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PIERRE BOURDIEU'S CONCEPT OF THE POLITICS OF SYMBOLIZATION AND SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM☆

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ABSTRACT

The decisive antidualism in Bourdieu's thought permits searching for the complementary traits of his theory of symbolic social system and symbolic interactionism, rather than opposition. The theory of the symbolic social system, which is characterized by the double structure of meanings in the order of social relations and its symbolic representation in the narrower sense, has many convergent points of view with the symbolic interactionists' perspective, starting with the category of habitus. Conceptual frameworks of structuralist constructivism and symbolic interactionism have one major difference – in Bourdieu's theory the individual self is not inscribed. There are, however, strong common premises in terms of epistemology, theory of meaning and social ontology. Both epistemologies are antidualistic and relativistic (antiessentialism). Both approaches are based on a common theory of the social origin of meaning (anticognitivism). Both social ontologies are constructivist (social construction of reality). However, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic struggle for control over the commonsense world-view introduces a new, political dimension to interpretive sociology.

TOWARD THEORETICAL INTEGRATION

One may agree with a reflection that in a pluralistic society a diversity of research methodologies is not only less problematic, but is also desirable (Ritzer, 2000, p. 632). On the other hand, there is a noticeable tendency toward the convergence of research paradigms (Mouzelis, 1995, p. 10), and especially to overcoming all sorts of dualistic schemas, starting from the micro- and macrosociological opposition. Symbolic interactionists are anxious to join the trend (Denzin, 2000, p. 914; Fine, 2002). A history of ideas that develops along a two-tier analysis of what is new (original) and what is old (regular) in academic discourse (Foucault, 1977, p. 174) has an important role to play in this "integration" process.

Among "old" theoretical problems of sociological theory remains the question of whether Emilé Durkheim was right in claiming that society is a *sui generis* reality, or the nominalists in presenting society as aggregation of active individuals. With regards to this problem, sociologists have been worried by the question of whether their discipline has advanced sufficiently, and whether it is possible or not to go "beyond the classics" (Merton, 1982, p. 25; Tenbruck, 1991, p. 17), or the founders, with Durkheim and George Herbert Mead at the lead, conducting, as it seems, antagonistic paradigms of the "social fact" and the "social definition of the situation." At the dawn of the twenty-first century a tranquilizing response seems substantiated. Among new theoretical offers Pierre Bourdieu's proposal to solve the realist-nominalist dilemma comes to the fore, unveiling the uniquely structured complexity of social practices. Obviously, it stems from and synthesizes many earlier conceptual currents. These primarily originate from the French intellectual traditions.

It is not my intention, which, after all, would not be realistic, to attempt to prove that Durheheim's influence was greater on Bourdieu than Karl Marx's, from whom he drew the idea of practice, or than Max Weber's, whose concepts on lifestyles he relates to. However, since my goal is to present Bourdieu's original input in the broader currents of symbolic sociology (Ha–las, 2002), it seems justified to stress the significance of his studies on Durkeim's social systems of classifications and collective representations. As pointed out by Serge Moscovici, only apparently this conceptual outlet is incompatible with symbolic interactionism (Moscovici, 1984, p. 40).

I propose reading Bourdieu's theory as free from an antagonism of "social fact" as opposed to the "definition of the situation" paradigms that interpretive sociology has adopted. In my opinion, attributing such antagonism (Mouzelis, 1995, p. 113) to Bourdieu's orientation is a misunderstanding. To the contrary, I intend to demonstrate similarities, parallels and the complementary traits of Bourdieu's structuralist constructivism with symbolic interactionism and how

they are encoded in his theoretical system. My attempt to uncover the links between Bourdieu's theory and symbolic interactionism is also a result of my conviction that the latter has lost nothing of its relevance (Johnson, Farberman & Fine, 1992, p. 7). Bourdieu's concepts together with symbolic interactionism constitute, as I will attempt to demonstrate, complementary models of symbolic practices – collective (groups) and distributive (actors).

There have in fact appeared attempts at discrediting Bourdieu's work (Collins, 1981, p. 179). However, my intent is to stress the innovatory nature of his approach to sociology understood as the sociology of symbolic processes. By developing sociology of power he steers interpretive sociology toward a conflict-based model of society and sociology of politics. In this manner he reinstates an emancipatory civic duty, so imminent to the Chicago school tradition, not crossing the boundary between cognitive and practical interests. The decisive antidualism in Bourdieu's thought permits me to search for the complementary traits of his theory of symbolic social system and symbolic interactionism, rather than opposition. It is true that neither social self, nor the actor, nor the social individual appear in the vernacular of Bourdieu's theory, giving rise to criticisms that he ignores subjectivity and intentionality as well as the rationality of social actions (Ritzer, 2000, p. 531). This, however, does not form an insurmountable barrier for the compatibility of the concepts underlying the theory of the symbolic social system with symbolic interactionism, in which the self understood through actions and systems of meaning arising from interactions is, after all, a social phenomenon. I argue, that through the lenses of social pragmatism and symbolic interactionism, social praxeology, as Bourdieu's theory (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 10) is sometimes called, can be better perceived and understood, as can the social processes that his model presents. The initial steps in this direction will be undertaken here and the further and full exploration left open. Metaphorically speaking, what will be attempted here is the creation of peculiar "synapses" – connections between these theoretical discourses, which will enable a better receptivity, exchange and synthesis of the respective concepts that should not be left apart and separated.

