

PIERRE
BOURDIEU'S
POLITICAL
ECONOMY
OF BEING

*G H A S S A N
H A G E*

Pierre Bourdieu's
Political Economy of Being

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Preface

It's early 1991, and I am in Paris for my first time as a postdoc at Pierre Bourdieu's Centre de Sociologie Européenne. I am in a room with a couple of other visitors and casual staff. Bourdieu enters the room, and everyone turns to him. He greets everyone and then walks straight to me and says, "You want to have lunch?" He asks no one else. We walk Rue du Cardinal Lemoine together heading from the Collège de France toward the river. I am internally, and perhaps not so internally, glowing: "Wow, I am walking the streets of Paris with Pierre Bourdieu, and we are going to have a tête-à-tête lunch." A number of people recognize him and greet him. We enter a bistro, where he is quickly welcomed and given a table. He tells me that this bistro is far superior to others in the neighborhood.

From the moment we enter the bistro I realize that, unfortunately for me, the main dining space is exceptionally noisy. I have been suffering from an increasingly acute hearing loss since my mid-twenties. By the time I came to Paris my hearing aids were becoming useless in noisy spaces, and it will still be some time before I am literally saved by the wonderful cochlear implants. Having only conversed with Bourdieu in his quiet office space before, I haven't had the chance to share with him how deaf I am in noisier environments. While we are waiting for the plat du jour that he has recommended, Bourdieu starts talking about the difficulties associated with interviewing, and particularly the difficulties of knowing where and how to position tape recorders on the table and the many problems his team has had with malfunctioning tape recorders. He and his colleagues are working on what will become *La misère du monde*. I am putting all my energy into hearing what he is saying, so I am just staring at him and not saying much beyond nodding. He notices that he is monologizing; he stops and asks, "Mais . . . peut-être que je vous ennuie?" (But . . . maybe I am boring you?). After a moment of being embarrassed by his question, I explain to him that I am severely deaf and struggling to hear. Bourdieu inquires more about my deafness, but now he is articulating himself clearly

and slowly. He does so very matter-of-factly, and I appreciate how quickly he has adapted his speech to my disability. I am also very grateful that I can hear him better, and that we are finally having a two-way conversation. Still, for a long while, all I can think about is the absurdity of the moment: Here I am, living the ultimate intellectual fantasy of my undergraduate years, sitting in Paris, in a bistro, with a famous French intellectual that I admire, and he's asking me if he is boring me.

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Ever since, whenever I am reading or writing about Pierre Bourdieu, I cannot do so without imagining him leaning forward and asking me, "But . . . maybe I am boring you?" And I want to say to him what I felt I should have said back then: "You've got to be kidding me!" So, in many ways, this is my "you've got to be kidding me" book. It recounts the anything-but-boring experience I have had thinking about Bourdieu's work and thinking with it as I have deployed it in my research.

This rich experience did not begin when I started reading Bourdieu in the late 1970s and mid-1980s. At that time, in the academic milieu I interacted with as a student in Australia, Bourdieu was read either as a sociologist of the relation between class and education or as a general theorist of practice who tried to move away from structuralism. As to myself, I mainly read him through, and compared him to, Karl Marx as a sociologist of class domination. I was unaware of Bourdieu's refusal to be read as a theorist, and his insistence on the importance of empirical research as the necessary ground for thinking about his work. Nor was I cognizant of the importance of coming to terms with the philosophical questionings that were behind much of his conceptualizations. I became far more attentive to their significance once I sat in on some of his lectures. This dual insistence on the importance of both the empirical and the philosophical can superficially appear to be contradictory. Yet, reading Bourdieu by taking this twofold emphasis seriously, one begins to realize that rather than leaving one stranded or torn between two irreconcilable directions, the entanglement of the empirical and the philosophical is in fact one of the core productive/generative principles present in his work. Learning how it worked unlocked more fully for me the complexity and potency of Bourdieu's concepts. Increasingly these concepts began to unravel a rich terrain of analytical problematics that helped to open up my own empirical research, multiplying and complexifying the issues that emerged within it.

This book exposes some of these issues and the analytical concepts associated with them. I try to show how the concepts worked to provide

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new perspectives on, and insights into, my own empirical material. It is an invitation into some of the philosophico-theoretical dimensions of Bourdieu's ideas, but it is philosophy/theory as activated and thought out in the midst of research processes. As such, while the book is theoretical in its main subject matter, it is less so in its form and style. In many parts I try to tell the kind of stories that say "Look at the interesting things that Bourdieu made me think while I was researching"—that is, describing the process of thinking with Bourdieu as my research was unfolding rather than focusing on the end product of such a process.

It is perhaps important to say explicitly and right from the start that I am not into idealizing thinkers. I hope this will become clear throughout the text. From my very first publication on Bourdieu, I highlighted the fact that I am not inclined to treat thinkers and their thoughts as something one "adheres to," such as to become Bourdieusian, Foucauldian, or Latourian. Bourdieu's thinking, when useful, has never been sufficient to me. I have always found other thinkers as—and sometimes more—useful. Sometimes I have synthesized Bourdieu's thought with the thought of others, and sometimes I have done my own original theorizing (unbelievable, but true). That Bourdieu himself encouraged me along such a path was certainly important to me. When I gave him a draft of that early article to read, he highlighted the bit where I say, "Bourdieu is not a football team that one relates to as a 'supporter,'" and added the exclamation "Oui!" next to it. My students can vouch that if there is one thing I repeat religiously it is that one's primary allegiance should be to one's empirical data and not to a particular thinker. And while I am happy to glorify those dimensions of Bourdieu's work that are helping me think about my data, I am also more than happy to think differently and move elsewhere with my thinking if other thinkers or my own thinking can help me yield more from my data. That is why I have always related in a slightly puzzled way to people who dwell on what certain thinkers lack, such as the ubiquitous "Bourdieu doesn't have a theory of social change." Apparently it is raining social change and Bourdieu fails to account for it. Let me preempt those who have something similar to say when reading this book. My reply has always been "I've shown you how Bourdieu is useful to me thinking about x or y ; if you are not interested in x or y , and if you don't find that he is useful to you thinking about whatever you are calling social change, the answer is very easy: don't think about your data with Bourdieu. Find someone who does help you, or, better still, produce your own theory."

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Perhaps the above has a bearing on another question that has been on my mind while writing this book. What does it mean for someone like me to write “yet another book about a white male thinker” amid the rise of an academic culture of post-, anti-, and decolonialism that I consider both legitimate and necessary? Perhaps the fact that I see no contradiction between the two says something about me. But, as I will show in this book, I hope it says something about Bourdieu’s work as well.¹

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In April 2022, I was presenting a seminar on Pierre Bourdieu's work at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany. Something that was both funny and embarrassing happened.

