identify the nodal points within it (3) before presenting, as vividly and as briefly as possible, some characteristic aspects of Bourdieu's works of cultural sociology (4) and shedding light on the impact of his work (5).

1. We therefore begin with the early study of Kabyle society mentioned above, whose programmatic title requires explication: *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977 [1972]). Bourdieu – as intimated in our remarks on his intellectual biography – was caught up in the enthusiasm for Lévi-Straussian anthropology in the 1950s and began his anthropological research in Kabylia by focusing on key structuralist topics. Studies of kinship patterns, marriage behaviour and mythology were to provide insights into the logic of the processes occurring within this society and into the way in which it continually reproduces itself on the basis of certain rules. Yet, Bourdieu's research had unexpected results. Above all, these did not confirm the structuralist premise of the constancy of rules (of marriage, exchange, communication) in line with which people supposedly always act. Rather, Bourdieu concluded that actors either play rules off against each other more or less as they see fit, so that one can scarcely refer to the *following* of rules, or follow them only in order to disguise concrete interests. This is particularly apparent in the first chapter of the book, in which Bourdieu scrutinises the phenomenon of 'honour'. In Kabyle society – and in other places as well, of course – honour plays a very important role; it seems impossible to link it with base economic interests because 'honourable behaviour' is directly opposed to action oriented towards profit. A man is honourable only if he is *not* greedy and *cannot* be bought. And, in Kabyle society, the rituals by means of which one demonstrates that one's actions are honourable and that one is an honourable person are particularly pronounced. Bourdieu, however, demonstrates that these rituals of honour often merely mask (profit-related) interests; the actors see this link between honour and interests – or at least unconsciously produce it – and people uphold rituals of honour *because* they enable them to promote their interests.

> The ritual of the ceremony of presenting the bridewealth is the occasion for a total confrontation between the two groups, in which the economic stakes are no more than an index and pretext. To demand a large payment for one's daughter, or to pay a large sum to marry off one's son, is in either case to assert one's prestige, and thereby to acquire prestige […]. By a sort of inverted haggling, disguised under the appearance of ordinary bargaining, the two groups tacitly agree to step up the amount of the payment by successive bids, because they have a common interest in raising this indisputable index of the symbolic value of their

products on the matrimonial exchange market. And no feat is more highly praised than the prowess of the bride's father who, after vigorous bargaining has been concluded, solemnly returns a large share of the sum received. The greater the proportion returned, the greater the honour accruing from it, as if, in crowning the transaction with an act of generosity, the intention was to make an exchange of honour out of bargaining which could be so overtly keen only because the pursuit of maximum material profit was masked under the contests of honour and the pursuit of maximum symbolic profit. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 56)

Rituals of honour thus conceal very tangible interests, which are overlooked if one merely describes the logic of the rules, as do structuralist anthropologists. What is more, for precisely this reason, rules are by no means as rigid and have nothing like the determining effect on behaviour that orthodox structuralist authors assume. As Bourdieu observed, rules that do not tally with actors' interests are often broken, leading him to conclude that an element of 'unpredictability' is clearly inherent in human action with respect to rules and patterns, rituals and regulations (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 9). This places a question mark over the entire structuralist terminology of rules and its underlying premises. Bourdieu puts forward the counter-argument that the following of rules is always associated with an element of conflict. If rules are not, in fact, ignored entirely – which certainly occurs at times – every rule-based act of exchange, every rule-based conversation, every rule-based marriage must *also* at least protect or enforce the interests of those involved or improve the social position of the parties to interaction. Rules are thus consciously instrumentalised by actors:

> Every exchange contains a more or less dissimulated challenge, and the logic of challenge and riposte is but the limit towards which *every act of communication* tends. Generous exchange tends towards overwhelming generosity; the greatest gift is at the same time the gift most likely to throw its recipient into dishonour by prohibiting any counter-gift. To reduce to the function of communication – albeit by the transfer of borrowed concepts – phenomena such as the dialectic of challenge and riposte and, more generally, the exchange of gifts, words, or women, is to ignore the structural ambivalence which predisposes them to fulfil a political function of domination in and through performance of the communication function. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 14, emphasis in original)

