



Four transversal principles for putting Bourdieu to work

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Dedicated to Mathieu Hilgers, with affection and admiration

Abstract

This article spotlights four transversal principles that animate Pierre Bourdieu's research practice and can fruitfully guide inquiry on any empirical front: the Bachelardian imperative of epistemological rupture and vigilance; the Weberian command to effect the triple historicization of the agent (*habitus*), the world (social space, of which field is but a subtype), and the categories of the analyst (epistemic reflexivity); the Leibnizian–Durkheimian invitation to deploy the topological mode of reasoning to track the mutual correspondences between symbolic space, social space, and physical space; and the Cassirer moment urging us to recognize the constitutive efficacy of symbolic structures. I also flag three traps that Bourdieusian explorers of the social world should exercise special care to avoid: the fetishization of concepts, the seductions of “speaking Bourdieuise” while failing to carry out the research operations Bourdieu's notions stipulate, and the forced imposition of his theoretical framework *en bloc* when it is more productively used in kit through transposition. These principles guiding the construction of the object are not theoretical slogans but practical blueprints for anthropological inquiry. This implies that *mimesis and not exegesis* should guide those social scientists who wish to build on, revise, or challenge the scientific machinery and legacy of Pierre Bourdieu.

Keywords

Bourdieu, Bachelard, Weber, Leibniz, Durkheim, Cassirer, social space, symbolic power, social topology, epistemological vigilance

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There are many ways to “slice and dice” Bourdieu for use in any domain of inquiry, and there already exists numerous standardized introductions and routinized overviews of his main writings intended for students of specialized topics, ranging from education, organization, religion, and intellectuals as featured in *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu* (Medvetz and Sallaz, forthcoming), to the study of space and the city as the latest major frontier for Bourdieu-inspired scholarship (Fogle, 2011; Lippuner, 2012; Webster, 2010; see Wacquant, 2017a for an assessment and different agenda). These pedagogical capsules of his main theories (always limited to a few major publications translated in the author’s own language) typically overlook the majority of Bourdieu’s corpus, suffer from predictable disciplinary biases and blinders, and scarcely indicate how to translate these theories into practical research designs and operations. Such is the purpose of this article.

I provided elsewhere a detailed discussion of how to deploy and distribute habitus, social space, bureaucratic field, and symbolic power in a comparative investigation of the triadic nexus of “Marginality, ethnicity and penalty in the neoliberal city” (Wacquant, 2014). I sketched a cartography of the analytic division of labor between these concepts and indicated how they can serve to clarify categories left hazy (such as the ghetto) and to forge new concepts (territorial stigmatization and advanced marginality, punitive containment and liberal paternalism, hyperincarceration and negative sociodicy) as tools for the comparative sociology of the unfinished genesis of the post-industrial precariat, the penal regulation of poverty in the age of diffusing social insecurity, and the building of the neo-liberal Leviathan. Here I want to build on this argument about urban structure and experience to spotlight four *transversal principles that undergird and animate Bourdieu’s research practice*.

These principles are liable to escape the notice of the rushed reader and the busy investigator eager to deploy Bourdieu on the urban front, but they can more fruitfully guide inquiry into the city as in any other domain than the exegesis of this or that writing of Bourdieu ostensibly pertinent to it. This is especially important since the French sociologist expressly rejected the conventional demarcations between disciplines and between subspecialties within them; indeed, he saw these demarcations, patterned after concrete objects of phenomenological relevance or civic concern, as a major obstacle to the development of a unified historical social science (Bourdieu, 1986: 13–52). For the purposes of mnemotechnic compression, I attach these principles to five authors who form central pillars of Bourdieu’s thought: Bachelard, Weber, Leibniz and Durkheim, and Cassirer. That these are not the “usual suspects” mentioned in standard presentations or influential discussions of Bourdieu is indicative of the yawning gap between the actual inspiration and inner makeup of his work and its academic image, formed by the accumulated layers of decades of truncated or mystified readings guided by misplaced theoreticism.¹ I also flag three correlative traps that Bourdieusian explorers of this or that sector of the social world should exercise special care to avoid: the fetishization of concepts (which stops inquiry where it should start), the seductions of

“speaking Bourdieuse” because it is the academic *langue du jour*, and the forced imposition of his theoretical framework *en bloc* when it is more productively used in kit through transposition.