AT THE ROOTS OF SIMILARITIES BETWEEN
VARIOUS BRANCHES OF SYMBOLIC SOCIOLOGY

Inclined, as he is, toward a relativistic epistemology, Bourdieu does not ascribe to any theoretical concepts a fundamental and absolute status. He feels any universalism attributed to them can, most probably, be an instrument of jockeying for position in academic discourse (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 45). For this reason he also considers as relative all contradistinctions, including that notorious one,

inherited from the neo-Kantian epistemology, based on the dichotomy: cognition of nature – cognition of culture, which was so important in the formation of the interpretative paradigm in sociology. These categories refer to substantive characteristics – immutable essences of things, either natural (characteristics of species), or cultural (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 18), without taking into account the fluctuating cognitive perspectives. It is not however a nihilistic relativism that denies objectivity of scientific knowledge. Bourdieu rejects the idea of absolute objectivity in the classic sense and the pure subject of cognition. The search for objectivity demands the cognition of social conditions of scientific practice that is historically changeable.

Criticizing Alfred Schutz's subjectivism (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 125), which refers to the consciousness of the participants of social life, but with equal force rejecting the one-sidedness of Marx's and Durkheim's objectivism (rejecting ideology and superstition), Bourdieu attempts at overcoming this unfortunate opposition. Also in an approach close to Ernst Cassirer, Georg Simmel, Florian Znaniecki and Mead, Bourdieu suggests an anti-essentialist understanding of social life, referring to relations rather than to individuals. Rejecting a physicalist understanding of objectivism (naturalism), he has build an objectivist social semiotics, searching for a connection with "idealistic" semiotics, as he termed it, or, as Jürgen Habermas puts it, with an intentional semantics (Habermas, 1991, p. 58). This means grasping a relationship between collective categories of cognition of "reality" and individual cognitive strategies of classification, applied by actors with regard to themselves, as well as interpersonally (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 562). Thus, the ground for the encounter with symbolic interactionism is ready under the condition that the latter's imput to the study of collective symbolism is properly understood (Strauss, 1969, p. 148, 1993, pp. 23–46). In this manner, according to Bourdieu's concept, the antidualist thinking, i.e. against the opposition: objectivism vs. subjectivism is supposed to lead to overcoming the antinomy between collectivism and individualism.

A number of different attempts at developing a social semiotics, for instance by Algirdas Greimas (1976), and Roland Barthes (1969) have taken place on the foundation of French structuralism. In contrast to cognitive structuralists, including its phenomenological version (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), Bourdieu stresses the pragmatic dimension of meaning, although tracking the origins for the idea of the "pragmatical" he refers directly to Kant, and not Pierce (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 543). Meaningful praxis and symbolic interaction come closer, in my reading, than usually assumed. Thus a materialistic reading of "realism" and "objectivism" in Bourdieu's conception (Jenkins, 1998, p. 92), allegedly depicting "necessities" and "determinants" of historical mechanisms, or taking place in biological units and things, can be seen as completely false and

unsubstantiated. He describes social reality primarily as a universum of potential stylizations (meanings, valuations and sentiments) in various fields of action: gaining nourishment, sexuality, habitation, sport, to name only the practices connected with what was termed "basic needs" (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 230).

Bourdieu interprets Marx himself as an adversary of both idealism (pure cognition) and a materialistic theory of cognition (a passive registering of experiences), since the latter pointed at the aspect of active consciousness, which is present between the conditions of existence and collective actions, or, as the pragmatists put it, between the environment and actions. Significantly, like John Dewey, or Mead in their polemics against John Watson and behaviorism (Mead, 1964, p. 36), Bourdieu also, almost paraphrasing them, insists that far from a mechanical reaction to a mechanical stimulus, human beings respond to the calls or threats of the world, to which they themselves contributed, through the creation of sense (Bourdieu, 1979, pp. 544–545).

This fundamental and only seemingly plain assertion, a common point of departure for interpretive sociology, and which Herbert Blumer concisely stated, claiming that people act on the basis of the meaning which objects possess for them (Blumer, 1969, p. 2), is further developed by Bourdieu. Still, he proceeds in a different direction than cognitivism, or the intellectual idealism of the phenomenologists (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 545), to name Schutz and Aaron Cicourel, but also Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, who looked for universal categories of common social knowledge. Again, the affinity of Bourdieu's decidedly anti-cognitivist stance with pragmatism is noticeable although to other authors than Dewey, he does not refer directly. He is criticizing both structural anthropology and its myths thinking in people, as well as interactionist sociology and ethnomethodology and their overemphasis on interpreters. He introduces the genetic concept of mental structures and classifications, searching for their social origins. Schemas of perception and evaluation are historically conditioned, present in practices and in symbolic objectifications embodying social structures.

If Bourdieu directs the accusation of cognitivism also against symbolic interactionism, then it is not difficult to refute, indicating that the leading thesis of the social origins of the principles of constructing the world is common both to him and to the interactionists. After all, they examine in what manner meanings stem from interaction (Maines, 2001, p. 3). However, in a manner similar to Georges Gurvitch before him, Bourdieu, metaphorically speaking, immerses the life-world in collective history, and the interactionists' proclivity to that dimension needs to be discovered.

For Bourdieu, socialization, which remains in the center of attention for interactionists as they follow the development of the social self (Hewitt, 2000;

Lindesmith, Strauss & Denzin, 1988), means the individual history of gaining embodied schemas of action, formed in collective history and making up the group ethos. The collective dimension of historical meanings, which find their embodiments in the actions of individuals, connects Bourdieu's research enterprise with Norbert Elias', that he occasionally mentions, citing the latter's works.

Bourdieu thus effectively shatters another antinomy: sociology – history. As he stresses, one of his main goals is to demonstrate that what is called social is in each of its parts history (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 74). History is revealed where it is most hidden – in habituses of thinking and behaving. This is history embodied and encoded in institutions and actions.