I have been trying to finish a book on Bourdieu for so long now that I ritualistically mock myself about it. At Halle, I started my talk by jokingly telling my audience, "I am not going to tell you this is the very last version of the book I am writing about Pierre Bourdieu. I have been telling this to my students at the University of Melbourne for the last fifteen years, and every year I find myself writing yet another 'very last version of my book on Bourdieu.'" When I finished saying this, however, someone in the audience raised their hand and said, "My name is Samuel Williams, I am a senior researcher here, I was your student at the University of Sydney more than twenty years ago, and you were saying the same thing then as well." So . . . I'd better come clean about how long I've been fantasizing about this book. In fact, it would be hard for me to hide it. In my very first publication on Bourdieu ("Pierre Bourdieu in the Nineties"), which appeared in 1994, I talk about my failed fantasy of writing "the first English-language book on Bourdieu." In the flow of books on Bourdieu that followed and that is still flowing, the fantasy—or, rather, the successive fantasies—that ensued became of writing something about Bourdieu that hasn't already been said. This book inevitably carries the traces of this long history of fantasies.

Some elements of the text you have here began to take shape in the very first seminars I offered on the work of Bourdieu at the University of Sydney (1994–2007). I have also given various versions of this seminar as a visiting professor at the American University of Beirut, Harvard University, and the University of Copenhagen. Nonetheless, as already noted, this last rendition is largely the product of a series of seminars I gave at the University of Melbourne (2011, 2014, and 2017–22). As fate would have it, and following the presentation referred to above at the Max Planck Institute of Social Anthropology, I was given the opportunity to spend

a year at the institute as a visiting fellow. I am thankful to Biao Xiang for encouraging me to give “one last series of seminars about my very last version of my book on Bourdieu” to help me wrap up the book. It worked.

I am indebted to the many students and colleagues who have attended the aforementioned seminars and who have discussed Bourdieu with me over the years. Geoffrey Mead, whose thesis on Bourdieu’s habitus I supervised and who is now way more the real expert on Bourdieu around the block, has helped me fill holes and find appropriate quotes from Bourdieu’s texts over many years. He has also helped me wrap up the whole final text.

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I am greatly indebted to him. A special mention ought to be made of my debt to my friend and colleague Michael Jackson, who invited me to teach courses on Bourdieu with him at both Harvard and the University of Copenhagen.

As always, I am thankful to have had my family around me throughout these many years of writing. My daughters have grown up with this work and even had Bourdieu negotiate a place in kindergarten for them when they lived with me in Paris. I am particularly grateful to my partner Caroline for reading and engaging with my work, and for enduring my detestable company when my writing is not going so well, especially during the despicable COVID-19 years.

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Introduction: The Political Economy of Being . . . and How to Analyze It

Pierre Bourdieu often defended himself against a utilitarian understanding of his conception of practice. He particularly objected to those who took his claim that social agents “accumulate capital” to imply a conception of the individual akin to that of marginalist economics: someone always aiming to maximize profit.¹ He once retorted, “It is not true to say that everything that people do or say is aimed at maximizing their social profit; but one may say that they do it to perpetuate or to augment their social being.”² This book grew out of an early conviction, reinforced over time, that a focus on this question of “perpetuation and augmentation of being,” not so much as a conscious finality but as a dimension of all practices, allows readers a means of appreciating one of the richer frameworks of social analysis, which Bourdieu’s theory of practice offers. It is a framework that highlights best the continuous interaction between metatheoretical/philosophical issues and empirical social research that is at the heart of his work. What this interaction entails is important to understand, even if it takes us—a bit too soon, perhaps—into difficult theoretical territory that requires more patience and attention to nuance than is often expected in a book’s introduction. I find an early dive into such territory necessary to clarify to the reader the significance of the book’s scope and structure.

The idea of an augmentation of being, and even the word *augmentation* itself, can be traced to Spinoza’s definition of joy as an “augmentation” of the body’s capacity to act.³ As Spinoza put it,

Joy is a man’s passage from a lesser to a greater perfection.

Sorrow is a man’s passage from a greater to a less perfection.

Exp[lanation]. I say a passage. For Joy is not perfection itself. If a man were born with the perfection to which he passes, he would possess it without an affect of Joy.

This is clearer from the affect of Sadness, which is the opposite of joy.⁴

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Spinoza's affects are not about *how much you have* or *how well you are* but about *how much and how well you're being transformed*. It is the experience of change, the augmentation, the rate of accumulation, or, conversely, the decline in your efficiency that matters. Nonetheless, by placing this Spinozan notion of augmentation or diminution of being within a whole economy that involves not only the increase and decrease of being but also its production and distribution, we get a typically Bourdieusian mode of investing in philosophy and subverting it at the same time.

2 Many philosophers, particularly in the phenomenological tradition, like to talk about "being" with awe, and mostly in very absolutist terms. This makes questions such as "How much being does this person have?" or "What kind of being is society producing and distributing?" (a logical corollary of a conception of being as an economy) sound philosophically cheap and quasi-sacrilegious. Yet in coupling the word *augment* with the word *being* there lies a highly significant claim. It can be thought of as a kind of non-Shakespearian claim, since, from this perspective, "to be or not to be" is not the question. Here, being—or, social being to be precise—is not understood in "either/or" but in "more or less" terms. Satisfying and fulfilling forms of lives, in all their varieties, are not equally made available and distributed in and by society. Nor are the degrees to which they are satisfying and fulfilling. What's more, people do not just passively receive a certain *amount of being* from society. Though some might inherit a location and various material and symbolic resources that make the augmentation of their social being relatively easy, others must feverishly scrape the bottom of the barrel for a little bit of being. This is why, rather than "to be or not to be," the question becomes of the order of "How much can one be?"

An Existential Political Economy

This vision of society as an assemblage concerned with the production and distribution of social being, and the complementing image of social agents struggling to define, legitimize, and maximize whatever their conception of a viable life entails, permeates all of Bourdieu's work. This is what I am referring to as the political economy of being. It is an economy in that it is a process of production and distribution of ways of living articulated to a simultaneous process of assigning differential value to these ways of living. It is a *political* economy of being in that all those processes of production, distribution, and valorization are structured by relations of power and domination while being, at the same time, the subject and

the outcome of political conflicts and struggles. Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow defined this as an “empirical existential analytics.”⁵ While this is made more explicit in Bourdieu’s later works, like *Pascalian Meditations*,⁶ it is already strongly present in the early texts. Even in the earliest writings on Algeria, one finds in Bourdieu’s analysis of the encounter between French colonialism and the Algerian peasant an existential concern with the peasant’s diminished being rather than the preoccupation, common at the time in the literature on imperialism, with economic deprivation and political subjugation. As the editors of the new edition of *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* point out, the experiences analyzed in the book highlight the way the marginalized “find themselves dispossessed of the referents that gave meaning and direction to their lives.”⁷ In his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, “A Lecture on the Lecture,” Bourdieu follows the Durkheimian lineage to propose a vision of society as the purveyor of a meaningful life: “What is expected of God is only ever obtained from society, which alone has the power to justify you, to liberate you from facticity, contingency and absurdity.”⁸ In that lecture we not only glimpse an unequal distribution of being but identify being as something that the dominant class acquires at the *expense* of the dominated. The ability of the dominant class to increase its “access to being” is accompanied by the “descent of the dominated into nothingness or lesser being.”⁹