The Bachelard moment

Break with common sense (which comes in three varieties: ordinary, policy, and scholarly) to question accepted categories of analysis, deconstruct prefabricated problematics, and forge robust analytic concepts, designed by and for empirical analysis, that encompass but depart sharply from folk notions (Wacquant, 2002). This is a straightforward application of the imperative of *epistemological rupture and vigilance*, the foremost teaching of “historical epistemology,” the philosophy of science developed by Bourdieu’s mentors Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem, which Bourdieu transplanted from the natural and life sciences to the social sciences (Bourdieu, 2001; Bourdieu et al., 1968; see Rheinberger, 2010, for a compact profile of this current).

A clarification is in order here: Bachelard’s epistemological *rupture* (the word is the same in French and English) is not Althusser’s epistemological *coupure* (break, cut), although the latter ostensibly derived his notion from the former. For Bachelard, and Bourdieu after him, science breaks with common sense by constantly confronting the real, not by taking refuge in the purified realm of a tautologic “theoretical practice” (Althusser et al., 1965). Moreover, rupture is an endlessly *reiterated practical activity*, carried out through a reasoned concatenation of technical research operations (conceptual elaboration, site or archival selection, questionnaire design, coding, etc.), not some mental inaugural act or historic pivot whereby science suddenly and magically separates itself forever from ideology—as in Althusser’s rendering of Marx’s 1845 epistemic epiphany in *For Marx*.² It is in keeping with Bachelard’s stress on the “primordial role of instrumentation in the approximative knowledge” produced by scientific activity that Bourdieu christened the interdisciplinary journal he founded in 1975 and edited until his passing by the awkward name of *Acts of Research in the Social Sciences* (Wacquant, 1999). Lastly, ruptures (plural) happen *within science itself* and fuel the engine of progress: “Scientific progress always expresses a rupture, perpetual ruptures, between ordinary knowledge and scientific knowledge, as soon as we deal with an evolved science, a science which, by dint of these very ruptures, bears the hallmark of modernity” (Bachelard, 1953: 17).

Rupture is a multiply repeated moment of inquiry too often ignored or skipped as a matter of course: vast sectors of urban research, for instance, accept the terminology, queries, and worries propounded by city managers, policymakers, journalists, or academic fashion (fastened nowadays on the twinned phenomena of gentrification, ethnic segregation, and the blossoming of cultural industries in the metropolitan core) when they should instead detect and neutralize the historical unconscious and social biases embedded in them by including these in their object of analysis. As Bachelard (1938: 26) warns: “The scientific mind forbids us to

have an opinion on questions that we do not understand, on questions that we do not know how to formulate clearly. Above all, one must know how to pose problems.”

The Weber moment

Effect the *triple historicization* of the agent (with the concept of habitus), the world (via the notion of social space, of which field is but a subtype), and the categories and methods of the analyst (epistemic reflexivity). This principle expresses Bourdieu’s radically historicist and agonistic vision of social action, structure, and knowledge, which is most germane in spirit and method to the work of Max Weber—even as the latter was wedded to an analytic individualism thoroughly alien to Bourdieu’s relationalism (1968, 1986: 147–166). For both authors, social inquiry must proceed from an acute sense of its distinctive *Wissenschaftslehre*, a reflexive “theory of science” that, along with Weber’s materialist sociology of religion, was Bourdieu’s initial entry into the Weberian corpus during his youthful years, and that decisively shaped his conversion from philosophy to social science (Bourdieu, [2000] 2011). For both authors, domination pervades social life but takes a multiplicity of forms that are irreducible to some economic basis and always entail the intercession of a symbolic authority framing the relation at hand, which leads Weber (1958) to focus on legitimacy and Bourdieu (1997) on the social production of doxa and the workings of misrecognition.