Sociology meets history in order to discover the genealogy of the present but Bourdieu simultaneously chooses a different perspective from the long duration propounded by Fernand Braudel, and present in macrosociology which examines processes taking place over a length of time, such as rationalization, bureaucratization, or modernization. As he defines it, his interest is in structural history, which demonstrates how current practices are a result of opposing tendencies toward transforming and conserving structures (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 56). He emphasizes social reality as history opposing the oversimplified reading of his thesis on reproduced structures (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 60, 1990). In this context accusations of mechanistic structuralism (Ritzer, 2000, p. 547), which would separate Bourdieu from interactionists, are also evidently off the mark.

The historical dimension of meaning brings Bourdieu closer to the hermeneutic concepts, which has been accurately noticed (Baert, 1998). However, it seems to me that it would be more adequate to call Bourdieu's orientation, developed between structuralism and hermeneutics, a historical pragmatism. Pragmatism is the deepest common root for Bourdieu's theory of practice and symbolic interactionism. It is necessary to remember that there are different types of pragmatism, and Bourdieu's concept remains in accordance with the fundamental thrust of Dewey's program. Thus what can be claimed is that the mark which distinguishes interactionism from Bourdieu's concepts is not the lack of a social genesis of meaning – on the contrary, that is a strong common premise – but the underdevelopment of this aspect from the historical or macro-social perspective in works of interactionists.

Symbolic interactionism emerged from Mead's concept of pragmatic inter-subjectivity and requires integration with macrosociological theory (Joas, 1992, p. 51). Such a potential is evident not only in Habermas' work, which refers to the interactionists, but especially in Bourdieu's theorizing, where concept of habitus meets the pragmatists' concept of habit. It is the concept in which the problem of the temporal dimension of society is reflected; it is antischolastic in its expression, rejecting the dualism of structures and history and implying the principle of

change (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 217). If the definition of the situation distinguishes the interpretive paradigm (Ritzer, 1980, pp. 487–492), then Bourdieu enters it and simultaneously rebuilds it. In this way, as I claim, the concept of habitus can constitute a bridge between Bourdieu's theory and symbolic interactionism. Bourdieu emphasizes that in maintaining autonomy in relation to direct determination through situation, habitus is not some ahistorical essence. It undergoes continual transformation in new situations, which demand adaptation. Simultaneously, habitus is described as a principle of a real autonomy of actions in relation to direct determinants of the situation.

The limited interest of many interpretive theories, including symbolic interactionism, in values has been demonstrated (Ha–las, 1991), and is being overcome (Fine, 2000). In contrast, it is the strong side of Bourdieu's theory. Bourdieu's concept of habitus emerges from his idea of ethos, which he initially also used (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 537), referring to the distinction: ethos and logos interpreted as the practical art and the verbal art. However, he rejected this dualistic categorization. He incorporated eidos, ethos, as well as hexis, i.e. cognitive schemas, axiological schemas and behavioral schemas, expressing their own social value, into his understanding of habitus, with which he replaced ethos (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 133). This concept encompasses contents related to the concepts of ethos and habit. Bourdieu draws directly upon Aristotle's concept of habitus and borrows ideas from Georg Hegel, Edmund Husserl, Weber, Durkheim and Marcel Mauss (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 12). He does not, however, refer explicitly to the pragmatists, who ascribed a decisive role to productive habits, and were against understanding them as mechanical, automatic, or reproductive (Dewey, 1930, p. 14). For Bourdieu, habitus is a factor generating social structures. It is – in his own words – a transforming machine. Habitus is a historically formed structure of dispositions active in the field of practices. Habitus and field are bound by a double relation and make the distinction actor-structure irrelevant. Field forms patterns of dispositions of habitus and habitus forms the field as a meaningful structure of positions.

Like the interactionists, rejecting a normative model of society, Bourdieu directs especially sharp criticism at Talcott Parson's theory. He takes into account the axiological dimension of the social system but understood as ethos, in other words, the practical principles as distinct from ethics as a system of norms verbally expressed. As he claims, practical principles of classification of knowledge and schematization of behaviour, which are constitutive of habitus, are inseparable and simultaneously axiological (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 133).

As I mentioned above, Bourdieu's theory without the social self was understood as a theory of social life without its subjects. Nonetheless, Bourdieu constantly stresses that habitus does not act on its own, beyond or above actors (Bourdieu,

1990, p. 13). Habitus implies a particular theory of action (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 10). Thus, it should be clear that Bourdieu's antidualistic approach, like that of symbolic interactionism, excludes any counterdistinction between the individual and society. According to Bourdieu's intention, the concept of habitus has to fill the explanatory gap between individual action and supra-individual structures (Jenkins, 1998, p. 74). Acting subjects are endowed with practical schemas of action directing the perception of the situation and the adaptable response, which have their historical rooting. Thus, Bourdieu's theory has evidently different premises than utilitarianism and the theory of rational choice, which presuppose a subject controlling means and goals, or also the motives of actions (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 45), but, nevertheless, it remains a theory of action understood as practice.

As Bourdieu phrases it eloquently – habitus is a structure structuring practices and the perception of practices – a structure structured internally. He points out pertinently that the structure of habitus is based on the logic of social differentiation, where the fundamental principle is the opposition: identity – difference, connected with social position, which in turn defines certain possessions, or characteristics and tendencies of action. Thus the central, or cardinal concept in Bourdieu's theory remains social identity, which defines and affirms itself in difference (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 191). This interplay of the oppositions: identity – difference, defines the position and structures habitus. The conception of social identity (Strauss, 1969) as a system of consensual meanings referring to the "I" and "we" relation is the basic concept of symbolic interactionism and the affinity of these variants of symbolic sociology may be also shown here. In contrast to the concepts of interactionists, identity also takes on a macrosociological thematization for Bourdieu. Bourdieu pays particularly close attention to the hierarchization of identities, as well as to the rules of social acceptance and rejection. These two processes are seen as basic principles of the particular logic of social order, the constructed and not the natural one.