Bourdieu accuses structuralism of having failed entirely to take account of how the action undertaken by social actors is related to interests in favour of a highly idealised description of rules and cultural patterns. People, according to Bourdieu, can manipulate rules and patterns; they are not merely the passive

objects of social classification systems. Because actors pursue their interests, we must assume that there is always a difference between the 'official' and the 'regular' (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 38) and between (theoretically) construed models and the *practice* of actors. It may be very helpful to identify social rules, but it is by no means sufficient if we wish to get at actors' *practice*:

> The logical relationships constructed by the anthropologist are opposed to 'practical' relationships – practical because continuously practised, kept up, and cultivated – in the same way as the geometrical space of a map, an imaginary representation of all theoretically possible roads and routes, is opposed to the network of beaten tracks, of paths made ever more practicable by constant use. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 37)

Ultimately, this is a profound criticism of structuralism (as the title *Outline of a Theory of Practice* indicates), particularly given that Bourdieu also resists applying the Saussurian paradigm of linguistic analysis – so inspiring for structuralists – to the social world (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 24). In this way, he casts doubt on the theoretical and empirical fruitfulness of the structuralist anthropology and sociology of Lévi-Strauss.

> [The only way] the Saussurian construction [...] could constitute the structural properties of the message was (simply by positing an indifferent sender and receiver) to neglect the functional properties the message derives from its *use* in a determinate situation and, more precisely, in a socially structured interaction. As soon as one moves from the structure of language to the functions it fulfils, that is, to the uses agents actually make of it, one sees that mere knowledge of the *code* gives only very imperfect mastery of the linguistic interactions really taking place. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 25, emphasis in original)

Examining the actual practice characteristic of the 'objects of investigation' more closely, according to Bourdieu, reveals how inappropriate or insufficient structuralist analysis is. To put it in slightly more abstract terms, Bourdieu introduces elements of action theory into his originally structuralist theoretical framework – namely, the idea of conduct at variance with the rules and related to interests. This was to change the structuralist paradigm markedly. As he was to state later in another publication, he objected in particular to the 'strange philosophy of action' inherent in structuralism, which 'made the agent disappear by reducing it to the role of supporter or bearer of the structure' (Bourdieu, 1996 [1992]: 179).

Yet, Bourdieu does not break entirely with structuralism. He always remained attached to structuralist thinking, as evident in the fact that he

termed his own approach 'genetic' or 'constructivist structuralism' (see, for example, Bourdieu, 1990 [1987]: 123). The exact nature of this attachment, however, was to become clear only as his oeuvre developed. This is, of course, due to the predominantly empirical orientation of Bourdieu's work, which sometimes makes it appear unnecessary for him to locate and distinguish his own concepts with respect to other theoretical approaches. It is only in his next major theoretical work (Bourdieu, 1990 [1980]: 4) that we find clear evidence of how structuralism 'influenced' him, when, for instance, he praises it for the 'introduction into the social sciences of [...] the relational mode of thought' and having broken with 'the substantialist mode of thought'. Bourdieu's thought leans heavily on structuralism (and, at times, also on functionalism). Thus, for him, it is not the individual actor that is the key analytical lodestone; rather, it is the *relations* between actors or the relations between the positions within a system – that is, in Bourdieusian terms, the positions within a 'field' – which are crucial. 'Fields', to cite a definition provided by Bourdieu, are:

> structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and which can be analyzed independently of the characteristics of their occupants (which are partly determined by them). There are general laws of fields: fields as different as the field of politics, the field of philosophy or the field of religion have invariant laws of functioning […]. Whenever one studies a new field, whether it be the field of philology in the nineteenth century, contemporary fashion, or religion in the Middle Ages, one discovers specific properties that are peculiar to that field, at the same time as one pushes forward our knowledge of the universal mechanisms of fields [...]. (Bourdieu, 1993 [1980]: 72)

According to Bourdieu, it is not useful to analyse the behaviour of individual actors in isolation, as many theorists of action do without further reflection, unless one also determines an actor's position within such a 'field', in which action becomes meaningful in the first place. 'Fields' offer options for action, but only *certain* options, which simply means that other options for action are excluded and that the actors are subject to constraints. The logic of action within the religious field is necessarily different from, for example, that in the artistic field because the constraints are different. These constraints and boundaries influence how prone actors – prophets and the faithful, artists and the viewing public – are to take action. This is why it is inevitably quite unproductive to restrict oneself to examining the biography of an actor, prophet, artist or author in order to explain religious or artistic phenomena (Bourdieu, 2000 [1997]: 115 ff.).

