

## **Pierre Bourdieu between Philosophical Foundation and Sociological Reproduction**

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### **Abstract**

This research paper examines the philosophical-sociological project of Pierre Bourdieu, one of the most prominent thinkers to bring philosophy and sociology together. Bourdieu sought to establish a critical perspective that reveals the relationship between knowledge and power within society, drawing upon an intellectual and philosophical background shaped by Marxism, structuralism, and phenomenology. However, he moved beyond these frameworks towards an analysis of social reality and the disclosure of the mechanisms of symbolic domination through a conceptual apparatus comprising fundamental notions such as cultural capital, habitus, symbolic capital, and the social field. Bourdieu's significance, therefore, lies in his transition from a theoretical philosophical foundation to the construction of a critical sociology.

**Keywords:** habitus; social field; philosophy; symbolic capital; cultural capital.

### **Introduction**

Pierre Bourdieu is widely regarded as one of the most important intellectuals of the contemporary age. He achieved worldwide renown as one of the foremost sociologists of the twentieth century, having made a major contribution to the development of sociological thought through his profound analysis of social relations and of the mechanisms of power and symbolic domination within society. Pierre Bourdieu sought to move beyond the traditional separation between the individual and social structure, seeking to understand how individuals' practices and ideas are formed within a given social context. Bourdieu drew upon a set of intellectual

references that contributed to the crystallization and formation of his intellectual project, such as the ideas of Karl Marx (1818-1883), Max Weber (1846-1920) and Émile Durkheim (1858-

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1917), which led him to propose an approach combining critical philosophical analysis with the sociological dimension of social reality.

Critique is the fundamental step that enables philosophy to trace the development and effects of the sciences to diagnose their epistemic status. In this way, it constitutes an epistemic discourse on science, deriving its principles from philosophy not only by subjecting the sciences to its principles, but also by reformulating the critical question concerning the examination of their competence, clarifying the ambiguities surrounding their obscure points, and broadening the intellectual and methodological frameworks of their achievements to reveal the extent of their epistemic significance and to evaluate their vision of themselves. For this reason, philosophy is an epistemological condition that constitutes a discourse aimed at revealing what remains unspoken and unthought within society. Hence, philosophical discourse is combined with sociological discourse to produce a socio-philosophical discourse that works to displace and destabilize all existing social forms. This produces what is termed social critique, as an evaluative critique of society's cultural and moral orientations, which develops and grows through rationalisation linked to philosophy and sociology, particularly in light of the technical and scientific developments witnessed by contemporary societies and their structures, where the need for philosophy has become both necessary and inevitable, since it alone is capable of constructive critique through its intervention and strict commitment to its critical rational method.

Consequently, the works of Pierre Bourdieu contributed to the foundation of a critical sociology, through which he presented his own conceptual apparatus, including habitus, symbolic capital, and the social field. The sociological approach on which Bourdieu relied in his theory of habitus went beyond all traditional conceptions, particularly Marxist, Weberian, structuralist, and analytical conceptions, which had addressed this subject on which Bourdieu worked extensively before it took its final form and became an essential analytical tool for understanding the way in which social actions are formed in light of the historical and cultural conditions in which individuals live.

The French thinker Christian Chauviré states: "The story of Bourdieu and philosophy is not a simple one, and here we shall retain and record only its most positive aspect. We are obliged to acknowledge that Bourdieu's thought never ceases to generate interlocutors such as

Searle, Habermas, Taylor or Bouveresse. It must be recognized that philosophers increasingly read Bourdieu as a philosopher” (Pinto, 2014, p. 16).

From this standpoint, the following problem may be posed: How did Pierre Bourdieu's thought develop from its critical philosophical roots into sociological thought? What are the central concepts that he presents in his sociological project that play a role in explaining the relationship between the individual and social structure? Put differently, how did Bourdieu redeploy philosophical concepts such as habitus within the sociological field? Therefore, the logical and methodological procedure requires recourse to the comparative analytical method to identify the origins of concepts and their movement from philosophy to sociology. The significance of this research paper lies in the fact that it addresses a project that is sociological and philosophical in its essence, developed by one of the most prominent founders of rationality in the contemporary social sciences, who has long been regarded as a methodological model through his precise style, which aims to unveil and break the glittering masks that Western modernity has habitually worn. He therefore insisted on destabilizing its categories and refuting its centrality. He is also considered a philosopher of multidisciplinary voracity, distinguished by an original and profound thought belonging to a generation greatly concerned with criticizing and questioning Western centrality in its manifestations and expressions, such as Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Althusser.