Closely connected with habitus is the concept of capital. Bourdieu recalls that the former was used in the scholastics, as certain moral possession or ownership (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 134). He introduces a broader notion of capital as all kinds of possessions, or resources, constituting an additional value of meaning being a result of practice. Several kinds of capital are distinguished: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital in the narrower sense of the term, since all types of capital are symbolic in the broader sense, constituted by meaning and valuation. Symbolic capital is defined as the form, which each type of capital attains when it is perceived and recognized as legitimized. Here Bourdieu's originality comes to the fore, since he stresses the political aspect of symbolization: meanings, which stem from interaction on the ground of which people undertake

actions with respect to each other, exercise power. I suggest that the three basic principles of symbolic interactionism as formulated by Blumer (1969, p. 2) find a further elaboration as the meaning and power are combined. Anselm Strauss, another founder of symbolic interactionism came close to that standpoint in his view on the legitimacy of meanings (Strauss, 1969, p. 148).

The significance of spatial metaphors in social theory has been quite often recognized (Silber, 1995). Moving away from a substantialist or essentialist conception of society, Bourdieu, in tune with Simmel, introduces the concept of social space (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 53), understood as the space of relations in which interacting individuals and groups find themselves. In this space they take on relative positions, existing through the difference between them. The social world is thus conceptualized as a multi-dimensional space created by the principle of differentiation, i.e. variegated, meaningful properties. Actors, individual and corporate, are defined by their relative positions in space. Thus, in such analysis, one enters a situation that is already somehow defined, or "equipped." The characteristics of actors do not have to be presented immediately in a current, situational practice. Structural factors understood in such a way, that they gradually enter in the situation of action, are also presupposed by symbolic interactionism (Fine, 1992). Social space is described also as a distributive structure of various capitals, in which it is possible to move around, both horizontally and vertically, both within and between fields. Bourdieu conceives them as trajectories: collective, including generational and group trajectories as well as individual trajectories (Bourdieu, 1979, pp. 146, 528).

The concept of trajectory is of particular importance in symbolic interactionism (Strauss, 1993, pp. 52–68), and the demonstration of its compatibility with Bourdieu's notion of trajectory in the field is possible. Bourdieu himself is well aware of these similarities, but all the more fervently emphasizes his criticism of subjectivism in examining biographical trajectories by interactionists and postulates taking into account their structural matrices (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 88). According to him, a purely phenomenological description only skims the surface of the complex structures of social biographies. He emphasizes the difference between the biographical analysis of actual people and the analysis of constructed individuals (types) and their trajectories in certain analytical fields. I do not see any untranslatable differences in conceptual approaches here. Methodologies, however, differ as to the choice either of the deductive or inductive strategy – or grounded in common experience. Interactionists generally selected the latter, whereas Bourdieu, referring to the epistemology of Durkheim and Gaston Bachelard, questions commonsense and all microsociological orientations, including symbolic interactionism, if they accept it as a point of departure. Bourdieu builds first a theoretical model of social reality and only afterwards, in the next

phase, admits the introduction of a sociology of the perception of the social world and construction of socially and historically relativized world-views (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 130–139). It is a very rewarding to look, however, for affinities between Bourdieu's and symbolic interactionists' perspectives on social order. To concisely express his understanding of social space, which is to go beyond the objective – subjective dualism, Bourdieu refers to Pascal's thought: "Le monde me comprend et me m'engloutit comme un point, mais je le comprend." He paraphrases the thought telling that social space encompasses you as a point. But it is a point of view (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 28). Once again in this perspectivism Bourdieu approaches positions of convergence with pragmatism and symbolic interactionism, emerging from Mead's conception of perspective and role-taking.

Bourdieu occasionally refers to Erving Goffman's concept of strategic actions (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 235, 1994a, p. 178) and interactionism in general (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 134), suggesting a critical development of the dramaturgical model of society. Such a model, if only through a basic concept of social roles, was especially elaborated in Goffman's works. Bourdieu, simultaneously inspired by a conflict model of social relations, expands the understanding of the conflict to a rival battle over the control over schemes of classification, a control over meaning. Bourdieu seems to extrapolate Goffman's analysis of the rivalry over meaning (the presentation of self) to include the rivalry of institutions and the analysis of their strategies for imposing the meaning of social reality. These strategies are implemented in fields of social space, which are demarcated by various interests (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 113), conceived in a non-utilitarian manner as being interested, the sense of which is brought out by its antonym, which is lack of interest. As one goes further, more possibilities for the discovery of conceptual kinship appear.

The idea of multiple fields of practices may be read as a competing proposal to Schutz's influential concept in interpretive sociology of structures of life-world, with its multiple inter-subjective realities. The critique of the illusions of everyday reality, which means commonsense reality, evokes the question of the equivalent of Schutz's concept of the paramount reality in Bourdieu's theory. A paramount field of practices may be indicated as the field of politics. It should be stressed again, that Bourdieu's approach is more dynamic and political with its introduction of the question of the rivalry over the legitimacy of meanings and social knowledge. This problem being not undertaken was the weakness of phenomenological sociology, and – more broadly – of interpretive sociology including, to a large extent symbolic interactionism.

