

Symbolic power and group-making: On Pierre Bourdieu's reframing of class

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Loïc Wacquant

University of California, Berkeley, USA; Centre européen de sociologie et de science politique, Paris

Abstract

Pierre Bourdieu's recasting of the question of class exemplifies the major features of his sociology and the way he extends, melds, and mends classical views into a distinctive framework. Bourdieu's approach is relational, agonistic, and synthetic; it spotlights the symbolic dimension of group formation as practical achievement while fusing theory and research, and it introduces multiple correspondence analysis as a statistical technique suited to grasping constellations of plural capitals. Bourdieu reformulates the problem of domination by *questioning the ontological status of collectives* and by forging tools for elucidating the politics of group-making: the sociosymbolic alchemy whereby a mental construct is turned into a historical reality through the inculcation of schemata of perception and their deployment to draw, enforce, or contest social boundaries. The article traces the impetus behind the key conceptual shifts Bourdieu effects, from class structure to social space, from class consciousness to habitus, from ideology to symbolic violence, and from ruling class to field of power. It also points to recent studies that have tried, tested, and refined the core tenets of his model and it offers a bibliography of Bourdieu's publications on class documenting a twofold empirical and analytic shift towards a *sociology of the realization of categories* that spotlights the constitutive power of symbolic structures.

Keywords

Bourdieu, class, classification, relationalism, symbolic power, struggle, social alchemy, group-making

Pierre Bourdieu's reframing of the question of class exemplifies the major features of his sociology *in globo*, so that a close reading of his key writings on the topic affords the reader a direct pathway into the core of his scientific project.¹ It highlights the key conceptual shifts effected by the French sociologist in an effort to recast and resolve one

Corresponding author:

Loïc Wacquant, Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94703, USA.

Email: loic@berkeley.edu

of the most vexing issues of social history and theory, and in so doing to forge tools for elucidating the broader politics of group-making: the *sociosymbolic alchemy* whereby a mental construct, existing abstractly in the minds of individual persons, is turned into a concrete social reality acquiring existential veracity as well as historical potency outside of and over them. I highlight here six interrelated features of Bourdieu's rethinking of class that extend, meld, and mend classical approaches into a distinctive framework.

1. Bourdieu's approach to class embodies his relentlessly *relational* conception of social life. For the author of *Distinction*, as for Marx and Durkheim, the stuff of social reality, and thus the basis for heterogeneity and inequality, consists of relations. Not individuals or groups, which crowd our mundane horizon, but webs of material and symbolic ties constitute the proper object of social analysis. These relations exist under two major forms: first, reified as sets of objective positions that persons occupy (institutions or 'fields') and which externally constrain perception and action; and, second, deposited inside individual bodies in the form of mental schemata of perception and appreciation (whose layered articulation compose the 'habitus') through which we internally experience and actively construct the lived world.² To capture them, one can and must overcome the deadly opposition between two antithetical and equally truncating stances, objectivism and subjectivism, by adopting a thoroughgoing methodological relationalism capable of grasping the tricky dialectic of social and cognitive structures in history, the tangled dance of dispositions and positions from which practice springs.

This relationalism sets Bourdieu apart from the *gradational* conceptions that dominated stratification research during the 1960s and 1970s, whether in the *subjectivist* strand represented by the continuist status-based approach exemplified by W. Lloyd Warner and the tradition of 'community studies' à la *Yankee City* (Warner et al. 1963) or in the *objectivist* mold of the school of 'status attainment' research running from Blau and Duncan (1967) to Featherman and Hauser (1978). But, by embracing *ab inceptio* both structure and agent, Bourdieu's relational framework also diverges sharply from both the Marxist and the Weberian approaches to class resurgent during the 1970s, insofar as the former construes the agent as a mere 'occupant' of a structural position while the latter treats the structure as the emergent product of the dynamic aggregation of individual lines of action aimed at effecting 'closure and usurpation.'³ Over the past two decades, stratification research has moved to incorporate organizations and networks as units of analysis, but these currents have tended to treat the first as self-contained sorting and ranking machines and the latter as self-propelling generators of social inequality or cohesion in the absence of a broader map of the class structure within which to embed them such as provided by Bourdieu's theory of multiple capitals.⁴