### **1. Pierre Bourdieu: From His Life to the Construction of His Sociological Concepts**

Contemporary social theory cannot in any way be separated from the earlier theories through which it was cumulatively established, and which contributed to and assisted contemporary sociologists in developing new methods that enabled the advancement of sociology and the expansion of its field of specialization, particularly through the topics raised within the social sphere, such as culture, social transformation, work, conflict, and so forth. Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) is considered one of the most important philosophers and sociologists, recognized at both the scholarly and philosophical levels, and was among the most significant French sociologists of the twentieth century. His works became widespread, attracted broad interest, and were translated into several languages.

He began his sociological career as an assistant lecturer at the University of Algiers between 1952 and 1960. This period constituted one of the most important stages in his

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intellectual trajectory, as he resided in Algeria in the late 1950s. There, his academic activity coincided with his field research in Algerian society. This experience enabled him to come into direct contact with Algeria's social and cultural reality, particularly amid the profound transformations of the colonial period. From this point, the features of his transition from theoretical philosophical formation to a field-based sociological approach began to emerge. The University of Algiers thus became a foundational space in the construction of his intellectual project. This period also helped direct his interest towards the study of social structures, as reflected in his sociological concepts, foremost among them the concept of habitus.

During this period, as indicated, he carried out a set of field investigations in sociology with the assistance of Algerian students and academics, among them Abdelmalek Sayad (1933-1998), an Algerian sociologist who was Pierre Bourdieu's assistant and participated with him in numerous field studies on Algerian society, as well as co-authoring some of his early works. He also engaged with Mouloud Mammeri (1917-1989), with whom he held research dialogues and discussions on poetry and speech in Kabyle society. For this reason, he acknowledged that anthropology could serve as a means of liberation, especially as Europe had lived through a difficult period of its history marked by the emergence of totalitarian political regimes, such as Nazism, fascism, and Stalinism, in which the concept of freedom disappeared, the meaning of reason vanished. The concept of progress in society was transformed into a concrete embodiment of destruction and decline (Boumenir, 2010, p. 12). This called for the reconsideration of numerous concepts, including progress, freedom, and critique. Do critique and progress increase human strength, or has technological civilization and instrumental reason reduced human beings to consumption and production?

Pierre Bourdieu was known for his universalist orientation owing to the abundance of his intellectual production, as he was one of the intellectuals who contributed effectively to the development of intellectual and political life by combining thought and practice. He drew this orientation from his contemporaries among French philosophers, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Foucault, since philosophy was no longer merely theoretical contemplation but became closely linked to reality and its transformation to uncover the hidden structures that govern human beings. Bourdieu therefore derived his dynamism from an implicit dialogue with Karl Marx's critical theses and from a questioning of the existential problematic posed by

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Sartre, without fully adhering to either. This led to the construction of a synthetic perspective that redefined and reformulated the relationship between thought and reality.

Bourdieu was interested in logic and the history of science, and this orientation constituted a decisive epistemological moment through which he sought to move beyond abstract philosophical contemplation and to offer a radical critique of what is known as critical philosophy, to develop a scientific approach to social reality. In this context, he was concerned with structuralism not as a closed doctrine but as a methodological horizon that makes it possible to understand the foundations that govern the production of meaning and practice. This orientation had a strong philosophical presence in Louis Althusser, an anthropological presence in Claude Lévi-Strauss, and a linguistic presence in Ferdinand de Saussure (Boukhrissa, 2017, p.20).