Fields prescribed by positions are described by Bourdieu as arenas for struggle over resources or capital. The symbolic struggle is played out concerning hierarchical positions and their legitimacy within each field of social practices

and between fields. This conception once again provides a ground for comparison with the concepts of interactionists, especially with the concept of a social arena in Strauss' understanding (Strauss, 1993, p. 226n), central for the action theory. The latter is also metaphorical, because it does not have in fact a physical location in space and time. It is central for understanding of order and change. "Arena action around issues ultimately signifies disagreement about directions of action – that is, in the broadest sense of the term, disagreement about the policy steps to be taken by the social world or subworld" (Strauss, 1993, pp. 226–227). Arena implies conflict or struggle about the legitimacy of a certain direction of action (or policy) and over the definition of the situation.

The structure of a field is dynamic through the constant presence of strategies aiming to transform it, which is expressed by the image that this structure is "in play." Space becomes a field when the properties selected for building it become active properties. Space can also be described as a field of forces, i.e. as a set of objective power relations affecting everyone who enters the field – relations, which cannot be reduced either to individual intentions or to direct influences. If such a formulation were to witness the impossibility of connecting Bourdieu's ideas with interactionism, then such an interpretation would be mistaken. After all, symbolic interaction has a temporal dimension. It cannot be reduced to the current exchange of behaviors here and now.

At this point we can reveal an outstanding parallel between the perspectivism of Bourdieu's theory, based on the notions: point of view in space and social games in fields of practice (Bourdieu, 1994b, p. 28), and concepts of role-taking and society as game, on which Mead's social pragmatism and symbolic interactionism are based. I would risk explicating Bourdieu's concept with the claim that it can be understood as an extrapolation of interactionist analysis of the "generalized other" – "we" in game – presented in a model of a symbolic social system. Society as symbolic interaction and Bourdieu's symbolic social system are compatible models for further examination in this direction.

THE SYMBOLIC SOCIAL SYSTEM AND SYMBOLIC INTERACTION

Citing pertinent arguments of Cassirer, Bourdieu, much like Blumer, Znaniecki or Elias, rejects the language of substantial wholes – individuals or societies – and examines social relations and effective relations, i.e. current exchanges, or interactions (Bourdieu, & Waquant, 1992, p. 113). As I mentioned before, he criticizes the uncritical acceptance by sociologists of commonsense structures of knowledge, or *Lebenswelt* (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 18), emphasizing, similarly to Karl Mannheim,

that they are culturally and historically relative. But his sociology of knowledge is closer to pragmatism, as he is examining social processes of constructing a world-view, entangled in a struggle over the legitimate understanding of commonsense.

The connections between the social world and symbolic systems, above all language, are in the focus of interest. Bourdieu remains in a broadly understood hermeneutic current, while eliminating the opposition between the "facts" of social life and "reports" concerning them (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 14). From this arises the problem of how the reality of social representation and symbolically represented social reality are connected with each other.

Inasmuch as Schutz speaks about typification and Dewey about an attitude of categorization, Bourdieu, similarly to Mauss and Durkheim, speaks of classification. Utilizing the etymological connection between the verb "to classify" and the noun "class," in the vernacular of his theory he inscribes and at the same time expresses within it this dual structure of social reality, i.e. social class relations and their representations – classifications, which is characterized by another duality: the long duration of relational structures and the situated interactions maintaining them. Together they form the symbolic social system. Classification is conceived of as a socio-logical phenomenon, where a hyphen divides the two dimensions of the structure: relational distinctions, and their symbolic representations. Socio-logy as a discipline, in this explication of its subject, gains a new interpretation. Consequently, the duality of social structures is revealed in different sense than this concept possesses in Anthony Giddens' theory (Giddens, 1986, pp. 1–40). Bourdieu is also concerned with the problem of connecting the agency and social structure, but above all he returns to an analysis of the subjective and objective dimension of social life. He is analyzing the meaningfulness of social reality and symbolic structures, or symbolic representations revealing social reality's dual structure: both the "social" and "logical" of "social reality."

Classifications are not simply taxonomies of social objects or systems of categories. Similarly to other proponents of the use theory of meaning, including interactionists, Bourdieu is interested in practices of classification. They create a social order understood in terms of social identities and differences.

Every element of the social world undergoes schemas of perception and evaluation that are socially constituted and it functions as a symbolic property. The correspondence between social and mental structures is expressed in the primary experience of the social world in the form of its common knowledge – *doxa*. Bourdieu sees the problem of translation here, and so the symbolic process of transforming one system of meaning into another. This is in fact a complex symbolism, where two systems, the social one and the symbolic one (in the narrower sense) e.g. linguistic – are in a signified – signifying relations, creating a complex symbolic social system.

The connection between mental and social structures should be understood as the relation of the signifying to the signified (social structures); in other words the articulated to the unarticulated; the discursive to the non-discursive, or, in Bourdieu's terms: symbolic form to habitus. They are inseparable as expressed with the double name for this theory: structuralist constructivism or constructivist structuralism. These two dimensions remain in a close relation, much like the figure and the background, interchangeable when the whole (*Gestalt*) of social phenomena is examined. Thus when the so-called objective social structures are examined, they are referred to contextual meanings, and when the performances of actors and their communicative exchanges are under study, a knowledge of their situation within the structures of social relations is required (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 7). Among these structures the hierarchy of domination interests Bourdieu most. At this juncture we have to do with divisions and visions overlapping, in other words with the reality of di-vision. It is a symbolic reality and pragmatically real, or, given in experiences and actions. A study of social order must simultaneously encompass an analysis of schemas of perception, evaluation and action, which create it internally. Its reverse is the analysis of the social genesis of cognitive structures at service in constructed actions.