2. Next, Bourdieu's conception of class is intensely *agonistic* – and here he moves closer to Max Weber. For struggle, not reproduction, stands at the epicenter of his thought and turns out to be the ubiquitous engine of both social rupture and continuity. Class as a modality of social grouping, and spring of consciousness and conduct, emerges and obtains in and through the endless competition in which agents engage across the varied realms of life for the acquisition, control, and contestation of diverse species of power or 'capital.' These contests, anchored by one's location in social space, defined by the three

dimensional coordinates of volume of capital, composition of capital, and trajectory, go on in three main arenas, ranked in order of ascending specificity and consequentiality: the ordinary judgments and mundane activities of everyday life, including routine consumptions, mapped out in *Distinction* (1979); the specialized fields of cultural production, such as art, science, religion, and the media (dissected in *The Rules of Art* [1992], *Science of Science and Reflexivity* [2001a], and *On Television* [1996]), wherein authoritative representations of the social world are produced and disseminated; and the public sphere situated at the intersection of the political field and the bureaucratic state, recast as the ‘central bank of symbolic power’ entrusted with adjudicating disputes over categories and certifying identities.⁵ These multilevel struggles, nested, as it were, in the manner of concentric circles, determine at once what social properties constitute capital and the relative value of the different species in circulation in the various social games that make up a given social formation, and most crucially the ‘conversion rate’ obtaining at a given moment between economic capital and cultural capital.

3. In the third place, Bourdieu’s take on class is matchless for the stress it puts on the *symbolic dimension and mechanisms* of group formation and domination: like any collective, classes arise and live through recognition-misrecognition, that is, a constant and variegated work of inculcation and imposition of categories of perception that contribute to making social reality by molding its representation – in the threefold sense of social psychology, dramaturgy, and iconology.⁶ For Bourdieu, building on the philosophical anthropology of Ernst Cassirer, the social agent is an *animal symbolicum* who inhabits a world lived and constructed through the prism of language, myth, religion, science, and assorted knowledge constructs.⁷ So the very existence of classes as containers and determinants of social life is not a brute given inscribed in the differential distributions of life chances. Rather, it is the result of a work of *group-making* entailing struggles to impose class as the dominant ‘principle of social vision and division’ over and against competing alternatives (such as locality, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, religion, and so on). This is because

Social groups, and especially social classes, exist twice, so to speak, and they do so prior to the intervention of the scientific gaze itself: they exist in the objectivity of the first order, that which is recorded by distributions of material properties; and they exist in the objectivity of the second order, that of the contrasted classifications and representations produced by agents on the basis of a practical knowledge of these distributions such as they are expressed in lifestyles.

(Bourdieu, 1978: 16)

The properly political work of group-making calls our attention to the panoply of techniques of symbolic aggregation and instruments of claims-making whereby boundaries are drawn and enforced, such that a population is forged into a collective, a ‘class on paper’ turned (or not) into a real class, endowed with the capacity to move its (putative) members, voice demands, and act as such on the historical stage. In advanced society, this labor of symbolic manipulation tends to be monopolized by specialists in representation – trade-unionists, politicians, state managers, pollsters, journalists, and intellectuals – who

vie to steer the ‘social operations of *nomination* and the rites of institutions’ (Bourdieu, 2001b: 156, emphasis in original) through which social discontinuity is produced out of continuity, and categories rooted in the objective divisions of social space are made to emerge as active entities. Social science itself (and especially the sort of ‘politology’ practiced in government departments and public policy schools) becomes deeply implicated in the work of group-making as its techniques of inquiry and analytic idioms are appropriated by political operators to project a falsely rationalized vision of their rule (Bourdieu, 1989: Part III; Bourdieu and Boltanski, 2007 [1976]).

4. It follows, fourthly, that Bourdieu’s approach to class is genuinely *synthetic* in two senses. First, it braids together theoretical traditions that are generally perceived as antagonistic if not incompatible: it retains Marx’s insistence on grounding class in material relations of force but weds it with Durkheim’s teachings on collective representations and with Weber’s concern for the autonomy of cultural forms and the potency of status as perceived social distinctions.⁸ Second and relatedly, it revokes the perennial opposition between objectivist and subjectivist conceptions of class, realist views for which class is a thing-like entity ‘out there’ and nominalist approaches which construe it as a folk concept or a heuristic tool of the sociologist. Alongside various constructivist schools (notably phenomenology and its neo-Schutzian offshoot, ethnomethodology), Bourdieu recognizes that agents actively produce social reality through their mundane activities of sense-making, but he stresses that they do so based on the positions they occupy in an objective space of constraints and facilitations and with cognitive tools issued from that very space:

These constructions are not effected in a social vacuum, as some ethnomethodologists seem to believe: the position occupied in social space, that is, in the structure of the distribution of the different species of capital, which are also weapons, governs the representations of this space and the stances adopted in the struggles to conserve or transform it.