   In light of this, Bourdieu consciously refrains from referring to 'subjects'; at most, he talks of actors. For him, actors are 'eminently active and

acting' – a fact overlooked by structuralism. Bourdieu, however, believes that Foucault's provocative structuralist notion of the 'looming end of man' or the 'death of the subject' is justified in as much as this was merely a way of stating the (structuralist) insight into the crucial significance of relations and relationships (within fields) and expressed the well-founded rejection of the idea, found in the work of Sartre and many other philosophers and sociologists, of a self-creating and autonomous subject (see the foreword to Bourdieu, 1998 [1994]: viii ff.). Time and again, Bourdieu was to defend this structuralist 'insight' with great vehemence; it was also the basis of his attacks on certain sociological or philosophical currents, which, as he puts it, give sustenance to the 'biographical illusion'. Bourdieu mercilessly assails any notion that people create their own biography and that life is a whole, arising, as it were, from the subject's earliest endeavours and unfolding over the course of their life. He repeatedly points to the fact that the 'meaning and the social value of biographical events' are not constituted on the basis of the subject, but on the basis of actors' 'placements' and 'displacements' within a social space, which lends biographical events their meaning in the first place – the meaning which they ultimately take on for the actor (Bourdieu, 1996 [1992]: 258 ff.; see also Bourdieu, 1998 [1994]: 75 ff.). Thus, rather than 'subjects', people are actors in a field by which they are profoundly moulded.

Yet, we wish to avoid getting ahead of ourselves in our discussion of Bourdieu's work. Let us turn once again to his early book, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977 [1972]). Although this text is rather wordy in places, and Bourdieu was to provide a clearer explanation of his position only at a later stage, it undoubtedly sets out his synthetic aspirations. For Bourdieu made it absolutely clear that all action-theoretical perspectives are insufficient *in isolation*: neither symbolic interactionism nor phenomenological approaches within sociology, such as ethnomethodology, are capable of deciphering the really interesting sociological facts. For him, these approaches are too quick to adopt the actor's perspective; they take on his or her *naïve* view of the givenness of the world, forgetting how crucial are *actors' positions in relation to one another* and to the field within which they move. To reinforce his 'objectivist' stance, Bourdieu borrows not only from structuralism, which seems to him overly idealistic in certain respects. He also draws on Marx's 'concrete' materialism when he points, for example, to the conditions of production on the basis of which marriage rituals take place and without which they cannot be understood:

> It is not sufficient to ridicule the more naïve forms of functionalism in order to have done with the question of the practical functions of practice. It is clear that a universal definition of the functions of marriage as an operation intended to ensure the biological reproduction of the group, in accordance with forms approved by the group, in no way explains Kabyle marriage ritual.

> But, contrary to appearances, scarcely more understanding is derived from a structural analysis which ignores the specific functions of ritual practices and fails to inquire into the *economic and social conditions of the production* of the dispositions generating both these practices and also the collective definition of the practical functions in whose service they function. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 115, emphasis in original)

Critical of the theory of action he describes as subjectivist, Bourdieu ultimately asserts the *pre-eminence of an objectivist form of analysis* in which the structures of a social field are determined *by the sociological observer* – structures that impose constraints on actors, of which they themselves are generally unaware. Loïc Wacquant, a sociologist closely associated with Bourdieu, has put this in the following way, drawing a comparison between the 'objectivism' of the Durkheimian method of analysis and that of Bourdieu:

> Application of Durkheim's first principle of the 'sociological method', the systematic rejection of preconceptions, must come before analysis of the practical apprehension of the world from the subjective standpoint. For the viewpoints of agents will vary systematically with the point they occupy in objective social space. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 11)