Bourdieu's openness to structuralism enabled him to construct a new conception of the social world as a network of autonomous fields in which agents' positions are determined by the symbolic capital they possess. Here, the role of habitus becomes manifest as a mediator between objective structures and individual practices. Pierre Bourdieu approached Marxism and structuralism with caution rather than blind submission. He invested their methodological tools in criticizing Marxist thought, and his aim was not to discredit this intellectual current, but rather to correct it, because Marxism is the theory of the working class, or proletariat, and its philosophy of revolutionary action. He also read and was influenced by Hegel's philosophy, which he studied in higher education. Nor was he free from the influence of Husserl's phenomenology, as the rigorous scientific philosophy that constituted the spirit of the age at that time surpassed all metaphysical conceptions. Bourdieu taught for a short period, then abandoned it after being called up for military service in Algeria as part of what was known as the policy of pacification. He subsequently obtained a teaching post at the Faculty of Letters in Algeria, where he began his field study as a sociologist among peasant Kabyle communities, which at that time were considered a fundamental center of the national movement against colonialism. This is regarded as one of his most important anthropological studies, and it formed the basis for the development of his major sociological concepts. This study also played an important role in understanding traditional social structures in the context of colonial transformations.

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Bourdieu became acquainted with Raymond Aron, and together they conducted several sociological studies. He later obtained the Chair of Sociology in 1981. He died in 2002, leaving behind an intellectual and sociological legacy represented by works such as *The Sociology of Algeria*, *The Inheritors*, *Masculine Domination*, *The Weight of the World*, and *Symbol and Power*.

Bourdieu was concerned with the scientific dimension of sociology, which made him a distinctive sociologist and researcher capable of combining abstract social theory with critical empirical investigation (Scott, 2009, p. 11). He thus achieved a methodological synthesis of social theory and empirical fieldwork, establishing a sociological approach that combines concept construction with empirical analysis. In his work, sociology became a critical science. He states: "Sociology emerged from its prehistoric stage a long time ago, that is, from the age of the grand theories of social philosophy with which it is often compared by those who are ignorant of sociology. Most sociologists worthy of the name agree on an acquired capital consisting of achievements, concepts, and procedures of verification. Sociology remains, as a discipline, one that often serves as a refuge, since it is extremely fragmented from multiple points of view. This explains the impression that sociology is a divided discipline, closer to philosophy than to the other sciences. Yet the problem does not lie in it, since the debate over the scientific status of sociology is what causes unease" (Bourdieu, 2011, p. 28).

Through Bourdieu's statement, it may be concluded that sociology has long since moved beyond what is termed the pre-scientific stage. It is no longer merely an extension of social philosophy, nor a general theoretical reflection on societal issues, as adopted by some pioneers of social thought, such as Auguste Comte and Karl Marx. Rather, it has become an autonomous science possessing precise concepts, a rigorous methodology, and a body of sociological and philosophical knowledge, thereby constituting a shared capital among sociologists. However, this internal coherence does not negate the complex and ramified nature of this field of knowledge. Pierre Bourdieu nevertheless went beyond classical ideas, acknowledging that plurality is one of the marks of sociology, whose object is the complex and composite nature of social reality. This gives rise to a form of internal debate, which constitutes one of the conditions for the production of sociological knowledge operating within

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a changing and multivalent world that imposes openness upon it, particularly towards philosophy, which contributes to its epistemological structure.

It may therefore be said that the weakness of modern sociology is due to its abandonment of the critical project of its beginnings (Haber, 2012, p. 14), according to the German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas (1929-2026), particularly in light of modern transformations brought about by empiricism, which led sociology to abandon its concern with explanations connected to the social whole, under the pretext of what is known as scientific rigour. Habermas drew this insight from Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), who worked on the technological deviation of the social sciences, especially after they had been endowed with an institutional and instrumental character by political and economic powers. This caused the social sciences to shift toward a system of power sources aimed at more effective control through information, prediction, and planning.

Habermas and Pierre Bourdieu represent two distinct orientations within contemporary social thought, each seeking to understand the structure of modern society from different angles: Bourdieu's angle of practice and symbolic structure, and Habermas's of communicative rationality. Bourdieu analyses society as a network of fields determined through the practices of individuals according to what he calls habitus, that is, those structures historically formed within bodies and minds. This context reveals hidden forms of domination manifested in what he calls symbolic violence. Habermas, by contrast, focuses on establishing communicative rationality as the optimal solution to the crisis of modernity and Western rationality after it falls into the clutches of reification, alienation, technology, and the stripping of human beings of all value-based and religious dimensions (Tahir, n.d., p. 58). Such rationality is founded upon dialogue, communication, understanding, and critique. In his view, society cannot be reduced to relations of domination; rather, it contains the possibility of emancipation through communicative action.