(Bourdieu, 1994: 28)

Bourdieu’s ‘genetic structuralism’ thus proposes that classes come to exist *to the degree that* people deploy class-based schemata of perception, appreciation, and action that, arising out of the objective divisions of social space, activate and inscribe these divisions in social relations and in political battles. But the alignment of class position, disposition, and practice in the different microcosms that compose a differentiated society is a *practical achievement* that depends on the labor of competing symbolic entrepreneurs, inasmuch as ‘the social world can be uttered and constructed in different ways’ (Bourdieu, 2001b: 298) according to different principles of categorization.⁹

The struggle to elevate or erode class as the paramount basis of social perception and action is waged most intensely in the upper reaches of social space, wherein the holders of the various forms of capital (economic, juridical, state-bureaucratic, religious, scientific, artistic, and so on) rival to determine their relative weight and prerogatives. Breaking with both liberal theories of elites and the Marxist vision of capitalist hegemony, which focus exclusively on the vertical division between ruler and ruled,

Bourdieu discards the substantialist notion of ‘ruling class’ in favor of the relational concept of *field of power* (see, in particular, Bourdieu, 1989: Part IV; Bourdieu, 2011; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1993). This topological notion enables us to anatomize the horizontal conflicts that pit the agents and institutions concentrating the disparate powers at play in advanced society. Indeed, Bourdieu suggests that many conflicts that we take to oppose dominant and dominated categories are in reality internecine battles pitting the different sectors of the field of power, that is, different fractions of a putative ruling class whose imperium is rendered both more opaque and more impregnable by the growing intricacy and contradictions internal to the mesh of domination.¹⁰ In short, instead of taking them as given or stipulating them through an act of scientific authority, Bourdieu problematizes the existence, boundaries, and degree of cohesion of both superordinate and subordinate classes, and he opens up for empirical inquiry the social modalities of their possible unification and eventual capacity for joint action.

5. Bourdieu’s reformulation of the question posed by Marx at the opening of *Das Kapital*, ‘What makes a social class?’ is distinctive for consistently *fusing theory and research*. The impetus behind the various conceptual shifts Bourdieu effects – from class structure to social space, from class consciousness to habitus, from ideology to symbolic violence, from ruling class to field of power – are rooted in and geared towards resolving concrete research puzzles: what confluence of factors produces the political disjunction between the urban subproletariat and the established working class in the Algerian war of independence? How do the children of the different classes curtail or extend their academic expectations so that these tend to match their actual chances at school? Why do peasants dislike photography when it is not ‘realistic’? How to categorize the different components of the petty bourgeoisie so as to capture the disparate roots of their shared penchant for ‘cultural goodwill’? What accounts for the ideological conversion of higher civil servants to the neoliberal vision of a minimalist and impotent state in the 1990s? How does the internationalization of the economy and the constitution of a worldwide web of elite schools impact the ability of various segments of the bourgeoisie to ensure the reproduction and conversion of their specific species of capital?

In Bourdieu, the analytics and the empirics of class are intricately interwoven and advance in unison. This is why he never wrote the treatise on class announced in a footnote of *Distinction*: separating theoretical principles from their implementation in research always runs the risk of scholastic reification. In ‘A Japanese Reading of *Distinction*,’ a public lecture given in Tokyo, Bourdieu elaborates:

The theoretical model is not displayed adorned with all the signs from which one ordinarily recognizes ‘grand theory,’ starting with the absence of any reference to a given empirical reality. The notions of social space, of symbolic space or of social class are never examined in themselves and for themselves. Rather, they are put to work and to the test in an investigation that is inseparably empirical and theoretical.

(Bourdieu, 1994: 16)

6. Yet Bourdieu’s recasting of class is not just theoretical and empirical. It also entails a major methodological innovation, namely, the introduction and refinement for social

research of the statistical technique of *multiple correspondence analysis* – evolving later into full-blown geometric data analysis.¹¹ This nonparametric method of categorical data analysis, derived from the mathematical work of Jean-Paul Benzécri, is geared to uncovering and mapping the interconnected spaces of individuals and properties. In conscious contrast and opposition to Lazarsfeldian ‘variable-oriented’ statistics, it obeys a topological mode of reasoning that retains the situated individual as unit of analysis to ensure a strong fit between social ontology, methodology, and theory; and it invites us to specify the conditions under which various agents will (not) come to cohere into a practical collective, and in what domains of social life. As Bourdieu explains: ‘The various statistical techniques contain implicit social philosophies that need to be made explicit’; each carries its own notions of ‘causality, action, and the mode of existence of social things’; and so he uses multiple correspondence analysis because ‘it is essentially a relational procedure whose philosophy fully expresses what in my view constitutes social reality. It is a procedure that “thinks” in relations’ (Bourdieu, 1991 [1968]: 255, my translation), which takes us full circle back to the first founding proposition of Bourdieu’s class frame.