At the same time, however, Bourdieu regards (objectivist) structuralism on its own as insufficient, just as he does the equally objectivist functionalism, which ignores actors' perspectives. His sociological approach is intended to take full account of actors' power and capacity to act. This means, however, that Bourdieu wishes to sail – and, as he admits, cannot avoid sailing – between the Scylla of 'phenomenology' or 'subjectivism' and the Charybdis of 'objectivism'. For him, all of these forms of knowledge are deficient *in and of themselves*, which is why he wishes to develop a third mode of sociological understanding: his 'theory of practice' – an approach which goes beyond 'objectivism' and takes what actors do seriously. This can succeed only if it is shown that there are '*dialectical* relations between the objective structures [of fields] […] and the structured dispositions [of actors]' (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 3, emphasis in original; our insertions), that is, that action and structures determine one another through their interrelationship.

 What Bourdieu is trying to do here is similar to arguments developed by Anthony Giddens (see Joas and Knöbl, 2009 [2004]: 281–307): Bourdieu also refers to 'structuring' or 'structuration'. Though this active conception never attained the systematic significance that it did in the work of Giddens (in part because Bourdieu was not a 'pure' social theorist and would probably have had no interest in developing the kind of social ontology present in the work

of Giddens), it is nonetheless clear that Bourdieu is aiming to develop a stance which, in contrast to functionalists and structuralists, assumes that structures are 'made' and continuously reproduced by actors. In contrast to the ideas supposedly expounded by pure action theorists, however, he also emphasises the profound and causal impact of these structures.

2. So far, we have defined Bourdieu's theoretical approach only vaguely; his cited statements generally represent declarations of intention that underline the need for a theoretical synthesis rather than providing one. When Bourdieu states that he wishes to proceed neither 'phenomenologically' nor 'objectivistically', this is a purely negative definition of his project. The question arises as to *how* he incorporates the action-theoretical elements – the level of actors – into his approach and *how* he conceives, in concrete terms, the actions carried out by actors that drive the process of structuration, which, in turn, structures their actions. Here, there is an evident need to scrutinise Bourdieu's relationship with utilitarianism and its theory of action, particularly in light of the fact that Bourdieu refers so often to actors' 'interests'. And a number of interpreters (see especially Honneth, 1995 [1990]) have, in fact, expounded the thesis that Bourdieu's approach represents an amalgamation of structuralism and utilitarianism – a hypothesis or interpretation of his work which, considering how he reacted to it, certainly infuriated Bourdieu like no other and which he rejected vehemently on numerous occasions. In fact, Bourdieu emerges as a harsh critic of utilitarianism and the rational choice approach in many of his writings – and it is very hard to reconcile key aspects of his work with the basic assumptions of utilitarian or neo-utilitarian arguments. Nevertheless, this does not render superfluous the issue of whether other – perhaps equally important – aspects of his work are not redolent of utilitarianism. What then (see Joas and Knöbl, 2009 [2004]: 94–122) distinguishes Bourdieusian actors from their utilitarian counterparts?

We have already hinted at Bourdieu's *first* criticism of utilitarian thought. Since it places the isolated actor centre stage, it ignores the relational method of analysis, which – according to Bourdieu – is a prerequisite for attaining key insights into the functioning of the social world. This criticism is intended to apply not only to utilitarian theories, but, in principle, to all action-theoretical approaches. His *second* criticism is more specific: Bourdieu assails utilitarian approaches for systematically failing to address the issue of the origin of utility calculations and interests. 'Because it must postulate *ex nihilo* the existence of a universal, pre-constituted interest, rational action theory is thoroughly oblivious to the social genesis of historically varying forms of interest' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 125). In addition, in his anthropological studies, Bourdieu showed again and again that the rational-economic calculations typical of modern Western capitalism are not found in other societies in this form.