The very primary process of social differentiation and establishing hierarchy is significant (Boudon & Bourricaud, 1982, pp. 289–298). Social order is internally endowed by meaning. It is a system of differences, which means identities which are differences (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 9), or, in other words, a system of identifying positions within the system, with which certain properties are connected and dispositions consolidated through habitus. These properties (for instance playing golf as a sign of belonging to the upper middle-class) function in the reality of social life as signs. Differences function as positive or negative distinguishing signs and this takes place regardless of the individual intent for differentiation (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 20). Habitus is characterized by this primordial level of symbolic social reality, the level of social practices, meanings in the processual structure of interaction, which concerned Mead. Speaking metaphorically in reference to this complex structure containing symbolic habitus and more narrowly understood symbolic representations, primarily linguistic, Bourdieu refers to a double reading, which is called social reality (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 9).

In fact Bourdieu does not hesitate to call social system a symbolic social system (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 237), i.e. a system of executive meanings, which structure lifestyles as classified systems and classifying practices. Discursive, or linguistic symbolism (structuring structures) should be examined together with significant structured structures of social relations, which could also be called symbolic systems, as, in fact, primary symbolic systems, like significant gestures, remain primary in relation to words. Objective relations are not negated; on the contrary.

However, they will not exist socially if they are not perceived, i.e. differences maintained as meaningful in the social world. Thus we have here important parallels with symbolic interactionism where communication takes active part in making social order (Duncan, 1962, p. XI).

According to such a radical cultural approach it would be a mistake to speak about a natural attitude and its universal characteristics, as Schutz did following Husserl. The role of sociology is the denaturalization and de-determination of the social world – revealing the historical and social conditions of the principles of hierarchization and evaluation, which owe their symbolic effectiveness to the fact that they impose themselves as absolute, universal and eternal (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 15). Bourdieu shares this relativism with the pragmatists. Asserting the ultimate lack of determined meaning enables the comprehension of the social dynamics of culture.

THE POLITICS OF SYMBOLIC PRACTICES

If comparisons can be made between the manner in which Bourdieu and symbolic interactionists deal with the semiotic dimension of social life, then on the other side, adhering to the problem of social practices, it should be recognized that the distinctive element in Bourdieu's theory is his elaboration of the problem of social struggle. So far, as the traditional, so-called humanistic or interpretive theory centered its attention around intersubjectivity and consensus as the basis of social order, Bourdieu deconstructs intersubjectivity, seeking out its social construction through authority and in this manner, its possible consolidation by domination or coercion. In other words he introduces the question of the politics of symbolic practices.

Symbolic struggle is very real. It profoundly defines social reality, and the term "symbolic" is quite distant in its meaning from the mere appearance or mimesis of true conflict. Although Bourdieu's sociology of world-view is a peculiar program of a sociology of knowledge, and the thesis that structuring structures (cognitive structures) are socially structured may seem similar to Schutz's, or even Berger and Luckman's thesis, Bourdieu nonetheless introduces a new view of the conflict over the symbolic representation of reality. It is an essential step forward. Firstly, he goes further than the postulate of examining the social relevance of all knowledge, or the postulate of looking for universal forms of the distribution of knowledge in the social world, or the description of different world-views of various social groups or classes. Bourdieu emphasizes that, which is possibly implicit in other theories – constructing reality is not peaceful and cooperative, but competitive, if not a struggle, and conditioned by symbolic capital of the authority of the involved sides.

Two manifestations or aspects of symbolic struggle are operating. The objective sides, i.e. actions that indicate or signify conflict, like a hunger strike or a demonstration – they are also called representative actions. The subjective side, or the discursive, involves transforming categories of perception and evaluation in constructing reality through teaching, indoctrination, etc. Here Bourdieu distinguishes between action that is perceived in behaviors and purely communicative action, in other words, embodied action and discursive action. Bourdieu adds political dimention to symbolic sociology and the sociology of knowledge. Actually, the term knowledge is too cognitive and rationalistic in reference to world-view and commonsense as examined by Bourdieu. A single everyday knowledge, as Schutz claimed, does not exist. That which is common knowledge for a Mormon or a Catholic is the result of symbolic struggle. Consensus is always the result of struggle between various meanings of social life. Thus Bourdieu postulates examining the meaning of social object in the process of becoming, which is a social process. Bourdieu emphasizes the competitive character of meaning creation. Encoded in the social origins of the most evident social identities (social values) are the losing and victorious sides which create reality.

This construction of reality as the representation of meaning is also a dramaturgical representation according to the interactionists (Perinbanayagam, 1982). The temporal dimension of symbolic struggle is expressed through the retrospective and prospective descriptions of the meaning of the present, i.e. creating collective memory of the past and predictions concerning the future. Every social object and its identity is expressed by meaning transcending that, which is directly visible, since it is prescribed through references to the past or the future. Although the symbolic struggle can have a nominalistic, or individual dimension, which enters into everyday interactive situations (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 21), Bourdieu is primarily interested in the collective struggle to impose a construction of social reality (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 127), which he defines as politics in the broadest sense of the term.

In the struggle to create and impose a legitimate vision of the social world, the state and its delegated bureaucracy possess a privileged position. In a travesty of Weber's definition of the state, Bourdieu defines it as a monopolist of legitimized symbolic coercion (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 240). The state presents a legitimized point of view, which means one which everyone must recognize at least within the boundaries of a given society (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 22). Its reasoning aims at a monopoly of commonsense through official naming and classifying, e.g. titles, certificates, official nominations and nomenclature, and also through researching public opinion, which is symptomatic of symbolic struggle. Symbolic coercion is primarily revealed in the domination of the official language, i.e. the tool of the official classifications and representations through the language supported by the

legal system of the state (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 45). Bourdieu gives the concept of the elaborated code, developed by Basil Bernstein, a political connotation, concerning the dominating competencies and symbolic domination. From this perspective state education or licensing is invariably in danger of being manipulated as a political tool. Maintaining a critical distance, postulated by Bourdieu himself, encompassing the sociology of the way sociology is practiced, the question should be asked as to the adequacy of Bourdieu's representation of the state. In replacing symbolic power with the concept of symbolic coercion with regards to state action in general, he either presents the position of an intellectual in conflict with bureaucracy, i.e. the authorized speaker, or the position of the anarchist who is suspicious about authority in general.