Bourdieu’s rethinking of class as one modality of group-making has proven especially fertile, not only because of its theoretical prowess integrating insights from Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Cassirer (as well as Merleau-Ponty, Goffman, Austin, and others), but also because it has spawned a large body of empirical research in which its core tenets have been tried, refined, and revised to cover the major classes of contemporary society, captured in phases of consolidation no less than in cycles of decomposition, in France as well as in other countries. In *Le Bal des célibataires* (2002), Bourdieu himself diagnoses the crisis of the peasantry of his native Béarn as the penetration of the village society by the school and the urban media breaches the circular correspondence between the kinship-based social structures and the gender-divided mental structures characteristic of the traditional agrarian order. This line of inquiry is extended by Patrick Champagne, who shows, in *L’Héritage refusé* (2002), how the symbolic domination of the peasantry operates to accelerate its material shrinking by intensifying the cultural gap across generations, thus fostering strategies of family transmission and professional reconversion that facilitate the replacement of the village peasant of old by the technician agribusinessman oriented toward the national and global markets. The nitty-gritty of the performative work of ‘group-making’ from above effected by union leaders in relation to their constituency as well to the state is scrutinized by Maresca in *Les Dirigeants paysans* (1983), which documents how the least representative farmers come to take the helm of the group to mold it in their own image.¹²

The unmaking of the industrial working class in the postfordist age is analyzed by Stéphane Beaud and Michel Pialoux in *Retour sur la condition ouvrière* (1990), a sort of ‘reverse E.P. Thompson’ study revealing how changes in the labor process, factory organization, and school system in the closing decades of the twentieth century conspired to fragment and demoralize workers, in effect undoing them as a unified class.¹³ Olivier Schwartz (1990) tracks how family life, gender segmentation, and the growing privatization of the domestic sphere as a defensive buffer and realm of consumption contribute to anchoring from within the internal division of manual workers among ‘proletarianized,’ ‘deproletarianized,’ and ‘precarized’ strata, thus weakening the collective they (used to)

form.¹⁴ Abdelmalek Sayad plumbs the particular position and experiences of Algerian immigrants within the French working class in *La Double absence* (1998), while Beaud returns to their intersection in his socioanalytic dialogue with a jobless youth of French-Algerian origin revealingly entitled '*Pays de malheur*' (Amrani and Beaud, 2007). Adding a spatial layer to class (de)formation, Wacquant (2008) traces how relegation in stigmatized districts of the urban periphery further fragments the precarious fractions of the postindustrial working class across Western Europe, ensuring that the *precarariat* remains a *still-born group* whose dispersed origins and built-in fissiparity continually obstruct its access to an organized form of collective existence and action. By contrast, Marie Cartier and her associates investigate the ambiguous positions and ambivalent stances of the lower middle-classes of the same urban periphery in *La France des 'petits moyens*' (2008) to find that their occupational heterogeneity is partially compensated by their shared residential anxiety and fear of downward mobility that would engulf them among the outcasts of the city.

Moving up the class structure, Baudelot (2010) replaces the rise of the 'working poor' in a social hierarchy profoundly reconfigured by rapid transformations of the world of work and the growing complexity of wage-earning statuses such that middle-class growth has been accompanied by growing opacity and deepening cultural divisions, while Bihr and Pfefferkorn (2008) broaden the analytic compass to track the dynamic cumulation of cascading disparities at the two ends of the class ladder. Luc Boltanski (1983) dissects the catalytic role of the *cadres* in aggregating a dispersed set of intermediate categories and in shaping the morphology, mobilization, and political leanings of the managerial middle and upper classes in postwar France.¹⁵ Monique de Saint Martin (1993) and Béatrix Le Witta (1995) enrich Bourdieu's picture of the upper class by plumbing the fructification and sanctification of social capital among the dynasties of the nobility and Parisian bourgeoisie, while Monique and Michel Pinçon (1989, 2007) anatomize the exclusive institutions they have built for themselves in the upscale neighborhoods of the western districts of the capital as well as their suburban and provincial extensions: spatial seclusion turns out to be a key modality of cultural unification and class cohesion at the top.¹⁶ Moving beyond the national level, Wagner (2007) demonstrates how the globalization of economic and cultural flows has reinforced the weight of cultural capital in class rule, with opposite effects at the two ends of the social spectrum, but that the rise of 'international capital' has reinforced, rather than displaced, the dominant fractions of national bourgeoisies in the different countries.¹⁷