This is why Weber and not Marx is Bourdieu’s anchor here (despite the latter’s historical and relational approach): like the author of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Bourdieu rejects economic determinism, the search for foundations, and the neo-Hegelian notion that history is endowed with a directional logic.³ He stands squarely in the neo-Kantian lineage that construes philosophy as duty-bound to start and end with “the fact of science” (to quote Bachelard again) and engages a genetic conception of knowledge as a perpetually unfinished synthetic process. This anti-metaphysical view of Kant was enshrined by the Marburg School, where Cassirer was trained on the advice of Georg Simmel and which influenced Weber through the works of Windelband and Rickert, leaders of the rival school of Baden neo-Kantianism.⁴

Accordingly, one should grasp urban (or any other) constellations, categories, and practices as the products, weapons, and stakes of struggles waged over multiple temporalities, ranging from the *longue durée* of secular macro-structures to the mid-level tempos of political cycles and institutional gyrations to the short-term phenomenological horizon of persons at ground level. This commandment belies the stale academic tale of Bourdieu “the reproduction theorist” that continues to be spun even by urban scholars sympathetic to his approach (e.g., Harding and Blokland, 2014: 129–130), but it accurately captures both his explicit instructions and his extant scientific practice (Wacquant, 2017b).

The Leibnizian–Durkheimian moment

Deploy the *topological mode of reasoning* to track the mutual correspondences, transpositions, and distortions between symbolic space (the grid of mental classifications that guide persons in their cognitive and conative construction of the world), social space (the fluctuating distribution of socially effective assets or capitals), and physical space (the built environment resulting from rival efforts to appropriate material and ideal goods in and through space). This way of thinking is indispensable because

social space tends to retranslate itself, in more or less deformed fashion, in the guise of a definite arrangement of agents and properties. It follows that all the divisions and distinctions of social space (high/low, left/right, etc.) are really and symbolically expressed in appropriated physical space as reified social space. (Bourdieu, 1997: 162)

This principle stands at the confluence of the *geometric* component of Bourdieu's thought, grounded in his early avid reading of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (whose *analysis situs*, developed in reaction to Pascal's perspective geometry, exemplifies the monist rationalism Bourdieu wishes to extend) and its *morphological* strand, derived from Durkheim and Mauss's (1901) bold formulation of the correspondence between the physical substratum and layout of social groups and the "forms of classification" through which they view themselves and the world. Elke Weik (2010) is right to point out the similarities and affinities between Leibniz and Bourdieu: the creative force that constitutes the world is God for the former and history itself for the latter. But he focuses mostly on habitus when the stronger linkages between the two thinkers is their shared relational philosophy of space (see De Risi, 2007, on Leibniz's view). It bears noting here, by way of transition to the fourth principle, that Cassirer's (1902) first book was a dissection of the thought of Leibniz in its scientific context.

As for the Durkheimian beam, it supports *inter alia* Bourdieu's objectivist effort to dissect the anatomy of the various social universes under investigation. Mapping the "external form" of webs of mutually engaged positions is indispensable because "the social substrate is differentiated in a thousand manners under the hands of men and these differences have great sociological significance either for the causes on which they depend or for the effects that result" (Durkheim, [1900] 1975: 21). In both concrete and abstract senses, the "scope of the territory" occupied by agents (be they Algerian peasants, French petty bourgeois, residents of defamed public housing projects, artists, intellectuals, or policymakers), "its geographic situation" relative to other spaces of action, "the form of its boundaries" as well as the "total mass of the population," and its density in the different regions are key variables that must be grasped in both synchronic and diachronic analysis, because "the structure itself is encountered only in its becoming... It is continually formed and decomposed, it is life when it has reached a definite degree of consolidation" (Durkheim, [1900] 1975: 20, 22).

Bourdieu accords a central place to this process of differentiation which effectively gives rise to the plurality of capitals and, further down the historical road, to this peculiar meta-field he calls “field of power.” The diversification of capitals and their degree of objectivation (they can exist in a “practical state as mechanisms” or be “codified in the guise of norms or explicit rules”), in turn, is “one of the great principles for distinguishing between the different kinds of societies” (Bourdieu, 2016: 446–449, 207–211).⁵ Moreover, morphological factors and their interplay inside and across the boundaries of distinct microcosms or zones of social space are primary causes of categorical conflicts, cognitive clashes, and structural disequilibria that motor social change and trigger revolutionary transformation, as indicated in Bourdieu’s analysis of the “crisis” of May 1968 in France and the invention of the modern novel by Flaubert and his comrades (see, respectively, Bourdieu, 1984, 1992).