Thus, according to Bourdieu, utilitarians turn a way of calculating actions that developed in modern capitalist societies into a human universal. More significant and more typical than this very well known criticism is Bourdieu's *third* objection, namely that utilitarians confuse the logic of theory with the logic of practice:

> The actor, as [this theory] construes him or her, is nothing other than the imaginary projection of the knowing subject (*sujet connaissant*) into the acting subject (*sujet agissant*), a sort of monster with the head of the thinker thinking his practice in reflexive and logical fashion mounted on the body of a man of action engaged in action. […] Its 'imaginary anthropology' seeks to found action, whether 'economic' or not, on the intentional choice of an actor who is himself or herself economically and socially unconditioned. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 123)

Here, Bourdieu first of all addresses the fact that utilitarianism has a false notion of real action processes, which are, for the most part, not entirely rational and reflexive. The kind of rationality and reflexivity that utilitarianism takes for granted here is possible only under particular circumstances – for example, in the sheltered world of science –, but is quite rare under normal conditions of practice. Action is indeed concerned with realising interests, but only rarely in the sense of the *conscious* pursuit of these interests. Thus, Bourdieu is advocating a stance similar to that of Anthony Giddens – one close to American pragmatism (see its concept of 'habit'). According to Bourdieu, action generally adheres to a practical logic, which is often shaped by routine requirements and which therefore has no need for the capacity for reflection demanded by rational choice theorists. Determined by socialisation, earlier experiences, etc., certain action dispositions are stamped onto our bodies; for the most part, these can be retrieved without conscious awareness and predetermine what form action takes. Bourdieu captures this idea with the term 'habitus', also to be found in the work of Husserl. A key term within his theory, he developed it at an early stage and was repeatedly to set himself apart from other theoretical schools with its help.

 In his *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, he defines the habitus as a 'system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a *matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions* and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems, and thanks to the unceasing corrections of the results obtained, dialectically produced by those results […]' (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 82–83, emphasis added).

This sounds complicated, but is in fact easy to explain. Bourdieu assumes that – from childhood onwards, in the family, school and world of work – we are taught certain schemata of thinking, perceiving and acting, which generally enable us to respond smoothly to different situations, to solve practical tasks, etc. Our physical movements, our tastes, our most banal interpretations of the world are formed at an early stage and then crucially determine our options for action.

> Through the habitus, the structure which has produced it governs practice, not by the process of a mechanical determination, but through the mediation of the orientations and limits it assigns to the habitus's operations of invention. As an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, the habitus engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions, and not others. […] Because the habitus is an endless capacity to engender products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production, the conditioned and conditional freedom it secures is as remote from a creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from a simple mechanical reproduction of the initial conditionings. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 95)

As this quotation indicates, the concept of 'habitus' does not rule out a certain behavioural room for manoeuvre that enables conduct of a creative and innovative nature. On the other hand, however, we cannot step or break out of this habitual behaviour entirely, because the habitus is an aspect of our life story and identity. The attentive reader will discern how this links up with Bourdieu's investigations in cultural sociology and class theory. For it is clear that there is no one habitus in a society, but that *different* forms of perception, thinking and action are inculcated in different classes, through which these classes – and, above all, the differences between them – are constantly reproduced. We are, however, not yet concerned with this aspect. What is important here is that Bourdieu deploys the concept of habitus in the attempt to rid himself of the assumptions of utilitarianism and neo-utilitarianism, which are highly rationalistic and anchored in the philosophy of consciousness.

If, as we have seen, Bourdieu's explicit effort to set himself apart from utilitarianism is unambiguous and there are elements in his theoretical edifice which simply cannot be reconciled with utilitarian thought, why has he so often been accused of being 'close to utilitarianism' – and not only by malicious interpreters or cursory readers? The reason is that, while Bourdieu has certainly criticised thinking in terms of economic utility,

the nature of his criticism is incapable of establishing clear distance between his
approach and utilitarian ones.

   Utilitarianism is fairly differentiated internally in that the so-called neo-
utilitarians have done away with some of the assumptions of traditional
utilitarianism (see Joas and Knöbl, 2009 [2004]: 94–122). Neo-utilitarians
have, for example, rid themselves of the concept of utility, replacing it with
the neutral term 'preferences', because only very few actions can be explained
on the basis of purely economic calculations of utility. It is true that Bourdieu's
critique of utilitarianism in its 'original' form goes further than this. The
concept of habitus allows him to take leave, above all, of the model of the
actor whose deeds are *consciously* rational. Yet, like *all* utilitarians, he continues
to adhere to the notion that people (consciously or unconsciously) *always*
pursue their interests – or preferences. According to Bourdieu, people are
socialised into a 'field', where they learn how to behave appropriately; they
understand the rules and internalise the 'strategies' indispensable to playing
the game *successfully*. And the aim of these 'strategies' – a (utilitarian) concept
used repeatedly by Bourdieu, although he is well aware of how problematic it
is in view of his critique of utilitarianism (see Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:
128) – is to improve the player's position within a particular field or at least to
uphold the status quo.