Outside of France, sociological, historical, and anthropological investigations have adopted and adapted Bourdieu's model to elucidate the relations of social space, class constitution, and cultural power in a dozen countries in periods spanning several centuries. This literature is now so voluminous as to warrant a separate article, so I will flag here only five studies concerning Portugal, Britain, the United States, post-Soviet societies, and Norway in the present era, as indicative of the dynamic diversity of the Bourdieusian legacy. Virgílio Pereira (2005) has replicated and specified the findings of *Distinction* by uncovering the tight fit between social position, cultural consumption, and sociability in the stratified neighborhoods composing the city of Porto, adding a multilayered spatial dimension to Bourdieu's model of the correspondance between social and symbolic space. The Manchester team led by Mike Savage and Alan Warde (Bennet et al.,

2009) has taken that model across the Channel to map British cultural consumption and participation while tackling frontally the complicating role of gender and ethnicity as bases of group formation.¹⁸ Annette Lareau (2003) has documented how the sharp class and ethnic bifurcation of child-rearing practices on America's Eastern seaboard perpetuates existing structures of inequality, displaying how class effectively works in 'familial ways' through the organization of daily life, language use, and differentiated relations to the school. Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley (1998) have extended and tested Bourdieu's model of capital conversion in the field of power to delineate the emergence of a new ruling class in the countries of the former Soviet bloc after the fall of communism.¹⁹ Finally, bringing Bourdieu to Norway, Lennard Rosenlund (2009) has disclosed the growing weight of the composition (as distinct from the volume) of capital as prime determinant of life chances and lifestyles in the city of Stavanger in the wake of the oil boom, and shown how the deep differentiation between the public and private sectors stamps the street-level feel of that city as well as the class structure of the country (and, presumably, of other Scandinavian nations similarly molded by the social-democratic state).²⁰

A close reading of his inquiries on class, power, and culture suggests that Pierre Bourdieu reformulated the classic problem of domination and inequality by *questioning the ontological status of groups* and by forging tools for disclosing how these come to be practically made and unmade in social life through the inculcation of shared schemata of perception and appreciation and their contested deployment to draw, patrol, or challenge social boundaries. At the epicenter of his sociology, then, lies the *conundrum of the realization of categories*, that is, the concrete activities and operant mechanisms whereby evanescent mental constructs are turned into hard and enduring historical realities, in the twofold guise of institutions (systems of positions) and incarnate subjectivities (clumps of dispositions) that work in tandem to actualize symbolic divisions by inscribing them into materiality. It remains for others to extend this praxeological rethinking of class to other social collectives based on age, gender, ethnicity (including that subtype of denegated ethnicity called race), and nation.²¹ The work of sociological deconstruction of the labor of group-making has only just begun.

Appendix: Key writings on class by Bourdieu

Bourdieu grants a central place to class as a modality of inequality, identity, and action throughout his work, but with two drifts over time, the one empirical and the other analytic. Schematically put, Bourdieu's primary empirical focus migrates up the class order across the decades, moving from the dissolution of the peasantry and internal makeup of the urban proletariat (in both Algeria and France, in the early 1960s, as exemplified by *The Ball of Bachelors* and *Algeria 1960*), to the contrasted inclinations and fates of the middle classes (mid-1970s, starting with *Photography as a Middle-Brow Art* and climaxing with *Distinction*), to the upper class and its internecine conflicts arising from the 'division of the labor of domination' (1980s, from *Distinction* to *The State Nobility*), to the role of the state, law, and international forces in shaping class from without and above (1990s, see in particular *The Social Structure of the Economy* and the spate of essays on neoliberalism).

Analytically, Bourdieu shifts likewise from documenting the enduring significance of class (in an epoch dominated by the twin themes of the alleged *embourgeoisement* of the