The Cassirer moment

Recognize the *constitutive efficacy of symbolic structures* and anatomize their two-fold imprinting, onto the subjective complexes of *dispositions* (categories, skills, and desires) that make up the habitus on the one hand, and onto the objective mesh of *positions* (distributions of efficient resources) that compose institutions, on the other. Ernst Cassirer’s (1944) genetic “philosophy of symbolic forms” is the main inspiration for Bourdieu’s potent concept of symbolic power that stands at the epicenter and apex of his work—and yet is typically overlooked by conventional readings and uses of Bourdieu ossified in the incomplete and redundant triptych of “habitus, capital and field” (Wacquant, 2017b: 63–64). Because the human animal encounters the physical universe not as brute reality but through the medium of symbols (materialized, in Cassirer taxonomy, as language, myth, religion, art, and science, five topics that Bourdieu mined with zest),⁶ the most objectivist science of the city must, of necessity, make room for the rival classificatory schemata through which agents give pattern and meaning to the urban world. And because the social cosmos can always be experienced and constructed through a plurality of points of views, these competing symbolic systems constitute so many weapons in the “struggle to produce and impose the dominant vision of the world” (Bourdieu, [1982] 1990: 159) and thereby shape it materially, propelling the historical alchemy of the *realization of categories* that is the conundrum at the core of Bourdieu’s lifework (Wacquant, 2013).

Bringing Cassirer back in spotlights the creative and agonistic tenor of socio-symbolic action that animates Bourdieu’s thinking: “Man, like the animals, submits to the rules of society but, in addition, he has an active share in bringing about, and an active power to change, the forms of social life” (Cassirer, 1944: 224). Insofar as she cannot live that life without expressing it, the social agent is the bearer—in the double sense of carrier and casualty—of a “fundamental polarity” or “a tension between stabilization and evolution,” the perpetuation of existing forms, and the creation of new ones. Symbolic systems are thus the means, site, and

stake of “a ceaseless struggle between tradition and innovation, between reproduction and creative forces” (Cassirer, 1944: 224). Injected into Bourdieu’s framework, symbolic power as the socially recognized capacity to forge and inculcate classificatory schemata (Bourdieu, [1982] 1990: 156) that order, celebrate, or denigrate certain populations and locations in social and physical space, can be mobilized both to solidify or to modify the social order and its materialization.

Applied to urban space, this tenet implies paying attention not only to the phenomenology of city life as lived reality situated in specific sites, but also to the words through which people, objects, activities, and places in the city are named because *consequential categorization* is an especially powerful vector of conservation or transformation of reality given the concentration of symbolic authorities (religious, political, legal, journalistic, artistic, academic, and scientific) in the metropolis. The material stamping of urban reality through its symbolic casting assumes a paradigmatic and paroxystic form with territorial stigmatization, whose sites and circuits of production, diffusion, and consumption permeate the city and impact all of its residents, even as it fastens on districts of sociomoral perdition at the edges and bottom of urban space (Wacquant, forthcoming).

Three cautions

Rectified rationalism in action; the radical historicization of arbitrary social forms and their deposits in institutions and socialized bodies; tracking the trialectic of symbolic, social, and physical space; probing the realization of mental constructs: taken together, these principles inform a scientific outlook sharply divergent from those fostered by positivism, realism, and hermeneutics, the alternative epistemologies that reign across social science. This stance commands investigations centered on the wide-awake and active “construction of the object” that eschews both empty formalism and blind empiricism to enter into the specificities of historical cases with the benefit of a generalizing analytic (Bourdieu, 2001). Along with these principles, one can distill from Bourdieu’s scientific practice three general cautions that will benefit students of the city (or any other concrete topic of inquiry) wishing to appropriate his work, whether in letter or spirit.