The second generation of the Frankfurt School, led by Habermas, relied upon Marxist ideas in its social critique, yet moved beyond them by explaining and analyzing those ideas in accordance with the requirements of society and the principles of critical theory. This theory was deeply concerned with critiquing modern Western rationality in its Enlightenment form, which ultimately became a technical and instrumental rationality (Tahir, n.d., p.59), grounded in scientific and technological reason. The latter consolidated control and domination. For this

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reason, the founders of critical theory undertook the task of examining the conditions for critiquing instrumental rationality by establishing a project of a new rationality grounded in self-reflection and philosophical consciousness, which legitimizes critique to expose and reassess the principles and foundations of the social movements that constitute society.

Instrumental rationality was therefore classified as one of the manifestations of modern capitalism and as a form of control and domination. It has even become a mechanism that reproduces human alienation in various forms, resulting in the erosion of the spiritual and value-based dimension of human beings, whose presence becomes dense in the world yet impoverished in consciousness and selfhood. Horkheimer states: "Critical theory, which aims at the happiness of all individuals, cannot, unlike scientists who serve the authoritarian state, be satisfied with endorsing misery. Reason's contemplation of itself by itself, which for ancient philosophy represented the highest level of division, has become for modern thought a material idea of a society that determines its own destiny, in which nothing remains of idealism except the fact that human possibility is not content with being absorbed into the existing order and with the accumulation of power and profit" (Horkheimer, 1990, p. 84).

This points to a fundamental issue: what the Frankfurt School offered across its different generations was not merely a superficial critique of the Marxist economic dimension, but rather a clear deconstruction of the structure of rationality upon which the capitalist system is founded. Domination is no longer confined to the alienation of labor, but has extended to the alienation of consciousness. Critical theory therefore moves from economics to culture, affirming that control and domination no longer include only the material dimension, through what Adorno calls the culture industry, or the production of a mass collective culture that entrenches the oppression and coercion of the individual through what is known as soft power, according to the American philosopher Noam Chomsky, or invisible power, because the individual believes that he makes his choices freely. In reality, he is governed by cultural and economic structures. Pierre Bourdieu went beyond what critical theory had offered, affirming that this domination, or soft power, is implanted in individuals in the form of mental and bodily structures (Haralambos & Holborn, 2010, p. 8), which make individuals act and think in ways that appear natural. However, it is the result of the accumulation of a long social history. This is what is termed symbolic violence.

## **2. The Horizon of Cultural Critique in Pierre Bourdieu's Philosophy**

As previously mentioned, Pierre Bourdieu represents one of the most important turning points within contemporary sociological thought, as he was among those philosophers and sociologists who did not content themselves with describing social structures, but went further by deconstructing their symbolic dimensions within cultural fields in an age in which the domination of culture as an instrument of reproduction had increased. The necessity of seeking a critical approach capable of revealing what remains unspoken also emerged. For this reason, Bourdieu reconsidered the concept of culture, moving beyond all classical conceptions that regard it as an independent domain in which individual freedom is manifested, and affirming its connection to social structures and the logic of symbolic domination.

From this point, power assumed a new symbolic horizon in the fields of sociology and cultural studies, as well as in the relationships among social agents. This led Pierre Bourdieu towards cultural critique, through which he addressed many educational issues, explaining the means and mechanisms that embody class distinction, whether in schools in general or among teachers and pupils. This relationship is founded on the idea of cultural capital in relation to economic capital, thereby legitimizing domination and cultural power. He explained that there is a firmly established body of evidence demonstrating the effects of class position and socio-economic status on academic achievement and scholarly excellence. For this reason, his concern was biased towards public affairs. He states: "Every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations upon which its own force is founded adds to those power relations its own specific force, that is, its symbolic force" (Passeron, 2007, p. 103).