working class, the rise of multiple ‘new classes,’ and the celebration of the ‘end of classes’) to the mapping of the invisible structure of social space within which classes emerge (or not) as a result of multisided symbolic battles aiming to impose it as ‘the dominant principle of social vision and division,’ over and against other possible bases of social determination and collectivity formation. Thus, in the many works leading up to *Distinction* (1979 in the French original), he takes class as a structural given and concentrates on tracing its manifold impacts and manifestations across realms (for example, across ordinary consumptions, aesthetics, and politics). By his 1984 Frankfurt lecture on ‘Social Classes and the Genesis of “Classes”’ (note the square quotes in the original), Bourdieu has drawn the full implications of his analysis of *Language and Symbolic Power* (1982), and so he drops that presumption to stress the inherent multidimensionality of the distribution of efficient resources in a given social formation and the correspondingly ‘semantic elasticity of the social world.’ He spotlights the relative autonomy of symbolic systems from social structures and their constitutive power, that is, their capacity to shape reality by shaping shared representations of the world.²² He centers on the problematic passage from ‘classes ‘on paper to classes in reality, from possible to actual class, as indicated by the title of his 1987 address to the Dean’s Symposium on Social Classifications at the University of Chicago (where he had been invited to speak on class in a closing keynote after Samuel Preston had covered age, Eleanor Maccoby gender, and Orlando Patterson race, in a scripted cast that kept these bases of categorization studiously separate): ‘What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups.’ *Social space and symbolic struggles then become the operant conceptual dyad* of a model that can be applied to any social collective resulting from ‘the classification struggles that are a dimension of any class struggle, be they age classes, sexual classes, or social classes’ (Bourdieu, 1982: 14).²³

The empirical ascent up the class ladder is accompanied by a major conceptual break with the elaboration of the notion of ‘field of power’ (first sketched in 1971 and elaborated most vigorously between 1988 and 1995, when Bourdieu decides to tackle frontally the question of the state, around which he had circled gingerly for decades), as well as the notion of *corps* (corporate bodies, such as occupations or the family, which warrant ‘the affinity of dispositions and the orchestration of habitus’), as distinct from both class and field, with which Bourdieu seeks to explain the initial consolidation of the state and the continued ‘organic solidarity’ of the dominant in spite of their objective divisions.²⁴ It is also accompanied by the promotion of orthogonal principles of classification such as gender (with the preparatory essays, the book, and ensuing debates on *Masculine domination*) and ethnicity (under the guise of region, immigration, and the treatment of foreigners).

The empirical shift is clearer than the analytic one, which could be interpreted as resulting either from a change of position or from theoretical maturation and clarification. As Bourdieu himself has warned: ‘when you know how to look, continuities are more striking than discontinuities. A thinker or a researcher is like a cruise ship: it takes an incredibly long time (*un temps fou*) to make a turn. Even with Foucault, in whose work you will find more apparent turns than in mine, I think the continuities are striking’ (Bourdieu, 2001c). This appendix provides a guide to assess these and other possible turns in Bourdieu’s thinking on class. It lists works chronologically based on their date

of first publication (drawing on Delsaut and Rivière, 2011), with English translations when available. It includes only works directly dealing with class, in an effort to strike a balance between parsimony and comprehensiveness.

1962

Célibat et condition paysanne. *Études rurales* 5-6 (April): 32–136. English: abridged as Part 1 of *The Ball of Bachelors: The Crisis of the Peasant Society in Béarn*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008 [2002], 7–130.

La hantise du chômage chez l'ouvrier algérien. Prolétariat et système colonial. *Sociologie du travail* 4: 313–331.

Les sous-prolétaires algériens. *Les Temps Modernes* 199(December): 1031–1051. English: abridged as The Algerian subproletariate. In: Zartman IW (ed.) *Man, State, and Society in the Contemporary Maghreb*. London: Pall Mall Press, 1973, 83–89.

1963

(with Darbel A, Rivet J-P, and Seibel C). *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie*. Paris/The Hague: Mouton.

1964

(with Sayad A). *Le Déracinement. La crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie*. Paris: Minuit.

(with Sayad A) Paysans déracinés: bouleversements morphologiques et changements culturels en Algérie. *Études rurales* 12(January): 56–94. English: Colonial rule and cultural sabir. *Ethnography* 5(4) (December 2004): 444–486.

(with Passeron J-C) *Les Héritiers. Les étudiants et la culture*. Paris: Minuit. English: *The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relation to Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

1965

(with Boltanski L, Chamboredon J-C, Lagneau G, Castel R, and Schnapper D) *Un Art moyen. Essai sur les usages sociaux de la photographie*. Paris: Minuit. English: *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

(with Bourdieu M-C) Le paysan et la photographie. *Revue française de sociologie* 6(2): 164–174. English: The peasant and photography. *Ethnography* 5(4) (2004): 600–616.

1966

(co-edited with Darbel A) *Le Partage des bénéfices. Expansion et inégalités en France*. Paris: Minuit. Especially: Différences et distinctions, 117–129; La transmission de l'héritage culturel, 383–420.

(with Darbel A and Schnapper D) *L'Amour de l'art. Les musées d'art et leur public*. Paris: Minuit. English: *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and their Public*. Cambridge: Polity.