First, *avoid the fetishization of concepts*: Bourdieu is frequently misread as a “theorist” when he was a dogged detractor of “conspicuous theorizing.” He construed theory not as the haughty master but as the humble servant of empirical inquiry, and he never advanced the one but through developing the other (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 29–35 and *passim*). The corrective to this common scholastic distortion, exemplified in urban studies by many articles recently published in *Progress in Human Geography* (I omit references here as an act of intellectual mercy), is to background the textual definition of concepts and to pay close attention to how Bourdieu converts them into concrete research operations to forge his empirical objects. There is less to be gained from parsing any dozen scholastic critiques or theoretical defenses of habitus, however clever they may be, than from tracking the variables Bourdieu digs up and interlinks to chart

the making and *modus operandi* of a given set of agents or an innovative historical figure.⁷ In *The Social Structures of the Economy*, for instance, he combines ethnographic observation, conversation analysis, and multiple correspondence analysis to reconstruct the “social genesis of the system of preferences” of homebuyers and to detect the conditions under which their tacit “sense of property” becomes activated or not (Bourdieu, 2000: 40–59). Similarly, Bourdieu’s (2013: 648–673) programmatic exploration of the layering of the “dispositions of Manet,” concretely illumines how the “assurance and aristocratism” of his hexis combined with his “spirit of challenge and competition” to form the “cleft habitus of a bourgeois artist who realizes a sort of synthesis of opposites,” with its “conformist side” nourished by a well-to-do family ensconced in Parisian *haute société* and a “rebellious side” that fuels his “visceral double refusal” of both academic and Bohemian painting.

Second, and relatedly, *beware of the rhetorical trap*: countless authors paint their inquiries in the color of Bourdieu when, in reality, the latter’s notions play no role in their analysis. The words are there but the concepts are not. Proof is that their findings and arguments are no different than if they had been derived from any number of alternative approaches (which they generally were). The concept of field is perhaps the most abused in this manner, as when it is invoked as a bland synonym for domain or arena of “strategic action,” displaying none of the highly distinctive properties that characterize a field as such according to Bourdieu (differentiation, autonomy, monopolization, chiasmatic organization, prismatic effects, etc.). By “speaking Bourdieuse” out of turn, these authors not only confuse rhetorics for analytics, they also occlude the theoretical and empirical profits that an effective deployment of Bourdieu’s tools would deliver.⁸

Such sterile soundings easily degenerate into nonsensical word play, as illustrated by the comical multiplication of urban-inflected habitus in recent scholarship: the “metropolitan habitus,” the “suburban habitus,” the “gentrification habitus,” the “dot.com habitus,” not to mention the absurdist “mini-habitus” (perhaps paving the way for the imminent anointment of the nano-habitus), all of which indicate that their inventors do not understand the basic meaning and makeup of habitus (Wacquant, 2016). It is constitutive of the metropolis that it contains a diversity of populations and categories, a wide span of social conditions, and a plurality of bounded social microcosms each fostering rival schemata of perception and appreciation. It logically follows that it spawns a great diversity of competing sets of dispositions (corresponding to broad classes of positions and trajectories), and *not* a singular unified habitus characteristic of the city as such. Talk of a “metropolitan (suburban, etc.) habitus” is sonorous but empty Bourdieubabble.

Third, it is not only possible but generally desirable to *decouple Bourdieu’s concepts from one another*, to ensure that there is a real payoff to their individual usage before they are eventually recombined as needed to frame and resolve the empirical puzzle at hand. I am well aware that Bourdieu and I argued in favor of the opposite strategy in *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, stressing that “notions such as

habitus, field, and capital can be defined only within the theoretical system they constitute, not in isolation” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 96). But, back in 1992, the priority was to provide an overarching view of the architecture and inner logic of Bourdieu’s framework and to explicate the synergy between his various concepts to readers largely unfamiliar with them. In the intervening two decades, the most fruitful works inspired by Bourdieu have turned out to be those deploying elements of that framework, while authors seeking to harness it in its totality have too often floundered. So, we must heed Bachelard’s teaching that epistemology is historical, and tactically change its prescription in reaction to the greatest threat to knowledge at hand.