Here, it becomes clear that Bourdieu is speaking of symbolic power, which possesses a hidden capacity and exercises its authority by imposing meanings, representations, or a vision that conceals the power relations that produced it and constitute the source of its force. At this point, Bourdieu intersects with the French philosopher Michel Foucault in his analysis of the relationship between knowledge and power. However, Bourdieu's distinctiveness is evident in his emphasis that this process leads to the reproduction of power, especially when power relations are concealed and their meanings are presented as legitimate authority. Consequently, individuals accept them and work to consolidate them. Here, the role of habitus

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becomes clear, as these symbolic meanings are embodied in individuals' consciousness and daily practices without their awareness. This grants power to a central character, transforming it into an internal structure within collective consciousness.

For this reason, Bourdieu rejected every authority whose source lay in state institutions or the bourgeois class within the economic field. His confrontation with bourgeois culture was therefore clear, since he came from modest popular origins. This became evident through his educational experience within the institutions of the bourgeois system, which made him feel alienated; this was among the first existential experiences that shaped Pierre Bourdieu's path towards critical thought. He says: "That I came to sociology was not unrelated to my social trajectory. I spent the greater part of my youth in a small, secluded village in southwestern France...I could not satisfy the demands of the school institution without giving up many of my earliest experiences and acquisitions, but only to a certain extent" (Wacquant, n.d., p. 19).

From this point, Bourdieu derives his critique of the dominant cultural system as a mode of falsifying reality. Here, he reveals the true role of every intellectual, far from the hidden ideologies that underpin practices of cultural domination, without overlooking the role of the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), whose intellectual corpus centered on the study of intellectuals' role in social change. Gramsci acknowledged that this group works to produce an ideology specific to the dominant class through means intended to disseminate and generalize it across various social strata. He calls them "employees of the superstructures", who carry out intellectual activities that grant them a position within the network of social relations, such as the teacher, the physician, the politician, the administrator, and the writer. The creative intellectual is the one who formulates his ideology and carries greater weight than the organizer who administers and manages that ideology (Labib, 2005, p.38).

Antonio Gramsci laid the foundations for what is known as dominant ideology, which is produced in accordance with the interests of the dominant class. However, Pierre Bourdieu begins from Gramsci's foundation to move beyond it, insofar as the intellectual is a critic who belongs to no ideology or authority, because he practices thought in its theoretical and epistemic sense. The modern intellectual, in Bourdieu's view, went beyond the conflict and fragmentation of social phenomena, and beyond the insertion of cultural phenomena into ideological struggles in favor of power or the ruling class, towards a more dangerous and

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violent confrontation: the confrontation with globalization led by liberal thought. This was evident in his critique of Sartre, whom he accused of producing an empty intellectual living in a permanent state of alienation under the effect of Marxist thought. The same applies to the postmodern intellectual. Bourdieu therefore reproaches intellectuals who hide behind their ideology to serve their own interests, as well as their complicity in all forms of material and symbolic power (Passeron, 2007, p.29).

Through this bold critique, he acknowledges that Sartre represented the dark face of the intellectual as the most telling example of the intellectual's alienation. For Bourdieu, the reason for this was not excessive loss of consciousness of the world, but rather the excessive claim to possess such consciousness. This extreme consciousness, as carried by Sartre, deprived the intellectual of insight, making him blind to the social and historical conditions of its realization. Sartre disavowed the conditions of the existence of the subject to pose the question of an existence that apprehends consciousness without mediations (Scott, 2009, p. 119).

This made the intellectual possess a transcendent and superficial discourse through which he seeks to guide and attract the masses, far from that natural intellectual vision which penetrates and deconstructs reality. Concern with cultural critique must therefore be founded and framed by what is scientific and theoretical. For this reason, Bourdieu proposes a distinctive new method for the study of culture, combining knowledge in both its theoretical and practical forms, which he calls reflexivity. In essence, reflexivity refers to continuous self-critique aimed at monitoring the social conditions that make sociological work possible (Bourdieu, 2007, p. 11), to be liberated from all forms of cultural domination imposed by power.

