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Putting Bourdieu in the Global Field

Introduction to the Symposium

by Marco Santoro

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> I think that the sociology of intellectuals is a preliminary to all science of the social world, which is necessarily done by intellectuals.
>
> Pierre Bourdieu

Long a dominant[1] figure in French social science and culture, Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) is increasingly influential also – and probably mainly – on a world scale. If something like a global cultural economy [Appadurai 1996] exists, we should consider Bourdieu as one of its more successful "symbolic goods," at least in the academic intellectual market. Translations of his works – a huge corpus of more than thirty books and hundreds of articles, chapters, oral communications and interviews [see Delsaut and Rivière 2002] – make up for a small and growing industry in itself, with ramifications in many countries as well as languages (not only English, Spanish and German, but also Italian, Russian, Finnish, Swedish, Greek, Catalan, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Arab, Turkish and Hebrew among others). The number of texts devoted to elucidate and discuss more or less critically this body of work is increasing

[1] "Dominant" means in this context intellectually influential much more than academically powerful. It is true that Bourdieu become professor in the prestigious Collège de France as early as 1981, but it is also true that Bourdieu's research center (*Centre de sociologie européenne*), which is also the place where many of his ex-students and collaborators still work as researchers, was – and still is – a relatively small one and not even dominant, it seems, inside the EHESS (itself only an actor in a much greater academic, intellectual and scientific field). Moreover, the Collège de France offers high prestigious positions which do not grant much temporal power over academic affairs. Bourdieu himself has often depicted his position as a marginal one – to begin with his provincial and "popular" social background – even if this marginality has been decreasing during his life and has not prevented Bourdieu and his followers to struggle for more control [see Bourdieu 2004]. This would make his case an interesting one for a sociological analysis of the effects of marginality on creativity on the one side, and on intellectual politics and conflictuality on the other. See the last section of this paper for some suggestions and references.

everywhere, as well as the attempts to apply Bourdieu's research tools and ideas to countries different from his native France – from Australia to the US, from Germany to Finland, from Great Britain to India, from Canada to Japan, from the Netherlands to Hungary and so on.[2] His sudden death in January 2002 acted as a catalyst, and was followed by a flow of obituaries, conferences, books and journals' special issues devoted to him and his works from a wide array of disciplines like sociology – Bourdieu's elected source of disciplinary identity at least since 1960 – anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, political science, linguistics, science studies, literary criticism, cultural studies, education, social work, medicine and so on [e.g. Alonso 2002; Barrett 2002; Boyne 2002; Breslau 2002; Calhoun and Wacquant 2002; Creswell 2002; Crossley 2002; Fournier 2002; Frank 2002; Müller 2002; Osborne 2002; Reed-Donahay 2002; Robbins 2002; Swartz 2002; Swedberg 2002; Pileggi and Patton 2003; Encrevé, P. and R.-M. Lagrave 2003; Swartz and Zolberg 2003; Pinto *et al.* 2004; Poupeau and Discepolo 2004; Vincent 2004; Mauger 2005; McLeod 2005; Savage and Bennett 2005; Hanks 2005; Laberge 2006; Heinich 2007; Lescourret 2008].[3] Not confined to sociology nor to the social and human sciences, Bourdieu's studies and ideas on education, art, inequalities, media and politics have influenced, inspired or

[2] An even provisional bibliography would be really very long. Just as exemplars, see among others on the US Holt 1998, on the UK Gunn 2005 and Warde 2007, on Australia Bennett *et al.* 1999 and Turner and Edmunds 2002, on Germany Mörth and Fröchlich 1994, and Blausius and Friedrichs 2008, on Denmark Prieur *et al.* 2008, on Finland Roos and Rahkonen 1985, on Norway Rosenlund 1996, on Canada Veenstra 2005, on Israel Regev and Seroussi 2004, on Italy Santoro 2002, on Central Europe, post-communist countries Eyal *et al.* 1999, on Spain Lizardo 2005, on Brazil Miceli 1981, and Heise and Tudor 2007, on various countries in Latin America Dezalay and Garth 2002, on China Hanser 2006, and Hong 2008, on Japan McDonald and Hallinan 2005, on Haiti Rei 2005, and for India the pertinent chapters included in Lardinois and Thapan 2006. See also Hallin and Mancini 2004 for an enlightening example of theoretical use of Bourdieu's sociological theory as a tool-box for comparative analysis (in this case, of media systems). A full application of Bourdieu's concepts to an Eastern country's social, economic and political situation (Laos) has been attempted by the German sociologist Rehnbein [2007] – but see also Ooms 1991 on Tokugawa Japan. The applicability of Bourdieu's central concepts of *habitus* and (cultural and symbolic) capital to North African countries is in a certain way implicit, as the author elaborated them in part from its anthropological and ethnographic studies in Algeria [i.e. Bourdieu 1977, 2008; see now Yacine 2008]. The applicability and usefulness of Bourdieu's sociological categories (as well as his more substantive and "secular" theories) outside France, i.e. the issue of their historical and cultural specificity, has anyway been much discussed by scholars, even sympathetic ones [e.g. Calhoun 1993], and sometimes negated too: see e.g. Archer 1993 and, with specific reference to the concept of "field," Broady 1991. Other information and literature in the following contributions.