The role of authorized individuals who create public opinion, such as the reporter, the writer, possibly the scholar, requires analysis at the point of their relationship to the state. Bourdieu is interested in the activity of the state that produces professional manufacturers of world-views. Symbolic coercion means a domination of classes in a different sense than Marx's class, i.e. a domination of the class of manufacturers of world-views through the agency of symbolic power. Bourdieu shows this relation as unperceived and as a process of domesticating the dominated (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 167). The symbolic activity of the state is expressed in the term "official," which etymologically derives from *ufficio*, meaning state office. From this, official – as Bourdieu reminds us – means dominant and binding, imposing recognition. It is the official point of view, expressed in official discourse, containing official classifications and official identities (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 21). Besides, Bourdieu refers to Cicourel's analysis of official language, which contains: diagnosis, in other words perceiving and recognizing what a person, people, or states of affairs are objectively; directives, i.e. what should be done about these objects, how to act; reports, i.e. authoritative records, descriptions of what was done.

Bourdieu rightly observes that sociology's difficulty stems from its surprisingly weak ability to think in a revealing way about matters assumed as understood, given in common definitions of the situation. Like Elias (Elias, 1978, p. 52), Bourdieu believes that sociologists should work to overturn myths. He claims autonomy, but not neutrality with regard to symbolic domination. Thus, when sociology and social sciences reveal social constructions upholding the established social order, take their own stand in political struggles, the symbolic effectiveness of it all depends on their rationale and effects being unrecognized. In Bourdieu's conception the phenomenological and interactive assumption of the classifying or typifying attitude takes on a political meaning as the question of imposing legitimized classifications, depending on position in the structure of social space. In his conception politics begins with the rejection of that silent

acceptance of the contract of belonging to the established order, which the original *doxa* defines. Political subversion assumes cognitive subversion, a subversive vision of the world (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 128). A criterion for an evaluation of political practices seems to be contained here: the limitation of any monopoly on absolutist discourse. At this point there seems to be a convergence with symbolic interactionism, for which meaning does not emanate from reality but stems from interactive processes. Such a point of view must always be subversive.

SOCIAL DRAMATURGY

Bourdieu's structuralist constructivism and symbolic interactionism are also related by a dramaturgical model of society. It is aimed at the question from which sociology should start – the question of the existence of a collective (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 250). Its objective existence is possible through symbolic practices, delving deeper in the cultural process than the sociological classics admitted in defining group consciousness. Nominalism is rejected as a-sociological, as well as formulations that reduce society to symbolic interactions (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 64–65), as Blumer's theses were mistakenly interpreted. On the other hand, much like symbolic interactionists, Blumer assigns collective identity a central position, i.e. names that describe a group, and are subject to negotiation (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 20).

In a way different from Habermas, but similar to the pragmatists, Bourdieu claims that the maximum informative effectiveness is only rarely the sole aim of linguistic production. Borrowing the term from Dewey (and noticing the conceptual convergence fairly late), Bourdieu speaks of the constitutive power, through words, relating this term in particular to group creation, which is an exemplary exercise of symbolic power. In the case of new groups it is their formation. In the case of existent groups, their duration requires the symbolic process of consolidation, which Bourdieu calls consecration. The formation of groups consists of creating a collective identity through designation, naming, creating visible and open divisions and social hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 23). *Corporatio* in order to be something more than individuals, requires symbolic practices carried out by embodied representatives of the group. The personification of a social fiction is necessary so that the group can objectively exist. The representative, delegate or speaker is a substitute for the group, which exists thanks to his or her delegation and acts through him or her, and only exceptionally as a whole. Then the process of the mobilization of the members through the delegation takes place (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 181). Through representation (symbolic action) the represented and symbolized group exists and gives existence to its

representative (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 204). In semiotic terms, Bourdieu presents this relationship as metonymy. The representative is part of the group; thus he or she functions as a sign replacing the group as a whole. He or she is a substitute of the symbolic structure that constitutes the group.

Much like the pragmatists followed by symbolic interactionists, Bourdieu analyzes the meaning of the group and its representatives through their relations to actions. To possess certain social significance means carrying out certain actions and (or) being subject to specific actions. Blumer's thesis that meaning stems from interaction finds its further elaboration in Bourdieu's formulation: in order to be legitimized and generally accepted, meanings demand a collective recognition. Subsequently, the social recognition of meaning stems from collective actions. Bourdieu often uses the expressions "social magic" (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 42, 207–208, 221–223) or "performative magic" (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 106–122) when he has in mind the processes creating social meaning or collective symbolic practices.

The attribution of meaning, i.e. certain properties, characteristics, or status, must be collectively guaranteed and is connected to carrying out actions in the name of or by the group. The act of instituting is a communicative act with perfomative effects, which are analyzed by the pragmatists and symbolic interactionists. It is a process in which the object becomes known as possessing certain properties and is recognized as such. These properties gain objective meaning and naturalness, since their social origins, cultural arbitrariness and relativity remain unrecognized. Bourdieu gives the anthropological example of the initiations of girls and boys, establishing the difference between femininity and masculinity despite the continuity of properties making up the characteristics (e.g. a masculine type of woman, a feminine type of man). In this manner discontinuities are created, distinctions and differentiations are instituted, giving social definitions to objects.