Condition de classe et position de classe. *European Journal of Sociology* 7(2): 201–223.

Comment la culture vient aux paysans. *Paysans* (INRA, Paris) 62: 6–20.

1970

(with Passeron J-C) *La Reproduction. Éléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement*. Paris: Minuit. English: *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. London: Sage, 1977 (revised edition with a new preface, 1990).

1971

Champ du pouvoir, champ intellectuel et habitus de classe. *Scolies. Cahiers de recherches de l'École normale supérieure* 1: 7–26.

Formes et degrés de la conscience du chômage dans l'Algérie coloniale. *Manpower & Unemployment Research in Africa* 4(1): 36–44.

Reproduction culturelle et reproduction sociale. *Information sur les sciences sociales* 10(2): 45–79. English: Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In: Brown R (ed.) *Knowledge, Education and Cultural Change*. London: Tavistock, 1973, 71–112.

1973

Classes et classement. *Minuit* 5: 22–24. English: Classes and classifications. In: Clarke DB, Doel MA, and Housiaux KML (eds) *The Consumption Reader*. London: Routledge, 2003, 246–251. (with Boltanski L and de Saint Martin M) Les stratégies de reconversion: les classes sociales et le système d'enseignement. *Information sur les sciences sociales* 12(5): 61–113. English: Changes in social structure and changes in the demand for education. In: Giner S and Scotford-Archer M (eds) *Contemporary Europe: Social Structures and Cultural Patterns*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 197–227.

1974

Avenir de classe et causalité du probable. *Revue française de sociologie* 15(1): 3–42.

Les fractions de la classe dominante et les modes d'appropriation des oeuvres d'art. *Information sur les sciences sociales* 13(3): 7–31.

1975

(with Boltanski L) Le titre et le poste: rapports entre le système de production et le système de reproduction. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 2: 95–107. English: Formal qualifications and occupational hierarchies. *Reorganizing Education, Sage Annual Review* 1 (1977): 61–69.

1976

(with Boltanski L) La production de l'idéologie dominante. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 2–3: 4–73. Reprinted as Bourdieu and Boltanski, *La Production de l'idéologie dominante*. Paris: Démopolis and Raisons d'agir Éditions, 2008.

1977

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Notes

This essay is a revised and extended version of a text initially prepared as preface to a collection of Pierre Bourdieu's key writings on class and politics to appear in Norwegian as *Et klassespørsmål* (Oslo, Forlaget Manifest). I thank the editors of the *Journal of Classical Sociology* for their encouragement to rework it and for their patience in awaiting the results, and the timely comments of Sébastien Chauvin, Megan Comfort, Johs Hjellbrekke, Daniel Laurison, and Tom Medvetz.

1. A plurality of Bourdieu's 37 books and 400-odd articles deal with one or another aspect of class, covering the peasantry, the (sub)proletariat, the middle classes, and the bourgeoisie (including the rivalry between their economic and cultural fractions), as well as the hierarchical constellations they form, such that it is not possible to supply here a comprehensive listing. Instead, I have selected in the appendix key writings that provide a panorama of his early (1960s), middle (1970s till *Distinction*), and late (post-1982) positions. They chart an analytic shift from the duet of class condition and position to class-making as one possible outcome of symbolic struggles.
2. 'The evidence of *biological individuation* prevents us from seeing that society exists under two inseparable forms: on the one side, institutions, which can assume the form of physical things, monuments, books, instruments, etc.; and, on the other, acquired dispositions, durable ways of being or doing incarnated in bodies. ... The socialized body (what we call the individual or the person) is not opposed to society: it is one of its forms of existence' (Bourdieu, 1980: 29, emphasis in original).
3. See Wright (1979) and Parkin (1972), for two representative positions.
4. For illustration, consult Baron (1984) and DiMaggio and Garip (2012), neither of which connects with Bourdieu. This connection is made by Emirbayer and Johnson (2008), and by the variegated articles gathered in that special thematic issue of *Theory & Society*, as well as the arguments stretched across the two books by Martin, *Social Structures* (2009) and *The Explanation of Social Action* (2011).
5. The operation of symbolic power in the political and bureaucratic fields is plumbed in Bourdieu's *Langage et pouvoir symbolique* (2001b), *La Noblesse d'État* (1989), *Raisons pratiques* (1994: esp. Ch. 4), as well as in the lecture course from the Collège de France from 1989 to 1992, *Sur l'État* (2012). Further elaboration is in Wacquant (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics: The Mystery of Ministry* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2005), esp. chapter 1.
6. Bourdieu points time and again to the 'innumerable acts of antagonistic construction that agents operate, at every moment, in their individual and collective struggles, spontaneous or organized, to impose the social vision of the world most conforming to their interests' and for which they are unequally armed (1977: 2).
7. See in particular Cassirer's *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1955–1957 [1923–1929]), a three-volume masterwork Bourdieu absorbed early in his intellectual development and had translated into French in his series with Éditions de Minuit, along with four other books by the Marburg philosopher.
8. Bourdieu's reworking of class both cuts across and overruns the conventional theoretical divisions – between Marxist, Weberian, Durkheimian, and post-classist analysis – into which Wright (2005) attempts in vain to slot it.
9. See also Bourdieu (1987: 158–162). This is particularly salient and glaring in the case of the middle class, owing to its 'in-between' location, liable to be viewed from or to orient itself above or below (Wacquant, 1991).
10. 'Domination is not a simple and direct effect of the action exerted by a set of agents (the "ruling class") invested with coercive powers but the indirect effect of a complex nexus of actions