[3] The flow of obituaries following Bourdieu's death is worth noting, not only as an indicator of Bourdieu's intellectual status but as he had already turned obituaries to surprising new uses in his research practice, by analysing them as empirical sources for the sociology of intellectual elites [e.g. Bourdieu 1996]. On this point see Fowler 2007, which builds on Bourdieu's social theory. What a sociological study of Bourdieu's obituaries could contribute to our sociological understanding of his intellectual status and more in general to our knowledge of intellectual social life is something to be ascertained.

at least concerned in the last few years – in France as elsewhere – artists, writers, playwrights and film-makers [e.g. Haacke and Bourdieu 1995; Grass and Bourdieu 2002; Haacke 2002][4] as well as administrative bodies and political leaders – including an intellectual revolutionary turned a nationalist warlord in an ex-Soviet state [see Derluguian 2006].

To be sure, the export of Bourdieu's works and ideas begun very early, just at the start of his intellectual career, in a certain way, with the American translation of his first book on Algerians [Bourdieu 1958; Bourdieu 1962] and his involvement in a few international editorial projects in the field of anthropology [e.g. Peristiany 1965]. As a visiting fellow of the prestigious Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, and a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania in the early 1970s, he had clearly occasions to discuss his ideas with influential internationally renown scholars like Albert O. Hirschman[5] and Erving Goffman – who in his last written text still reserved a place to discuss the work of his French colleague and friend [see Goffman 1983].[6]

But it is really in the last twenty years, mainly through the systematic English translation of his work (initially thanks above all to Polity Press, founded in 1984 in Cambridge, UK) and the "transatlantic importation" of his social theory in what is arguably the most influential sociological national field – the US – that Bourdieu has definitively changed his intellectual status becoming a truly dominant social scientist, probably the most influential single sociologist in the world in these first years of the new millennium. Or at least, the most referred to, as Figure 1 clearly suggests through a comparison of the case of Bourdieu with three other very influential scholars in the field of social and cultural sciences: Erving Goffman, Anthony Giddens, and Jürgen Habermas.[7]

[4] See the documentary film on Bourdieu by Pierre Carles, *Sociology is a Martial Art* [English subtitled version of *La Sociologie est un sport de combat*]. Brooklyn and Paris: First Run/Icarus Films, VF Films and Pierre Carles (C-P Productions), 2001. For a review of the film see Laberge 2006. Bourdieu was also a gifted practitioner of photography – a "middlebrow art" that was the object of one of his first collective research projects [Bourdieu *et al.* 1965]. For a collection of Bourdieu's early photographic works from his fieldwork in Algeria, read also in their artistic quality, see Schulteis and Frisinghelli 2003.

[5] To give just an example: Bourdieu is among the few fellow scholars acknowledged by Hirschman in the Preface to his seminal and celebrated slim book *The Passions and the Interests* [see Hirschman 1977].

[6] Returned in France, Bourdieu has acted as a local cultural broker for Goffman, promoting the French translations of some of his works in the collection he was editing for the Parisian publisher Minuit. The relationship between Goffman and Bourdieu as a source of sociological ideas – for both the authors – and of their international circulation is still to be reconstructed and assessed.