The final chapter of *Pascalian Meditations* offers what is perhaps the most condensed exposition of this existential analytics. There Bourdieu tells us, “The social world gives what is rarest, recognition, consideration, in other words, quite simply, reasons for being.” Accordingly, he points out, “one of the most unequal of all distributions, and probably, in any case, the most cruel, is the distribution of symbolic capital, that is, of social importance and of reasons for living,” and “there is no worse dispossession, no worse privation, perhaps, than that of the losers in the symbolic struggle for recognition, for access to a socially recognized social being, in a word, to humanity.”¹⁰

What Bourdieu means when he talks of “social being” varies.¹¹ As in the quote above, the augmentation of social being can mean an augmentation of recognition. But in many places, and as will be examined throughout this book, social being is also a question of self-realization and practical efficiency: the capacity to achieve what one sets out to do. Even though it is not a concept that Bourdieu has himself used, I have found the concept of *social viability* to be as useful to deploy as that of “social being,” and a reasonable equivalent to it. Over the years, inspired by Bourdieu but

encompassing the work of many others, I have tried to develop what I have called an anthropology of viability: an anthropology concerned with the way individuals and groups struggle to make their lives viable, whereby a viable life means an experience of life as worthwhile, fulfilling, and meaningful, as well as practically and symbolically satisfying.¹² Thus, without wishing to reduce Bourdieu to an anthropologist of viability, the present book can be usefully, or perhaps even best, read as my attempt to highlight what I see as Bourdieu's contribution to an anthropology of viability.

4 I will try to show how a struggle for viability is an enduring dimension of Bourdieu's analytical disposition toward society and one of the cornerstones of the analytical habitus he has bequeathed us. Analysts who inherit and internalize the modes of classification and the analytical practices this habitus entails start seeing struggles for being and viability in everything. Whether they are analyzing someone picking flowers in the countryside, talking about the latest Netflix series they have seen, looking for a job, or demonstrating for or against asylum seekers, they find themselves asking, What conception of a viable life is behind what is being done here? In what way is this practice an attempt to perpetuate or augment the social being of the person engaging in it? How do societies work to valorize certain conceptions of the viable life over others? How do they work to legitimize some and delegitimize others? How do they make available or restrict access to what certain conceptions of the viable life entails?

At the same time as it leads social analysts to see struggles for social viability everywhere, a Bourdieusian habitus is particularly conducive to making them see a distributional—that is, a “more or less” rather than an “either/or”—logic in everything. There is a long history of academics arguing against binary oppositions and either/or logic, but none are able to instill the opposite analytical vision of more or less as systematically as Bourdieu's analytical apparatus does. When social analysts internalize Bourdieu, the moment they hear someone making an either/or claim, they find themselves, almost unconsciously, critically deploying a more or less analytics.¹³ In my work *White Nation*,¹⁴ I deployed this logic to criticize the analytically taken-for-granted either/or logic of nationalism: “Are you or are you not Australian?” I showed that the claim itself is part of a logic of accumulation where what is at stake is a politics involving who is more and who is less, rather than who is and who is not Australian. Even when faced with what might appear as a banal identity claim such as “I am a man,” a Bourdieusian analytical disposition invites one to approach

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it by asking, To what extent is such an identification an investment in and a pursuit of manhood? If it is, then in what way is this investment and pursuit a particular mode of augmenting one's social being and viability? What kind of social agent—that is, with what kind of social history and social trajectory—makes claims of being “more of a man” than others? What components are posited as necessary to accumulate to be “a man”? How are they accumulated? How is their possession unequally distributed in social space?

In this book I will elucidate some of the key questions raised by such an analytic vision. I will highlight the way societies are the sites of *economies* of being—that is, as noted, processes of production, distribution, valorization, accumulation, and loss of, as well as investment in, social being. But I will also highlight the way these economies are *political* economies—that is, both structured by power relations and the object of continuous struggles. Most important, perhaps, I will examine the way Bourdieu makes a conception of the social world as vague as “a political economy of social being” operational in empirical research. Last but not least, I will explore what it means to be a social scientist who is both a part of and professionally trying to make sense of the social world in this specific way.

The first thing to note when thinking about an economy of being is that it is not merely a matter of substituting *being* for terms commonly associated with the concept of economy as we know it (e.g., *money*, *wealth*, or *capital*). Thinking about an economy of being involves rethinking the very notion of economy. This is implied in Benedict de Spinoza's concept of “augmentation,” which is not equivalent to the notion of “accumulation.” For Spinoza, as for Bourdieu, certain forms of accumulation can lead to diminished rather than augmented being.¹⁵ This is so even in the mundane way in which people say “Money doesn't bring happiness.” In an economy of being it matters what you are accumulating. We know all too well today that a productivist economy that aims to accumulate development at any cost can lead to diminished being in the form of ecological misery. In an economy of being, how you are accumulating also matters: people who accumulate too slowly, or too quickly or voraciously, might witness a decline in their being.¹⁶ This is similar to the way eating too much or too quickly can give one stomach pains. Thus, in an economy of being, the dominants do not aim just to get rich; they aim to flourish. And the dominated suffer from living diminished lives, which may or may not coincide with being poor. It is in that sense that Bourdieu and

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colleagues' *Weight of the World* offers the experience of men and women whose "social suffering" is grounded not in their poverty but in "the difficulties they have existing."¹⁷

6 If, from this perspective, Bourdieu's larger sociology aims to uncover the way societies constitute a space of struggle over how to define, produce, and distribute social viability, his conceptualization of practice is also formulated with a similar analytical horizon in mind: What makes a practice more or less conducive to the viability of those engaging in it? This is what this book focuses on. It explores how the key concepts that make up Bourdieu's theory of practice are all analytical components of this critical political economy of being.

Bourdieu and Philosophy

As noted earlier in this introduction, by emphasizing the overarching theme of a "critical political economy of being" I am also concerned with giving prominence to Bourdieu's dialogue with philosophical and metatheoretical issues and the way this dialogue is articulated to empirical research. As such, in each chapter, I endeavor to show the specific perspective on being and the struggle for viability that each of Bourdieu's concepts—be it habitus, *illusio*, capital, or field—offers. I explore the intellectual traditions with which each concept is in dialogue and, finally, the ways in which the concept, understood in this way, opens a new analytical horizon and allows for new research perspectives.