- engendered in and by the network of criss-crossing constraints that each of the dominant, thus dominated by the structure of domination through which his domination is wielded, suffers from all the others' (Bourdieu, 1994: 57).
11. This is stressed by Lebaron (2009). An excellent introduction to the method as deployed by Bourdieu is Le Roux and Rouanet (2009), who have trained legions of researchers to do multiple correspondence analysis through special workshops held across Western Europe (and more recently in the United States, at Berkeley). A instructive comparison of Bourdieu's brand of correspondence analysis with the mathematics of rational choice developed by James Coleman is made by Breiger (2000); an alliance with network analytic technique is proposed by de Nooy (2003).
 12. For extensions of this problematic to the peasantry of Spain and Brazil, see Combessie, *Au Sud de Despeñaperros. Pour une économie politique du travail* (1995), and Garcia, *Libres et assujétis. Marché du travail et domination au Nordeste* (1995).
 13. Chauvin's *Les Agences de la précarité. Journalier à Chicago* (2010) on the springs and experience of extreme labor casualization in the American inner city.
 14. A germane effort to map out the founts of working-class subjectivity in England, fusing Bourdieu and Schutz, is Charlesworth's *A Phenomenology of Working Class Experience* (2000).
 15. The role of morality in the differential constitution of the middle (or is it upper?) class in France and the United States is explored by Lamont (1994). The issue of practical morality in class formation in Bourdieu's wake is taken up further by Sayer (2005).
 16. Among many extensions in other countries, the work of Sergio Miceli in Brazil deserves special mention, e.g., *Imagens negociadas. Retratos da elite brasileira, 1920–40* (1996).
 17. This analysis is updated in the thematic issue of *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* edited by Wagner on 'Le pouvoir économique,' 190, December 2011.
 18. For an extended discussion of this book and other replications, extensions, or attempted refutations of *Distinction* outside of France, see Duval (2010).
 19. The impact of Bourdieu on American research is simultaneously registered and neutralized in Lareau and Conley (2010).
 20. I discuss Rosenlund's contribution to the empirical and international extension of Bourdieu's model of class in 'Norwegian Distinctions' (Wacquant 2001, reprinted as preface to his book). This is complemented by a rich body of research on the Scandinavian upper class conducted by teams led by Johs Hjellbrekke in Norway and Annick Prieur in Denmark: see, for illustration, Hjellbrekke et al. (2007) and Prieur et al. (2008).
 21. For provocative forays and sorties in this direction, sketching the broad contours of an emerging 'group-making' paradigm, read Noiriel (1991); Brubaker (2005); Calhoun (2007); DaCosta (2007); Weiß (2012); and Wimmer (2012).
 22. 'These symbolic struggles – both the individual struggles of everyday life and the collective and organized struggles of political life – have specific logics, which confers them a real autonomy from the structures within which they are rooted. ... Thus we can now examine under what conditions a symbolic power can become a constitutive power, taking the term constitution, with Dewey, in both its philosophical and its political senses: that is, a power to conserve or transform the objective principles of union and separation, wedding and divorce, association and dissociation, at work in the social world, the power to conserve or transform extant classifications in matters of sex, nation, region, age, and social status, and to do this through words used to designate or describe individuals, groups or institutions' (Bourdieu, 1987: 160, 163).
 23. Rogers Brubaker (1985) was first to detect this tension (or slippage) in Bourdieu's usage of class as a specific concept or a generic category.
 24. See the pithy and pivotal, yet cryptic paper: 'Effet de champ et effet de corps' (Bourdieu, 1985).

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