Still visible is structuralist constructivism's and symbolic interactionism's common focus of attention on social identities. Identity is a symbolic quality – a distinction expressed through external signs and (or) embodied signs, i.e. manners of behavior, meaningful gestures, to use Mead's terminology, signifying social position, distinctive differences in social space. Identity does not stem from typification or naming itself, but has its origin in social practices, which is why Bourdieu also calls this a ritual of legitimization. In contrast to Victor Turner, who concentrated on the transgression of social distinctions, Bourdieu is inspired by the metaphor of the boundary before and after a ritual. Therefore he analyzes the significant social ritual of instituting, as well as consecrating a certain arbitrary boundary which creates identity. This signifies for individual or collective what

the identity is in a way which both expresses and imposes this identity defining for everyone in an authoritative manner what the individual or collective is and has to be.

Social beliefs maintaining an engaged participation in a ritual, or, according to Mead, role-taking in the game is a condition for the effectiveness of this kind of creation of meaning. It is a process of creating identity on the basis of differences through social symbolic instituting. The ritual of instituting depends on a ceremonial act of categorization, which aims at producing that which has meaning. Instituting means giving social definition, identity, also imposing boundaries.

Such study of institutional rituals conducted by Bourdieu is close to the symbolic interactionists' analysis of constructing social attributes. Neither nature nor "naturalized" cultural products, values, or language, determine social reality as a social space of relations and habituses (Bourdieu) or as articulated actions mediated by symbolic interaction (Blumer). Bourdieu claims, much like the interactionists, that the rhetoric of "the nature of things" covers up the property of social objects that they are culturally arbitrary and socially produced in social rituals of institutional establishing.

Aside from the naturalization effect of the social vision of divisions and distinctions, another conception revealing a convergence with the analyses of the interactionists, is the so-called "oracle effect" in the broader context of the fetishism of the group through delegation. Bourdieu analyzes the symbolic effect depending on producing both the message and the interpretation of the message by the delegate, the symbolic substitute of the group. The "oracle effect" is a performative result, which makes the authorized speaker, who gains his or her authority from the group, to carry out the recognized symbolic violence on particular members of the group. The incarnation of the group gives the individual an identity, e.g. of a teacher, and permits authority over others. The "oracle effect" is the exploitation of the transcendence of the group in relation to individuals – a transcendence derived from the authorized individual – which, in a certain sense, is a group because no person can say "you are not a group" until that person does not establish another group and his or her recognition as the delegate of the new group. Bourdieu utilizes Friedrich Nietzsche's analysis of a strategy presenting the latter's thesis as a critique of a strategy, by means of which the delegate absolutizes and consecrates himself (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 210). Bourdieu presents the strategy of attaining this symbolical and performative effect in relation to a group: through presenting one's role as irreplaceable (an irreplaceable interpreter); creating problems, which only the delegate can solve; creating the necessity of mediation (impersonal responsibility); the consecration of the performer through presenting

a sacred task; making universal values dependent on oneself, which means monop-olizing meanings such as wisdom, God, nation, freedom, etc. The representative gains authority from the group, which authorizes him or her to place limitations on the group. This process is effective, if it is unrecognized, if the delegate or representative identifies himself or herself with the group and negates his or her privileged status. It is right to conclude the explication of Bourdieu's concepts by indicating their political implications – i.e. the problem of democratic and non-democratic representations and incarnations of groups.

CONCLUSION

According to Bourdieu – like for the pragmatists and symbolic interactionists – meanings have their social origin. He examines them from the perspective of collective practices – embodied habituses and discursive practices as a bridge for overcoming the various dualisms that have been persistent for so long in sociology: nominalism – realism in the comprehension of society; individualism – collectivism; the dualism of structure and history.

The theory of the symbolic social system, which is characterized by the double structure of meanings in the order of social relations and its sym-bolic representation in the narrower sense, has many convergent points of view with the symbolic interactionists' perspective, starting with the category of habitus.

Conceptual frameworks of structuralist constructivism and symbolic interac-tionism have one major difference – in Bourdieu's theory the individual self is not inscribed. There are, however, strong common premises in terms of epistemology, theory of meaning and social ontology. Both epistemologies are antidualistic and relativistic (antiessentialism). Both approaches are based on a common theory of the social origin of meaning (anticognitivism). Both social ontologies are constructivist (social construction of reality) – they are based on social practices and focus on relations.

There are several important parallel concepts, including the general idea of symbolic social system and society as symbolic interaction. Bourdieu's habitus has its parallel in the interactionist concept of habit; classification is parallel to the idea of categorization (typification). Bourdieu's perspectivism meets the parallel idea of role-taking and fields of practices may be interpreted as parallel to social games. In both orientations three notions are important: social drama, ritual and trajectory. Bourdieu looks at social drama in the macro-scale, whereas interac-tionists study it in the micro-scale. Bourdieu is preoccupied with institutional rituals and the interactionists with interpersonal rituals. Trajectories as structured

are of interest for Bourdieu, and simultaneously, as experienced, are of interest for interactionists.

Other concepts are complementary: control of meaning and intersubjectivity; symbolic struggle and manipulation of meanings; politics of symbolic practices and strategic interaction; historical dimension of meanings and situated (contextual) meanings.

On the one hand I have suggested the reading of Bourdieu's analysis of the processes forming collective identity as complementary with regard to the concepts of symbolic interactionism. On the other hand his concept of symbolic struggle for control over the commonsense world-view introduces a new, political dimension to interpretive sociology.

Discovering a peculiar social order that is not identical with the state permitted sociology to become independent from political philosophy, Bourdieu refers to broadly understood politics as the power of control in the communicative process. He presents a rejuvenated science of society through both notions of culture and politics. This theorizing is linked at many conceptual junctures with symbolic interactionism.

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