It is well known today that Bourdieu, like many other prominent French sociologists/anthropologists before him (Émile Durkheim, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl), was initially trained as a philosopher.¹⁸ He was writing his thesis on Edmund Husserl under the supervision of Georges Canguilhem when he was conscripted into the French Army and deployed in Algeria.¹⁹ There he morphed into an anthropologist and, later, a sociologist. It is not surprising therefore that there are many explicit and implicit critical dialogues with philosophy in Bourdieu's work. As he sees it, even though philosophy raises some of the more difficult questions about the world, social science, because it involves empirical investigations, offers a better space for thinking through such questions. But it can only do so when the social scientist is aware of the metatheoretical and philosophical issues they are confronting. As such, Bourdieu calls for, and sees himself as always engaging in, "fieldwork in philosophy."²⁰

Despite the continuous presence of this philosophical dimension, the relation between Bourdieu's work and philosophy was hardly acknowledged in the early reception of his work, especially in the Anglophone academic world. It can be said that the relation became harder to avoid in later years because Bourdieu's work itself increasingly highlighted it.²¹ It was becoming already more pronounced in *Practical Reason* and even more so in *Pascalian Meditations*. As such, this relation is the subject of a number of articles and books, and a whole conference was devoted to it.²² Some philosophers have even claimed Bourdieu as one of their own, arguing that despite his stating that he is using philosophy to further a better sociology, there is enough evidence to ask whether, in fact, he has not found in sociology the best way to approach philosophy.²³ In a way, saying that Bourdieu is aiming for a sociologically grounded philosophy is just as true as saying that he is aiming for a more philosophically inspired sociology. At any rate, it makes the particular mode of interaction between philosophy and sociology that his work entails necessary to engage with right from the start. It is important for approaching Bourdieu in general, but particularly so to understand what it means for him to see social life as a struggle for what I have called the perpetuation and augmentation of being.

At one level, it can be said that Bourdieu sees in philosophy a type of aristocratic ethos, a mode of free thinking, unhampered by the mundane reality of the pleb and, as such, providing the philosopher with unlimited *jouissance*.²⁴ One can feel, reading Bourdieu, that he is not immune to the charm of this kind of ethos but that, at the same time, he is trying to resist it at any cost.²⁵ He does so via sociology, which is positioned as a kind of submission to a reality principle (empirical reality) that needs to be investigated as a price one has to pay to engage in decent thinking.²⁶

This idea of philosophy as the unlimited *jouissance* of a thought that knows no empirical restraints is perhaps behind Jacques Derrida's reported quip that Bourdieu relates to philosophy as a man relates to his mistress. This is a pertinent characterization insofar as the traditional male imaginary of the mistress denotes not only a clandestine relation with someone but also a relation that provides one with more enjoyment than responsibility and a type of escape from the exigencies of social reality that are represented by married life. Nonetheless, one can say that after Bourdieu's critical severity toward Martin Heidegger in *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*, toward Jean-Paul Sartre in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, and toward Immanuel Kant in *Distinction*,²⁷ *Pascalian Meditations* represents

a succumbing to the philosophical pleasure principle, where the relation to the mistress is brought out in the open.

8 As helpful as this opposition between reality and pleasure principles might be, there is another, more important dimension to Bourdieu's critical engagement with philosophical thought. It presents itself in his critique of what he has termed, after J. L. Austin, "scholastic reason." Detailing the meaning and the significance of this critique of scholasticism is important to fully understand the nature of Bourdieu's analytical categories and how they relate to the political economy of being that they aim to unpack. This is where the "patience and attention to nuance" that I have implored from the reader early in this introduction is at its most necessary.

The Problematic of Scholastic Reason

In *Sense and Sensibilia*, Austin refers to what he calls the "scholastic view." He illustrates it with the example of the "erudite," who, when looking for the meaning of a word, produces an inventory of all possible meanings outside any particular context of usage.²⁸ Bourdieu develops his critique of scholastic reason through a thorough reflection on the conditions of possibility and implications of this capacity to look at things outside any particular context of usage, which is encouraged at school and later professionalized in universities. In opposition to scholastic reason is precisely the thought that is produced within a particular context of usage, what Bourdieu calls "practical reason." The latter, he argues, is the reason that dominates everyday social life and that people produce while engaging in tasks, big and small, directed toward practical ends—from walking to the station, to cooking for one's family, to operating on a patient, to planning a demonstration.

The opposition between the scholastic and the practical is far from absolute, and it is easy to find cases that do not fit. It goes without saying, for instance, that engaging in thinking as part of a university job can readily be seen as a particular type of everyday practice rather than something opposed to everyday practices as such. And it is not the case that practical reason is free from scholastic ruminations. Like all binary oppositions, it works best to help us think of a certain difference rather than create an empirically strict, and strictly binary, classificatory system.

In much the same way, it is useful to think of the opposition between abstract/metatheoretical and concrete/applied thought as a binary that coincides with the scholastic and practical binary. But it would be wrong to take this to mean that those thinking from within the university do

not think practically or that those engaging in everyday practices do not think metatheoretically. An example of practical reason is the knowledge that an electrician is producing and deploying to install or fix your home's electrical circuits. This knowledge can be usefully opposed to an abstract meditation on various conceptions of the nature of electricity and its relation to the vital forces of life, which is more of the order of scholastic reason. Nonetheless, though the electrician might well engage in abstract metatheoretical thinking while contemplating a problem encountered as they fix your circuit, their abstract reasoning, insofar as they are engaging in it in relation to fixing your circuit, is subordinate to that practical function.

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Thus, the best differentiating criterion that can help us understand what Bourdieu is aiming to achieve remains the difference in the finalities and ends of different practices, which are also the finalities and ends of the thinking articulated toward these practices. Scholastic reason involves a mode of thinking about the world for the sake of thinking about the world. Practical reason is more of the order of instrumental reason; it characterizes the thought that is deployed as part of deeds that are more functional, pragmatic, and—at the risk of sounding tautological—practical.

To be immediately clear, for Bourdieu, the problem is not that scholastic knowledge is *bad* and practical knowledge *good*. Far from it. The word *scholastic* itself derives from the notion of *skholè*, advanced by Plato to describe a position that puts the thinker at a distance from the urgencies and necessities of social life.²⁹ In this sense, scholastic reason today is the product of a type of thinking that thrives in those areas of the university where people still engage in what is referred to as pure science (which includes pure social science). These areas can still be thought of with an “ivory tower” imaginary and its intimations of detachment from urgent practical problem-solving. Even if such a university life is no more than a cliché in most universities today, Bourdieu believed that the kind of thinking that university life implies continues to leave its imprint on academic thought, precisely because of the structural position of pure scientific research vis-à-vis society. Academics engaging in pure science remain those thinkers who can take a distance from the social processes around them. They are not doing any time-restricted applied research for a government, a company, or any other organization. Relative to other researchers they are still given *the time to take their time* in order to think. Bourdieu, like Plato, sees this as something positive. The best social science is a social science that is free from urgent social problem-solving imperatives imposed on it by nonacademic economic, political, or even social forces. Bourdieu's

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anti-neoliberal activism in later years was motivated by the desire to protect this freedom “from urgent social problem-solving” and its conditions of possibility from what he saw as governmental attempts at undermining it by imposing national-interest imperatives.³⁰ Thus, Bourdieu is clear that his critique of scholastic reason should not be seen as an ethical or political condemnation of the scholastic position as such.³¹ It is, after all, a position that marks all academic thought, including his own. Rather, the object of his critique is a common tendency in scholastic thought to be blind to its specificity.³² This ends up producing a series of scholastic biases and fallacies that limit the very gains that such a position can afford the thinker.