For Bourdieu, the intellectual engages in an epistemic and militant act that enables him to reveal all the categories of unthought thought and to liberate the field of thought that is thought (Bourdieu, 2012, p. 75). This is because he possesses cultural, ethical, human, and value-based consciousness, enabling him to guide cultural life, contribute to the making of history, and analyze the realities of his society. He states: "The words of the responsible intellectual contribute to the making of history" (Bourdieu, 2012, p. 75). The true intellectual, for Bourdieu, must side with public affairs or the working class through his consciousness and thought, to liberate it and liberate himself. This was manifested in his

famous work *The Weight of the World*, in which he employed knowledge in the service of the deprived and the oppressed. Therefore, the least that can be said of Bourdieu is that he was committed to and engaged with the issues of reality, unlike traditional intellectuals.

### **3. The Intellectual Frame of Reference of Pierre Bourdieu**

The theory of the philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu did not emerge ex nihilo; rather, it was established within its own specific context, beginning with his familial and social upbringing, influenced by class division and by the cultural milieu that contributed to framing the theses of this exceptional thinker, who founded a philosophy that brought together various values: simple rural values and bourgeois urban values, which he rejected. In this respect, he relied on his life within Algerian society, which he addressed in many of his works and studies, acknowledging its role in shaping his sociological conceptual apparatus, especially since he carried out numerous ethnographic and anthropological studies, particularly in the Kabyle region, which opened up many intellectual horizons for him in the critique of Western centrality, especially as he was contemporary with postmodernism, post-structuralism and post-Marxism. He states: "Most of the concepts that framed my work in the sociology of education and cultural sociology were born out of the epistemological and social results of the work I established in Algeria" (Bourdieu, 1997, p.98).

He was also influenced by philosophers and sociologists, as well as by philosophical methods that played an effective role in founding his theory and in constructing its concepts to formulate his critical sociological project. Among these figures was Karl Marx, who represents an important turning point in the history of contemporary philosophical thought and is one of the most influential representatives of the Hegelian Left, imposing himself upon everyone who enters the world of philosophy, sociology, and economics. Bourdieu states: "I read Marx at that time for academic reasons, and I was particularly interested in the young Marx; I was fascinated by the theses on Feuerbach" (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 19).

However, it should be noted that Marxism at this stage was not free from Stalinist pressures. Marxism in its traditional form made the material economic factor the primary driving force of class conflict and excluded all other dimensions and factors, such as ethnicity and nationalism. This was rejected by Bourdieu, who proposed an alternative in the form of the concept of the field, which comprises a network of social relations among individuals.

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According to Bourdieu, Marxist materialism produced alienation, namely the dispossession of human beings from religious, moral, and human values, or reification in the language of György Lukács, who adopted it as a tool for analyzing the ideas of capitalist society. It is one of the critical structural concepts that founded genetic structuralism, which Bourdieu adopted in his critical sociological theory. Here, the role played by Althusser in Marxist structuralism becomes clear, as Bourdieu's ideas were nourished by it, since it constituted an advanced Marxism that broke with traditional Marxism.

Bourdieu therefore invokes Max Weber in his reading of Marxist social philosophy, especially since Weber was among the most influential sociologists in the field of contemporary sociology, particularly in his critique of Marx's ideas concerning the economic factor, as embodied in his famous work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* in 1901 (Othman, 2009, p. 79). For this reason, Bourdieu based his critical sociology on two essential concepts that shaped Max Weber's sociology: legitimacy and representations, which individuals formulate to give meaning to social reality. What Bourdieu offered may be regarded as a development of the ideas of Max Weber, the philosopher of understanding and interpretation, especially regarding the rationalization of social thought.

If we turn to the long-standing academic tradition in France, represented by the French sociologist Émile Durkheim, he is considered one of Pierre Bourdieu's intellectual references, particularly in terms of his formulation of the concept of sociology as the study of social phenomena and the treatment of them according to the logic of things, which is known as positivism (Lehmann, 2013, p. 15). This is what he addressed in his work *Moral Education*, drawing on the comparative method, grounded in the idea that the same causes lead to the same results, which become rooted in collective consciousness. Bourdieu therefore sought to go beyond the positivist rigidity into which Durkheim had fallen.