> It is not enough to say that the history of the field is the history of the struggle
> for a monopoly of the imposition of legitimate categories of perception and
> appreciation; it is in the very *struggle* that the history of the field is made; it is
> through struggles that it is temporalized. (Bourdieu, 1996 [1992]: 157, emphasis
> in original)

The battle over the realisation of actors' interests is thus a factor driving
the historical change of fields. The strategies deployed in the field are not
always concerned solely with attaining economic benefits – Bourdieu would
roundly reject an economistic or primitive utilitarian perspective of this kind.
The way he puts it is that the strategies are intended to procure those goods
worth playing for within a particular field. This *may*, as in the field of the
economy, be financial profit; in other fields, meanwhile, strategies are oriented
towards enhancing one's reputation or honour (which cannot necessarily
or immediately be converted into financial gain). The priority, however,
will always be to pursue those *interests* relevant within a particular field – in
competition with others.

   There is no doubt that this line of argument entails a premise backed by
typical utilitarian notions, which one can also detect within the context of
conflict theory (see Joas and Knöbl, 2009 [2004]: 174–198) and to which

Bourdieu explicitly refers: 'the social world is the site of continual struggles to define what the social world is' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 70). The concept of 'struggle' crops up in his work as frequently as that of 'strategy'; in much the same way as in utilitarianism and conflict theory, there is quite often a hint of cynical pleasure in the observation of the hypocritical behaviour of the objects of inquiry, whose subjective motives are by no means to be taken at face value:

> The most profitable strategies are usually those produced, without any calculation, and in the illusion of the most absolute 'sincerity', by a habitus objectively fitted to the objective structures. These strategies without strategic calculation procure an important secondary advantage for those who can scarcely be called their authors: the social approval accruing to apparent disinterestedness. (Bourdieu, 1990 [1980]: 292n.10)

This close connection between utilitarian, conflict theoretical and Marxian arguments is even more clearly apparent in another key Bourdieusian concept, that of 'capital', which complements or completes the concepts of 'field' and 'habitus'.

This concept of capital owes its existence to the following problem. Bourdieu must explain which goods the actors in the various fields struggle over, that is, what they are trying to achieve in deploying their various action strategies. He rejects the notion characteristic of (primitive) utilitarianism that social life is to be understood exclusively as a struggle over (economic) goods. For the same reason, he criticises Marxism, as it tends to focus on the struggle over economic goods, while ignoring or neglecting other forms of dispute (see, for example, Bourdieu, 1985 [1984]: 723).

Bourdieu now takes the logical step already taken in much the same way before him by conflict theorists. *His concern is to bring out how social struggles are about more than just financial utility and economic capital.* Yet, peculiarly enough, the way in which he proceeds – once again, in much the same way as does conflict theory (see Joas and Knöbl, 2009 [2004]: 174–198) – does not entail *a complete break* with utilitarian or Marxian notions. For in order to determine more precisely what is at stake in social struggles, Bourdieu deploys the term capital, which originates in 'bourgeois' and Marxian economics, but he extends its meaning and distinguishes between *different forms* of capital. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu criticises Marxism for having utterly neglected what he calls 'symbolic capital' – a consequence of its preoccupation with economic capital. Bourdieu, using language highly redolent of utilitarianism, puts it as follows: Marx only recognised immediate economic interests and these were all he allowed in his theoretical edifice, relegating all other types of interest to

the sphere of the 'irrationality of feeling or passion' (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 177). What one must do, however, is apply economic calculations to *all* goods (utilitarians and conflict theorists would say: 'to all resources'):

> [...] contrary to naively idyllic representations of 'pre-capitalist' societies (or of the 'cultural' sphere of capitalist societies), practice never ceases to conform to economic calculation even when it gives every appearance of disinterestedness by departing from the logic of interested calculation (in the narrow sense) and playing for stakes that are non-material and not easily quantified. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 177)