For Bourdieu, this blindness to the specificity of one’s reasoning about the world is first and foremost a blindness to the specificity of one’s *perspective* on the world. Here the prime examples are those philosophers who philosophize about being and life in “oracle mode” (and as if no one in particular is living the life they are referring to). The biggest problem with scholastic thought is that it often fantasizes itself to be perspectiveless. It becomes clear at this point that while Bourdieu often criticizes philosophy in general, his particular targets are the same perspectiveless philosophers famously admonished by Friedrich Nietzsche when he wrote,

Henceforth, my dear philosophers, let us be on guard against the dangerous old conceptual fiction that posited a “pure, will-less, painless, timeless knowing subject”; let us guard against the snares of such contradictory concepts as “pure reason,” “absolute spirituality,” “knowledge in itself”: these always demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which alone seeing becomes seeing something, are supposed to be lacking; these always demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense. There is only a perspective seeing, only a perspective “knowing.”³³

While Bourdieu’s perspectivism was born in interaction with many philosophers other than Nietzsche, and particularly philosophers of science like Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem, it is hard to overstate how important Nietzsche’s perspectivism is to him. In one of his earliest Collège de France lectures Bourdieu explicitly declares that “insofar as the social world is concerned, perspectivism as conceived by Nietzsche is unsurpassable.”³⁴ One needs to take this statement seriously, and it can be said that without a good understanding of the way this perspectivism

affects his outlook, one cannot capture the scope of Bourdieu's analytical categories and would only be scratching their surface. By the same token, it is this perspectivism that helps us explain best how Bourdieu conceives of the interaction between philosophy and the social sciences and how this very interaction shapes his own analysis of the "perpetuation and augmentation of being." Three dimensions of Nietzsche's perspectivism are of most importance to him: first, the need to acknowledge perspective; second, the importance of perspectival multiplicity; and third, an ontological conception of perspectivism.

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Taking Perspectivism Seriously

To take perspectivism seriously means first and foremost to take seriously Nietzsche's emphasis on the *only* in the claim "there is *only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective 'knowing.'" Perspectivism is one of those things that everyone agrees with but very few rigorously put in practice. Let me insert a brief example here. I get many prospective research students from a variety of disciplines who come to me and say that they want to work "on multiculturalism" or "on racism." When I ask "From whose perspective?" it turns out that this was not something that was considered. For instance, one can work on racism from the perspective of racists and one can work on racism from the perspective of the racialized. One can, of course, work on racism tout court, but this itself assumes either a governmental perspective or indeed a scholastic perspective whereby one is hovering over the phenomenon, able to gaze at racism as a process or a structure. Despite sometimes lapsing into an oppositional mode of thinking,³⁵ Bourdieu, on the whole, does not necessarily invite us to prefer one perspective over another. What is more consistent with his approach is to see him as stressing the need to be clear—to clarify to oneself and to one's readers what perspective is being researched.

As there is always, in Bourdieu's writing, more than a hint of a competitive attempt to dethrone philosophy from its position as the aristocrat of the human sciences, this perspectivism becomes particularly important: it brings sociology right into the heart of philosophy. This is so because perspectivism means that there is nothing more "meta" than sociology itself. Once we say that all thoughts about the world are generated from a particular perspective on the world, we are saying that any thinking about the world, including philosophical thinking, necessitates a sociology: an analysis of where *in* the world—that is, from which *societal* location—a

perspective on the world emanates from and how this social location leaves its imprint on what is thought. The problem with philosophy—or, rather, with the dominant mode of doing philosophy—is that it fails on all these counts. Even if one accepts that the aim of philosophy is to reach a certain knowledge that transcends particular perspectives, and Bourdieu does accept that, there is no escape from the fact that this transcendence is only possible from a particular social location and the perspective that it allows. When it refuses to see itself in such a perspectivist way, philosophy is unable to understand what constitutes its specificity, with all the gains it affords us as well as their limits. By the same token, it fails to understand its difference from the practical nonscholastic reason that is far more prevalent in the world. Consequently, Bourdieu's critique goes on to maintain that an analytical thought—or a “diagnostic” thought, as Michel Foucault called it—that lacks such a sociological perspective on itself ends up positing that everyone is engaging in the kind of invariable, universal reasoning that is peculiar to it. Or as Bourdieu formulaically puts it, it ends up “projecting its own particular relation to the object into the object.”³⁶ That is, it imagines itself talking about the whole world while, in fact, it is only talking about its own world.

Thus, Bourdieu argues, social thinkers have to ask themselves whose perspective on the world they are taking to be the object of their research. There are many perspectives on the world to choose from, whether it is the perspectives of individuals or collectives, whether these are contingent or structural, and so on. But as a first step, social researchers need to ask themselves if they want to take their own perspective on life as their object of reflection, or if they want to analyze those nonacademic perspectives on life where practical reason prevails. For Bourdieu, the answer is clear: If social thinkers are to write about people's struggle for “being” in the world, and they want their thought to be relevant to those struggles, they do not want to write about a kind of being that consists of sitting in an office and contemplating the hard questions of life. They want to research those regions of life where practical reason prevails.³⁷

The differentiation between scholastic and practical perspectives is akin to taking a particular sport and differentiating between the perspective of the people engaging in the sport, the players, and the perspective of the professional commentators observing it from the spectators' stand. For Bourdieu, insofar as this analogy is relevant, what is true of a sports game is also true of the “game of life”: unlike those playing the game, philosophers and social scientists all occupy spectator seats, and anything they say and

write about the game they are observing is marked by their perspective as spectators. As he puts it in *The Logic of Practice*, “The inadequacy of scholarly discourse derives from its ignorance of all that its theory of the object owes to its theoretical relation to the object, as Nietzsche . . . suggested: ‘Kant, like all philosophers, instead of envisaging the aesthetic problem from the point of view of the artist (the creator), considered art and the beautiful purely from that of the “spectator,” and unconsciously introduced the “spectator” into the concept “beautiful.”’”³⁸

The first kind of fallacy that Bourdieu wants to avoid, and that he accuses the worst kind of philosophical scholastic thinking of engaging in, is to comment on how one is experiencing life as a spectator and assume that one is commenting about life in general. It’s like writing a book titled *How to Live a Better Life* about how to be more comfortable in your spectator seat, and how to access the kiosk to buy yourself beer and some chips as efficiently as possible, without being conscious of the specificity of the life you are writing about, and assuming that your writing is about everyone’s lives and should be of value to everyone, including the players. For Bourdieu, there is nothing wrong with writing about what one’s life as a spectator is like, as long as one is aware of the specificity of what one is writing about. But if one wants to claim that one’s writing is relevant to those who are engaging in the game, one has to take the life of those playing the game as one’s object.