Pierre Bourdieu was an epistemological thinker who founded a set of scientific and epistemological concepts based on a classical philosophical and sociological ground, relying on major sociologists as well as contemporary philosophers such as Michel Foucault and his archaeological method, which he employed in the search for power, domination, and the self-centredness of the logos. It should also be noted that Bourdieu did not escape the influence of Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, Althusser's structuralism and Husserl's phenomenology, to which he gave a different reading consistent with social reality. In addition, he intersected

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with many of the visions and ideas of the philosophers of critical theory, namely the Frankfurt School, represented by figures such as Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, and Habermas. Pierre Bourdieu also invoked existentialist philosophy in its Sartrean form, namely Jean-Paul Sartre, since it was a dominant current in contemporary philosophical thought at that time and sought to rescue Western humanity from his existential crisis after the two World Wars, without forgetting the French scientific tradition represented by the philosophy of science in its Bachelardian form, namely Gaston Bachelard.

Pierre Bourdieu relied on a paradigm, or constructive model, to establish his critical sociology, which rests on a contemporary philosophical methodology. Pierre Bourdieu formulated a conceptual apparatus characterized by scientific rigor, inspired by a profound philosophical dimension, since philosophy is a field of knowledge that underpins the creation of concepts and subsequently introduces them into the sociological domain, such as symbolic capital, habitus, and field.

**4. Symbolic Capital: *Le capital symbolique***

This term is a compound expression consisting of two parts: the first refers to capital, and the second to the symbolic. It is one of the most important concepts upon which Bourdieu founded his theory and his philosophical-sociological project. This concept is inspired by classical economics, as it carries within it an economic semantic load referring to wealth. It was embodied in the works of Karl Marx, especially in the study of the relationship between the owners of the means of production and the sellers of labor power (Al-Hajj, 2000, p.255). This prompted Bourdieu to expand the scope of economic interests to encompass symbolic and immaterial interests, so that the idea of capital would encompass all forms of power: material, cultural, social, and symbolic. This is particularly so because individuals possess many different resources through which they preserve their positions within the social order. The symbolic dimension has thus become highly significant for the study of human behavior, as evidenced by his study of Algerian Kabyle society, since nothing is devoid of symbolic meaning (Baghura, 2005, p.11). It should be noted that each field has its own specific form of capital, such as cultural and social capital. Bourdieu defines symbolic capital as “any property or any kind of capital, whether natural, economic, cultural or social, perceived by social agents whose categories of perception allow them to recognize it, acknowledge it and grant it value.

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For example, honor in Mediterranean societies is a typical form of symbolic capital, which exists only through reputation, that is, through the representation made by others when they share a set of particular beliefs that make them perceive and evaluate certain properties and types of behavior.... More precisely, it is the form taken by any capital when it is perceived through categories of perception that are the product of the incorporation of the divisions or oppositions inscribed in the structure of the distribution of that kind of capital: strong, weak, rich, poor, educated, illiterate” (Bourdieu, 1998, p.137).

This indicates the existence of other forms of capital that control the determination of social roles and positions, as well as the various forms of authority and power. There is a kind of competition among individuals to maximize the value of their capital to maintain their status within the social order. It should be noted that Max Weber was the first to use the term "symbolic capital". Whoever possesses power possesses domination, while those who do not possess it are dominated. Symbolic capital, then, is the set of characteristics possessed by the individual that enable him to acquire value or status within social space, thereby imposing his authority after a process of recognition that confers legitimacy upon it. For this reason, Bourdieu affirms that symbolic capital intervenes in all social fields. He states: “I call symbolic capital every kind of capital: economic, cultural, educational or social” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 187).

### **5. Habitus: *L'habitus***

Bourdieu's project is founded upon concepts that cannot be overlooked when examining his socio-philosophical thought, since they constitute the core around which his study and analysis of social phenomena revolve. Among these is the concept of habitus, a term whose origins go back to the Greeks. Yet the question that arises is: how did Pierre Bourdieu adopt this term, and how did he define it?