Moreover, the theological reading of the Bourdieusian scriptures stipulating that one implement his core notions *omni et simul* is in tension, if not contradiction, with the pragmatics of any research project and it clashes with the way Bourdieu himself employed them. For instance, the French sociologist mines habitus and symbolic power without any mention of field throughout his Algerian work (Bourdieu, 1972, 1977, 1980, 2008), for the simple reason that no field exists in the agrarian communities of the Kabyle countryside. This cautious strategy is especially apposite for those investigators who are still groping to get beyond an elemental grasp of Bourdieu’s way of thinking: it is better to apply one concept well within its proper analytic purview than to invoke five at cross purposes or for mere declamatory effect.

For illustration, Nathan Marom’s (2014) recapitulation of “One hundred years of spatial distinction in Tel Aviv” offers a case model of an economical, efficient, and fruitful use of Bourdieu that validates these three recommendations. To make sense of the trajectory of socio-spatial oppositions over the full life course of this disputed city, Marom focuses on a single operation, “the translation of social space into physical space.” He draws elegantly on just two concepts, social space and symbolic power (whose duo happens to be the pivot of Bourdieu’s thought); he engages them to break with the naturalizing problematic of segregation inherited from urban ecology, as well as to overcome the blindness of political economic approaches to the performative potency of symbolic classifications and classification struggles. Bourdieu goads Marom to formulate a new question, to historicize its terms, and to dig up data enabling him to document novel empirical facets of the phenomenon and, ultimately, produce an original interpretation of the changing principles of spatial vision and division of Tel Aviv across multiple scales that other theoretical perspectives could not have spawned.

Marom’s article further confirms that, while every one of the seven major concepts organizing Bourdieu’s work (habitus, capital, social space, field, symbolic power, doxa, and epistemic reflexivity) can be fruitfully mobilized by investigators of urban constellations, the most potent and generative of the lot is indisputably *social space*. Not only because it is anchored by a geographic metaphor, but because it is the “mother-category” from which flow the more restricted concepts of field, *corps* (body), and apparatus as specific types of settings in which social action takes root and flows (Wacquant, 2017b: 62–63) and because it is a

“natural fit” for the city as a milieu fostering the incubation, differentiation, proliferation, and accumulation of competing forms of capital. Indeed, social space is the one category that most decisively sets Bourdieu apart from and fills a gaping void at the center of all extant strands of urban theory: Chicago-style ecology and ethnography, political economy, postcolonial urbanism, assemblage theory, planetary urbanism, and the urban land nexus approach (Storper and Scott, 2016).

To conclude, putting Bourdieu to work entails not reciting scriptures in awe or disdain, replicating or refuting findings necessarily tied to a particular time and place, or yet launching into theoretical disquisition with or against the master-thinker, but investing, in concrete research operations, the *principles of construction of the object* that he engaged and exemplified in his scientific practice. Epistemological rupture, triple historicization, the topological mode of thinking, and recognition of the constitutive efficacy of symbolic structures are not theoretical slogans to be adjudicated on paper but practical blueprints for the concrete fabrication of sociological research projects. This means that *mimesis and not exegesis* should guide those social scientists who wish to build on, extend, or genuinely challenge the scientific machinery and legacy of Pierre Bourdieu.

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Notes

1. A convenience sample yields the following: Bourdieu has been tied to Marcel Mauss and Claude Lévi-Strauss by Collins (1994) and Moore (1999), but cast(igated) as a closet Marxist by Alexander (1995); paired with John Austin by Judith Butler (1997) and thrown into the lumpy rhetorical porridge of “practice theory” along with Marshall Sahlins and Anthony Giddens by Ortner (2006); excoriated as an unrepentant structuralist by Sewell (2005) and extolled as a soul mate of Garfinkel by Lemert (2016); connected to Wittgenstein (Schatzki, 2008) and linked to American pragmatism (Shusterman 1999); and quizzically portrayed as “first and foremost an empiricist” by Joas and Knöbl