Yet scholastic problems are not eliminated simply by being clear about whose life experience is being analyzed. Even when one takes life from the perspective of the players as one’s object, another form of scholastic fallacy appears: to observe the game and comment on the players, but to see them only from one’s perspective as an observer, without having a sense of what it feels like for them as players. We, spectators of sport, often engage in minor forms of this scholastic fallacy when, let us say, a player approaches the goal in a football match, shoots from a short distance and yet misses, and we exclaim, “How could you?” What seemed so simple from a spectator position could have been much harder to execute “in the heat of the game,” where exhaustion, nerves, limits of bodily reflexes, a different field of vision, and many other things are at play that we spectators are not experiencing. The opposite can also be true. What seems very hard to achieve from the perspective of the spectator might have been very easy to execute from the perspective of a player with years of training. Bourdieu wants a social science that is more phenomenological in this regard, one that is more able to apprehend life as lived by and as unfolding before the players

playing it. The difficulty for those who want to think with him is that he also wants that social science to be distant from the players, analytical and structural. But this is only difficult if one has internalized an opposition between phenomenology and structuralism. For, at another level, one can say that all Bourdieu is offering is a version of participant observation. But it is a philosophically enmeshed version of participant observation with a particularly acute awareness of the perspectivist gymnastics and rigor that are required for engaging in such an inherently multiperspectival mode of researching and analyzing.

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To be clear, then: Despite the issues his demand generates, Bourdieu not only sees the position of the observer and spectator of the game as inevitable—this is where social analysts are structurally located—but also sees it as necessary and useful. It is the source of perceptions and understandings that the players involved in the game do not have access to. The spectators/analysts have a macroperspective that, depending on their sophistication, professionalism, and training as analysts, allows for important insights into certain realities affecting the game that only they have the time and the skills to examine and perceive clearly. The issue for Bourdieu is that unless one has at the same time a phenomenological understanding of reality from the perspective of the players, like that described above, one cannot understand how these macrorealities are experienced by the players. Without such a perspective, the analyst is still bound to produce knowledge that is of interest only to other analysts and of little or no interest to the players of the game. As such, one can say that Bourdieu is interested in analytically relevant knowledge. He wants to analyze the way players are engaged in a political economy of being, but he wants an analysis that players can find relevant and of use in their struggles to augment their social viability. In wanting to combine a macro- and micro-analytics of practice, in wanting to understand the game from a detached perspective as well as how it is experienced by the players, and in wanting his categories to be both analytical and of practical relevance, it can be said that Bourdieu wants social scientists to produce knowledge akin to that deployed by coaches who also work from this double perspective. To be sure, *akin to* does not mean “the same” but rather “of the same order.” It is a knowledge that wants to push players to see more than they can see if they are left to their own devices and, as such, it is a knowledge that uses categories that are outside people’s everyday perspectives but that is nonetheless aimed at widening that perspective by never losing touch with what the perspective entails. This is another dimension that makes for the

specificity of Bourdieu's notion of "participant observation." He not only wants the *method* of obtaining data to be a variety of participant observation but also wants the *result* of the analysis itself to be observational and participatory. That is, while many undertake participant observation to produce texts that are solely for other academics, Bourdieu wants the text and the analytical categories that he produces to be themselves invitations to *observe* that *participate* in enhancing the being of those who read them.

To maximize this possibility, Bourdieu wants social thinkers, whether philosophers or social scientists, to acknowledge that even when they have the best intentions of understanding the game from the perspective of those playing it, and even when they equip themselves to do so theoretically and with well-acquired data, they can never eliminate the effect of their structural position on the knowledge that they are producing. They therefore need to examine and labor at how they produce knowledge and how they communicate it. This is why Bourdieu argues the need to integrate yet another perspective to all the other perspectives above. It is what he refers to as "reflexivity."³⁹ Social analysts have to be analytical observers of themselves as they are observing others playing the game if they want their categories to be relevant and communicable despite these categories coming from outside people's everyday reality. They need to fully analyze and understand their relation to the object, which is that of the "outsider who has to procure a substitute for practical mastery in the form of an objectified model."⁴⁰

This, in a way, is a version of Nietzsche's perspectivist pluralism. Social thinkers have to continuously split themselves in three so that one part of them is apprehending a practice from the perspective of the players, one part of them is apprehending the macrosocial grounds in which the play is happening, and one part of them is devising a perspective on the totality these parts comprise. In much the same way, each of Bourdieu's analytical categories has to be seen as the scene where the interplay between these perspectives is played out. When we read and analytically deploy habitus, *illusio*, capital, or field and fail to see the work that Bourdieu is trying to make them do—and to make us, the readers and users of these categories, do—we are reading them and deploying them in a truncated fashion. There is nothing necessarily wrong with this. From my own personal perspective, as I have already indicated, I don't have a desire to engage in or advocate a "religious" faithfulness to an author's intentions, but it is clearly better if one is aware of how partial one's interpretation is. For there is no doubt that for a fuller appreciation of the scope of Bourdieu's categories we need to appreciate that they are always inviting us to see things, at the same time,

from the people's practical perspective, understood phenomenologically from the inside; the outsider analytical perspective of social scientists on the people's practical perspective; and the reflexive perspective on social scientists having a perspective on the people's perspective.

16 There is one final dimension of Nietzsche's perspectivism that finds its way into Bourdieu's work and has important consequences for how we perceive the interplay of perspectives described above. It is the former's ontological variety of perspectivism. For Nietzsche, a perspective is not an angle on an already existing meaningful reality. Social objects and social realities come into being through the process of relating and having a perspective on them. For Nietzsche, without an active seeing there is nothing much to see. It is only because we have a perspective that embodies *active and interpreting forces* that seeing becomes seeing *something*. From this Nietzschean standpoint, when a social scientist produces a category such as *social structure*, this structure comes into being as a reality through the analytical perspective that has a purpose in bringing it forth. Its reality is associated with its analytical pertinence. At the same time, this does not make it an analytical fiction any more than an *atomic structure* is. It points to something that exists and that has causal powers even for those who do not experience it or who experience it differently and have another language to account for it within their own reality.

As we shall later see, this theoretical realism has important ramifications for a Bourdieusian conception of politics. But it is also important to help us understand how Bourdieu's analytical categories function. As with the example of the social scientist above, it is clear that Bourdieu sees his categories as analytical categories. People do not walk around with a consciousness of their habitus or their *illusio*, but they do walk around with a consciousness of something that habitus and *illusio* allude to. The latter are nonetheless theories of the social subjects (or the "social agents," as Bourdieu prefers to call them) produced by a social scientist to account for the nature of their agency. But, yet again, they are not *just* theories, if by *theory* one means something constructed intellectually to account for reality. There is more to them than that. For if perspectives are ontologically productive and specific, the idea that Bourdieu's categories are, as I have argued above, a meeting ground for three perspectives will mean that the categories are the meeting ground of three realities. They embody the reality of the person or group engaging in a particular practice, the reality of that part of the social scientist observing that person or group, and the reality of that part of the social scientist observing herself observing the

person or group. This can easily start to sound farcical if not thought out properly. Suffice to say at this introductory stage that Bourdieu doesn't just want to "reflect" on the reality of the people's struggle for being that he is analyzing. He wants the analytic world he brings forth to participate in this struggle. He wants his analytic labor to open up a reality that helps people augment their being. That is, he wants his categories to be participatory in the processes they are analyzing.