According to Bourdieu, Marxism entirely disregards the fact that actions which at first sight seem irrational because they are not geared towards immediate financial gain may be a means of acquiring substantial benefits *of other kinds*, which Bourdieu calls 'symbolic profits' and which prompt him to refer to 'symbolic capital' as well as economic capital. Certain deeds – such as generous gifts, extravagant behaviour, etc. – enable people to accrue all kinds of distinction; such deeds are a symbol of one's own (outstanding) position, power, prestige, etc., allowing one to distinguish oneself from those of lower rank. This symbolic form of capital is of relevance to the class hierarchy in a society in as much as it can be converted into 'real' capital in certain circumstances. The great prestige enjoyed by an individual, the good reputation of a particular family, the ostentatiously displayed wealth of a great man often furnishes people with opportunities to attain economic capital as well, in line with the motto: 'to everyone that has (symbolic) capital, (economic) capital shall be given'. Hence, there is nothing (economically) irrational about symbolic capital. Rather, the accumulation of symbolic capital is a clever way of safeguarding one's prospects of obtaining economic capital. This symbolic form of capital is a kind of credit, on the basis of which economic opportunities constantly arise. In this sense, Bourdieu can state that symbolic capital represents a 'transformed and thereby *disguised* form of physical "economic" capital' (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 183, emphasis in original).

> It is thus by drawing up a *comprehensive balance-sheet* of symbolic profits, without forgetting the undifferentiatedness of the symbolic and material aspects of the patrimony, that it becomes possible to grasp the economic rationality of conduct which economism dismisses as absurd: the decision to buy a second pair of oxen after the harvest, on the grounds that they are needed for treading out the grain – which is a way of making it known the crop has been plentiful – only to have to sell them again for lack of fodder, before the autumn ploughing, when they would be technically necessary, seems economically aberrant only if one forgets

all the material and symbolic profit accruing from this (albeit fictitious) addition to the family's symbolic capital in the late-summer period in which marriages are negotiated. The perfect rationality of this strategy of bluff lies in the fact that marriage is the occasion for an (in the widest sense) economic circulation which cannot be seen purely in terms of material goods [...]. (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 181, emphasis in original)

Nevertheless, this great importance of symbolic capital is not, as this quotation referring to Kabyle society might lead us to presume, restricted to 'primitive' or pre-capitalist societies. It is true, as Bourdieu states, that pre-capitalist economies have a 'great need for symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]: 191) insofar as circumstances of unadulterated exploitation and great material inequalities exist and are always papered over symbolically and thus concealed (or, conversely, realised in brutal fashion by means of physical violence). This, Bourdieu suggests, arguing in a very similar way to Marx, has changed in capitalism in that its practice of domination no longer depends on symbolic concealment, but can be legitimised in a very different way (for example, through the ideology of fair exchange between goods, money and labour). This does not mean, however, that symbolic capital plays no role in modern societies. Nothing could be further from the truth. It was to become Bourdieu's core project in the sociology of culture to analyse this 'symbolic capital' in modern societies – particularly modern French society – in a sober and sometimes cynical way. In his view, a convincing analysis of modern societies must go beyond economic forms of capital and pay heed to symbolic capital as well.

   Subsequently, when he had more or less ceased to carry out anthropological studies and increasingly devoted himself to the analysis of French society, Bourdieu was to attempt to clarify more precisely this still relatively nebulous concept of 'symbolic capital'. In addition to economic capital, he introduced the distinction between 'cultural' and 'social' capital; sometimes he also refers to 'political capital', prompting observers and critics to refer to the 'inflationary' tendency affecting the concept of capital in his theory. There is no need for us to understand all these extensions and differentiations in detail. It is enough to point out that in his best-known writings, Bourdieu distinguishes between economic, symbolic, cultural and social forms of capital. As the meaning of the term 'economic capital' ought to be fairly clear, we shall briefly clarify the other three types:

• Under the term 'cultural capital' he includes *both* works of art, books and musical instruments, in as much as this capital is present in the form of objects, *and* cultural capacities and cultural knowledge, in as much as these