- (2009: 371) in their overview of major strands of theorizing. Most exegetes, moreover, see Bourdieu as elaborating a “critical” social theory—an adjective that he expressly rejected as both redundant and pretentious, rhetorical garnish that no science has any need for.
2. In *The Rationalist Activity of Contemporary Physics*, Bachelard (1951: 9–10) calls these operations *phenomenotechnics*, the collective deployment of the means of the experimental construction of a phenomenon: when “the two societies, the scientific society and the technical society, touch each other and cooperate,” then “we have left the world of nature to enter into the manufacturing of phenomena. . . . Rational objectivity, technical objectivity, and social objectivity are henceforth three strongly linked characteristics.” For a different take on the relation of Althusser to Bachelard, read Balibar (1991).
 3. Bourdieu’s rejection of the Marxist theory of history and its base/superstructure imagery is clear and definitive in this passage from his unfinished book on Manet: “The search for an explanatory factor of social change, a central problem in the social sciences, is made difficult by the remanence, within our minds, of a washed-out Marxism that is very difficult to rid ourselves of. Not because it is dominant (it actually never was) but because it is rampant, it creeps in a state of common sense banalities in pretentious discussions. Intellectual doxa is inhabited-haunted by Marxist concepts” which “foster reductionism and feed a simplistic, mutilated materialism” (Bourdieu, 2013: 577–578).
 4. Bourdieu got thoroughly acquainted with this German tradition of historical philosophy in the 1960s through his quasi-filial connection to Raymond Aron, who had himself introduced this current of thought in France in influential books published in the 1930s (Aron, 1935, 1938) and sponsored Bourdieu academically after the latter was forced to flee Algeria in 1960 on the eve of the pro-colonial coup of the Algiers generals (Bourdieu, 2002: 47–50).
 5. Here Bourdieu explicitly links Durkheim’s view of differentiation as a master trend and characteristic of modernity to Weber’s conception of the multiplicity of *Lebensordnungen*: “One can extend the analysis of Durkheim” on the purification and intensification of distinct functions permitted by structural differentiation “with a Weberian analysis” of the emergence of distinct life- and value-spheres “expressed by the emergence of ‘as’ (*als*): the economy as economy, art as art, law as law” (Bourdieu, 2016: 1005–1006).
 6. Indeed, Bourdieu devoted full monographs or book-length articles to each of these topics: *Language and Symbolic Power* (1982, enlarged in 1991); “The demon of analogy” (in *The Logic of Practice*, 1980, Book II) and *Masculine Domination* (1998); “Genesis and structure of the religious field” (1971) and “The holy family: The French episcopate in the field of power” (Bourdieu and De Saint-Martin, 1982) which, together, would make a hefty book (indeed, they anchor a 280-page collection of Bourdieu’s publications on religion in German, volume 5 of his *Schriften zur Kulturosoziologie*, edited for Suhrkamp Verlag by Franz Schultheis and Stephan Egger, 2011), *The Love of Art* (Bourdieu and Dabel, 1966), and *The Rules of Art* (1992); and *Science of Science and Reflexivity* (2001), revisiting and updating *The Craft of Sociology* (Bourdieu et al., 1968).
 7. For recent illustrations, see Croce (2015), Decoteau (2016), Mead (2016), and Strand and Lizardo (2017), who either proffer as new arguments already contained in Bourdieu or purport to remedy flaws that they themselves insert via a truncated understanding of Bourdieu’s uses of habitus; and the cluster of five articles gathered by Silva (2016), which curiously claim to extend “beyond sociology” a concept that originates in moral psychology and essay applications of habitus that, for four out of five, blissfully ignore Bourdieu’s empirical work on the very issues they tackle (see the proleptic warning in Wacquant, 2016).

8. This is particularly evident in the case of two widely popular concepts among Anglophone macro-sociologists, “organizational field” (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991) and “strategic action field” (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012), both of which are loose derivations or semantic echoes of Bourdieu’s *champ* that obfuscate the latter’s distinctiveness.

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**Mathieu Hilgers at work,
Université Libre de Bruxelles,
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(photo by Loïc Wacquant)**

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