To summarize what has been highlighted in this introduction, we can say that Bourdieu's categories articulate three broad concerns. First, they aim to offer an analytics of the way a particular dimension of practice is conducive to the social viability of those engaging in it. Second, they aim to be autoreflexive categories: they are the seats of an interspectival gymnastics, constantly elucidating the epistemological and ontological presuppositions and processes they are part of. Third, they are in continuous dialogue with the philosophical traditions that have reflected on the analytical ground they are concerned with: through them Bourdieu wants to demonstrate how empirically oriented research offers the ground for metatheoretical reflections. To fail to see how all this is at work when concepts like habitus, *illusio*, capital, field, and symbolic violence are deployed is to be merely scratching surfaces.

Chapter 1 stresses the importance of understanding *practice* as the very mode of existing in the world. But while practical being can take many forms, the chapter stresses the importance of routinized practices. The latter are the very stuff from which the social world is made. The chapter explores why and how, for Bourdieu, routinized, habitual practices are defined by degrees of efficiency that reflect degrees of complicity with the social world. It goes on to describe how habitus offers a theorization of humans insofar as they are social beings subjectively oriented toward the augmentation of their practical efficiency and complicity with reality. The chapter explores how the concept of habitus involves a dialogue with a vitalist tradition that sees the viability of life as capacity to act: energy, power, efficiency, and force.

Chapter 2 starts by highlighting that, for Bourdieu, the way societies continue to reproduce their basic structures despite the immense changes that they undergo over time is of the order of the magical. Part of the magic is the way routinized social practices are continually generating new strategies to meet new situations and yet manage to reproduce the social world in the very process of doing so. The chapter stresses how important it is to understand that habitus is a theory of what we are as social subjects such

that we are continually performing this magical trick. As such, the chapter highlights the ontological nature of habitus as a real, generative structure that constitutes us and where practical dispositionality emerges as a social force. The chapter finishes with an autoanalysis of my own deafness as a way to understand the potentials and limits of habitus.

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Chapter 3 explores the way, with the concept of *illusio*, that Bourdieu is broadly in dialogue with the phenomenological tradition that delineates something like an “existential viability.” The concept offers us a window into the dimension of life where social viability is primarily associated with the existence of a *raison d’être*, something to live for. The chapter examines the notion of *investing the self* in a meaningful life. It explores three orders of meaningfulness encompassed by *illusio*: the order of intelligibility, where to speak of a meaningfulness of life and of social reality is to speak of them as making sense, as not being absurd; the order of purposefulness, where to speak of meaningful life is to highlight having a life with aims and a sense of direction; and, finally, the order of importance, where meaningfulness points to a life that one takes seriously.

Chapter 4 examines the angle that Bourdieu’s concept of capital offers on his economy of being. The chapter begins by showing that there is a sense in which the accumulation of capital points to an accumulation of efficiency and an accumulation of meaningfulness and as such offers another take on habitus and *illusio*. It is only with the notion of symbolic capital that we have a new dimension of viability associated with recognition. Here Bourdieu is in dialogue with a largely Hegelian and post-Hegelian tradition that has always been concerned with such questions. The chapter explores the way the accumulation of capital points to a *phallic modality of being* in which recognition and legitimacy are associated with the possession of distinction.

Chapter 5 deals with Bourdieu’s concept of field. If humans aim to augment their being by augmenting their practical efficiency—by securing a sense of purpose in life and by seeking recognition from others—they do so as beings born in an already existing social space demanding particular forms of practical efficiency, offering particular paths of self-realization, and offering recognition for certain forms of capital more than others. This social space is already marked by various modes of domination and by certain routinized forms of distribution that create enduring (structured) social divisions. This is what Bourdieu calls “fields.”

Highlighting the social nature of being and viability means, first and foremost, that social being is irreducible to individuals. It is associated

with certain structural locations. These locations offer in themselves certain forms of social being in the form of inheritance of resources but also in the form of inheritance of capacities to augment one's inheritances. Being associated with particular structural locations means that social viability, as opposed to individual viability, is a class matter. Furthermore, because people are born in particular locations within these fields, the way fields are structured and organized has a causal effect on people's capacity to augment their being. The field is not just a scene where things happen; it has its own dynamic and the forces that emanate from it, as magnetic fields are causal in themselves.

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The book's conclusion deals with the way Bourdieu conceives the relation between viability and domination. The latter, it will be argued, is ultimately conceived as the ability to institute a social ecology in which one can augment one's being. The conclusion highlights an often-missed ontological dimension present in the work of Bourdieu. It can be said that, for him, we are ultimately autoecological beings: we generate our own ecology, that is, the environment in which we thrive. In the conclusion we examine the various forms that domination takes in this process of making and unmaking reality, and how each form of domination affects the production and distribution of being at both macro- and microlevels. The conclusion then highlights another important dimension of viability treated by Bourdieu: the dimension of "reflexivity." Reflexivity, in its most general sense, is the capacity to reflect on the unfolding of one's own being. It is about how well one understands one's location, one's inheritances, one's capacities, and one's social determinations and the particular way all of these bring our reality into existence. It is what Bourdieu has sometimes referred to in his lectures as "lucidity." The conclusion ends with a reflection on the relation between lucidity and viability.

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Introduction

Notes

Preface

- 1 For a thorough and excellent investigation of Bourdieu's relation to colonial culture, see Pérez, *Bourdieu and Sayad Against Empire*.

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- 1 Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 115. For such an interpretation of Bourdieu, see, for example, Lamont, *Money, Morals, and Manners*, 185: "Bourdieu shares with rational choice theorists the view that social actors are by definition socio-economic maximisers who participate in the world of economic exchange in which they act strategically to maximize material and symbolic payoffs."
- 2 Bourdieu, "Concluding Remarks," 274.
- 3 Spinoza, *Ethics*, 4, "Axiom," 2/241(P41, Dem), in *Collected Works*, 570.
- 4 Spinoza, *Ethics*, 3, "Definition of the Affects," 2/190, in *Collected Works*, 531–32.
- 5 Dreyfus and Rabinow, "Can There Be a Science of Existential Structure and Social Meaning?," 35.
- 6 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*. For an interpretation of Bourdieu sympathetic to this dimension, see Threadgold, *Bourdieu and Affect*, 30.
- 7 Bourdieu, *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie*, 11.
- 8 Bourdieu, *In Other Words*, 196.
- 9 Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*.
- 10 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 241.
- 11 Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 478; Bourdieu, "La dernière instance," 269; Bourdieu, *Practical Reason*, 52; Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy*, 218; Bourdieu, "Symbolic Capital and Social Classes," 296.
- 12 Hage, *The Racial Politics of Australian Multiculturalism*; Hage, "Bearable Life."