Habitus is a set of enduring dispositions in which individuals are socialized and which they acquire. These dispositions are capable of transformation or transfer, since they constitute a set of principles that generate and organize practices and representations. Habitus, therefore, operates according to a complex and composite system that shapes the limits of the structure in complete independence from its surroundings and subsequently appears as actions or practices through which individual identity and belonging are determined. Bourdieu

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states: “The system of dispositions and representations, habitus, is a unifying generative principle that retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position into a unified lifestyle, or a unified set of choices of persons, goods and practices” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 187).

It is an idea and a generative principle that produces ideas and rules. The individual embodies his ideas and constructs his objects according to a rationality that imbues human behavior with organization and coherence. For Bourdieu, habitus is one of the mechanisms that expresses and reveals the principle of social inequality among the various groups and classes of society. This is explained by the role of symbolic capital, which determines positions and roles within society, within a framework of dispositions and representations that guide individual behavior. Habitus also carries the capacity for continuity and survival across generations (Bourdieu, 1998, p.31), thereby determining relationships among individuals through a shared mode of conduct. He states: “Agents determine their choices spontaneously through their own habitus, without calculating the constraints that weigh upon them and upon their decisions, especially the weight of the past and of history, insofar as it is incorporated and adapted; they proceed without drawing attention to it. Bourdieu calls this forgetting of history the unconscious, this history that is the fruit of minimal adaptation” (Bourdieu, 1998, p.254).

Habitus is therefore a system of formations acquired over a long period of time, since it is a historical product. What the individual acquires in his social environment is among the factors that control habitus and its differences. Thus, habitus, as Bourdieu described it, is a system of conscious and unconscious schemes of thought and dispositions, and an interpretation of the process of reintegration and cultural and social domination.

## **6. The Field and Its Significance**

To complete his critical sociological project, Bourdieu introduces the field as a central concept, since it is one of the mechanisms through which social activities can be understood. Bourdieu approached the field as the operational space that enables us to understand social phenomena in terms of their emergence and their dynamism. He states: “If we perceive and think of each of these social worlds as a field, we provide ourselves with a means of entering into the most precise details of those fields, fields in their historical

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singularity, while at the same time working to construct and produce them (Bourdieu,1998,p.254).

Each field has its own features and characteristics that grant it autonomy and its own logic. Bourdieu indicates that this social world is divided into a set of fields that witness conflict and contestation among individuals seeking to preserve power within each field, including a group of persons prepared to play and equipped with habitus. He states: “This concept, namely the field, like other concepts such as habitus and capital, can only be defined and determined through the theoretical aspect within which it arose and was formed” (Chevallier,2013,p. 285). For this reason, the structure of the mind is governed by the logic of power among agents,resulting in domination and control within the field as a consequence of conflict and divergent interests. This is what Bourdieu terms “distinction”, which operates within the field, this structured system of objective forces, as Bourdieu sees it. He moved beyond all prior ideas concerning the concept of the field, especially structuralist ones, which he criticized and whose methodological weakness he demonstrated, despite their importance, processual character, and necessity in other issues, such as those of language, symbol, and myth. From the foregoing,it may be said that the concept of the field is central and essential in Bourdieu's thought and cannot be addressed in isolation from the other concepts that construct his social philosophy.

### **Conclusion**

It may be said that Pierre Bourdieu was one of the major sociologists of the twentieth century, whose work extended across philosophy, economics,the social sciences, and many other fields of knowledge.He established a critical sociology that constituted the core of contemporary social thought, and many of his ideas continue to attract the interest of researchers and intellectuals, as they proceed from a critical vision and scientific and logical rigor inspired by twentieth-century philosophy, including analytic philosophy, existentialism, phenomenology,and structuralism. He thereby created concepts that brought together philosophy and sociology and extended into the cultural dimension to renew the role of the intellectual in the making of power outside the circle of domination and ideology.

The concepts of habitus, symbolic and cultural capital,and the field were therefore developed to uncover the hidden mechanisms that reproduce domination within

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society, especially through the educational and cultural system. For this reason, his thought assumed a critical character, deconstructing the relations of symbolic power rooted in social life. Accordingly, Pierre Bourdieu's thought constitutes a profound analytical tool for understanding contemporary social developments in light of the transformations the world is witnessing. It is therefore an essential reference for reading social reality critically, in a manner that moves beyond appearances towards the deep structures that govern society.

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