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- 13 In a private chat Bourdieu once said to me something that stayed with me and that I later scribbled on a piece of paper. He said (not word for word): "I suppose it might be useful to start researching a space by thinking of some binary oppositions that one, as a researcher, thinks are crisscrossing it, as long as one then works to show why they are neither as binary nor as oppositional as they first seem, which, mind you, doesn't mean they are not there."
- 14 Hage, *The Racial Politics of Australian Multiculturalism*, 67.
- 15 As Nadler, *Think Least of Death*, 68, points out: "A free person, then, does not know gluttony, drunkenness, lust, greed, or ambition. Spinoza defines these vices as 'an immoderate love or desire for eating, drinking, sexual union, wealth and esteem.' As forms of love, they are directed at things that bring joy or pleasure. Ultimately, however, they result in sadness, as they all involve an eventual diminishing of one's overall *conatus* or power in body and mind."
- 16 Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 330.
- 17 Bourdieu et al., *La misère du monde*, 7. Please note that this is my own translation of this sentence, which differs from the one found in the English version of the book.
- 18 Heilbron, *French Sociology*.
- 19 Bourdieu, *Sketch for a Self-Analysis*, 41; Heilbron, *French Sociology*, 198; Pérez, *Bourdieu and Sayad Against Empire*, 55–56.
- 20 Bourdieu, *In Other Words*, 3–33.
- 21 See Shusterman, "Bourdieu as Philosopher."
- 22 Bolmain, *Pierre Bourdieu philosophe*; Braz, *Bourdieu*; Gautier, *La force du social*; Perreau, *Bourdieu et la phénoménologie*; "Pierre Bourdieu et la philosophie"; Meyer, "Présentation."
- 23 Lescourret, "Pierre Bourdieu," 26.
- 24 Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 472.
- 25 Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, 6, claims that "Pierre Bourdieu says that in philosophy Heidegger was his 'first love.'"
- 26 As Bourdieu, "Scattered Remarks," 334, notes, "The conduct of genuine scientific research requires that one knows how to break oneself of all the habits of thought to which are attached the attributes of theoretical grandeur and depth: to abandon radical doubt in favor of a doubt proportionate to the degree of doubt in the thing, such as Leibniz recommended, to renounce the narcissistic satisfactions provided by all prestigious and sterile meta-discourses, whether methodological or epistemological, in favor of the methodically and epistemologically controlled production of new knowledge."

- 27 Bourdieu, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*; Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 73–76; Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 485–500.
- 28 Austin, *Sense and Sensibilia*, 3–4.
- 29 As Bourdieu, “The Scholastic Point of View,” 381, notes, “Adoption of this scholastic point of view is the admission fee, the custom right tacitly demanded by all scholarly fields; the neutralizing disposition (in Husserl’s sense) is, in particular, the condition of the academic exercise as a gratuitous game, as a mental experience that is an end in and of itself. I believe indeed that we should take Plato’s reflections on *skholè* very seriously and even his famous expression, so often commented on, *spoudaios paizein*, ‘to play seriously.’”
- 30 Bourdieu, “Intellectuals and the Internationalization of Ideas.”
- 31 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 49.
- 32 Bourdieu, “The Philosophical Institution.”
- 33 Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 119.
- 34 Bourdieu, *General Sociology*, vol. 1, *Classification Struggles*, 127; Bourdieu, *Sociologie générale*, 1:187. This quote in the text is my translation of Bourdieu, “s’agissant du monde social, le perspectivisme tel que le définissait Nietzsche est indépassable,” as it appears in Bourdieu, *Sociologie générale*. The passage is mistranslated in *Classification Struggles*: “as far as the social world is concerned, some degree of perspectivism as defined by Nietzsche is inevitable.”
- 35 The tendency to see the scholastic approach to the world as bad social science is particularly present in Bourdieu’s early critique of Lévi-Strauss’s structuralism when he wanted to mark the specificity and originality of his theory of practice. But one can easily see, as I do, that his difference with Lévi-Strauss is a difference in their chosen research objects. See also Lentacker, *La science des institutions impures. Bourdieu critique de Lévi-Strauss*.
- 36 I have this particular formulation as a note taken during a class at the École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. A student had made a remark about something (I no longer recall what), and Bourdieu replied, “C’est ce que j’appelle projeter notre relation particulière à l’objet dans l’objet.” Bourdieu, in *The Logic of Practice*, 29, has noted the “projection of a nonobjectified theoretical relationship into the practice that one is trying to objectify,” and Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 68, notes “an uncontrolled relation to the object which results in the projection of this relation onto the object.”
- 37 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 51; Bourdieu, *Retour sur la réflexivité*, 79.
- 38 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 34.

- 39 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 9–10.
 40 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 34.

Chapter 1. Social Efficiency and Social Complicity

- 1 Emirbayer, “Tilly and Bourdieu,” 411.
 2 See, for example, Bidet, “Questions to Pierre Bourdieu.”
 3 Silva, “Unity and Fragmentation of the Habitus,” 171; Swartz, *Culture and Power*, 101; Wacquant, “A Concise Genealogy and Anatomy of Habitus,” 65.
 4 Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, 138.
 5 Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 72–78; Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 179.
 6 Bourdieu, *Sociologie générale*, 2:82.
 7 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 55.
 8 Bourdieu, “Scattered Remarks,” 340.
 9 Bourdieu, “Men and Machines,” 309.
 10 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 41.
 11 Perreau, *Bourdieu et la phénoménologie*; Perreau, “Quelque chose comme un Sujet.”
 12 Lévi-Strauss assesses Bourdieu’s criticism of him in much the same way. In response to Bourdieu’s emphasis on strategies (as opposed to rules) of marriage, Lévi-Strauss, in Lévi-Strauss and Eribon, *Conversations with Claude Lévi-Strauss*, 103, asserts that “centers of interest shift over time. Sometimes the emphasis is on regulated aspects of social life, at others, on those elements where a certain spontaneity seems to occur. . . . It boils down to knowing what level of observation is the most profitable in the present state of knowledge and in light of a specific inquiry.”
 13 Connell, “The Black Box of Habit.”
 14 Tokarczuk, *Drive Your Plow over the Bones of the Dead*, 51–52.
 15 Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 140.
 16 Bourdieu, *Sociologie Générale*, 2:1072–73, speaks of the specific power of those who have the capacity to “transform the practical, the confused, the vague that is of the essence of our experience of the social world into a discourse that is explicit, constituted, formalised, codified.”
 17 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 55.
 18 Bourdieu, “Men and Machines,” indicates the kind of relationship operating here—“a quasi-ontological commitment flowing from prac-