[7] Consider also that Habermas is reputed and read more as a (moral and political) philosopher than as sociologist. And a great part of Giddens' citations is relative to his more political writings on the "Third Way." According to the ISI Web of Science, in this pantheon of the most influen-

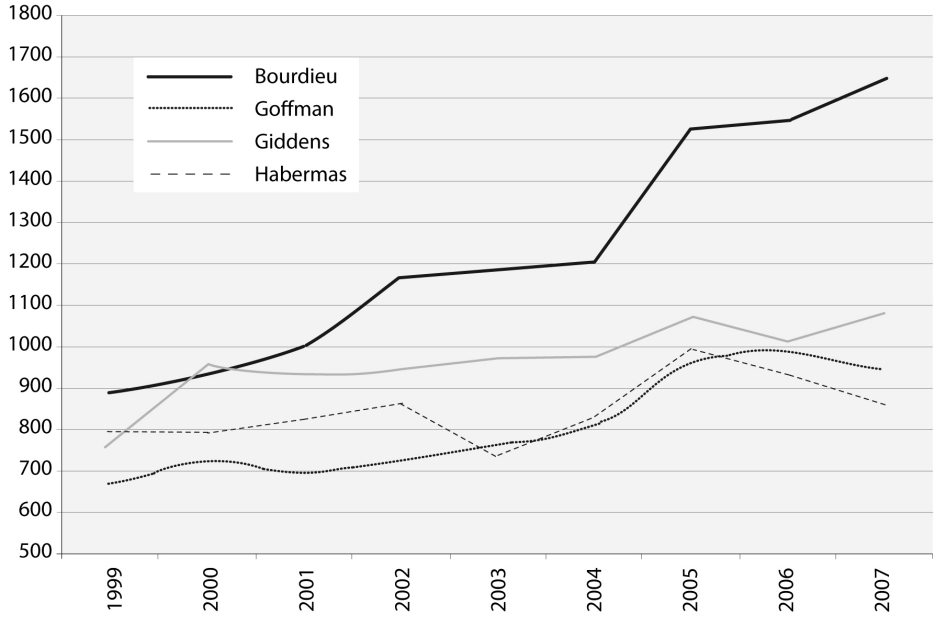

FIG. 1. Number of references to Pierre Bourdieu, compared with those to Anthony Giddens, Erving Goffman and Jürgen Habermas, 1999-2007.

Source: ISI Web of science.

Note: Included are references in articles, reviews, book reviews, notes and other editorial material.

tial sociologists (if we are willing to read citations as a rough indication of intellectual influence, of course) we would find James Coleman (more than 700 citation a year) and the philosopher turned sociologist and anthropologist, Bruno Latour (between six and seven hundreds). A good position – with more than 500 citations a year in the last three years – is that of the now American (but originally Spanish) Manuel Castells, the American Mark Granovetter, and the German Ulrich Beck. A growing presence is that of Paul DiMaggio and Alejandro Portes (both more than 500 citation in 2007). An internationally renown scholar and writer like the Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman received on average – and a bit surprisingly – "only" four hundred citations year in the last three, while the German Niklas Luhmann (the author of one of the most complex and esoteric sociological theories currently in circulation, which has only very recently been exported in the US and UK) is currently receiving on average 300 citations a year – the same of the late Charles Tilly and a bit more that H.S. Becker (an average of 250 between 2005 and 2007). Reputed "general" sociologists like John H. Goldthorpe, Richard Sennett, Immanuel Wallerstein, Scott Lash, Jeff Alexander and even the "father of ethnomethodology" Harold Garfinkel get an average of 150-200 citation each year – not so different from the more specialised Neil Fligstein, Robert Wuthnow, or Loïc Wacquant (a student of Bourdieu). Well-known French sociologists like Alain Touraine, Raymond Boudon, Michel Crozier and the younger Luc Boltanski (another student, and early collaborator of Bourdieu himself) receive around (or less) one hundred citations a year, that is sixteen times less than Bourdieu. A longer perspective would complicate the picture, however, as intellectuals' success is historically contingent and their relative positions could change even radically: e.g. in the 1960s and 1970s Boudon seems to have enjoyed much more influence on US sociology than Bourdieu at the same time (see the citation data collected in Steinmetz 2008, drawn from JSTOR and relative to three mainstream US journals like *ASR*, *AJS* and *Social Forces*).

Interestingly, only less than 5% of the 2007 references (as registered, I recall again, by the US based ISI Web of Science) come from scholars based in France,[8] while more than 60% come from the US, UK and Canada.

Independently from any other considerations regarding the value, the soundness and the usefulness of his work, Bourdieu's documented centrality in current international debate and research is something which alone, I reckon, asks for a serious engagement on the part of contemporary scholars, sociologists above all as it is as a sociologist that Bourdieu proposed himself worldwide. That is not only with respect to the substantive contents of this work (themselves object since many years of a huge and growing literature, as already noticed) but also with respect to the reasons, the modalities, the mechanisms and the limits of its circulation, which for all its width is not without borders nor obstacles (and enemies, too). This is what the Symposium aims to generate, while offering some first, insightful and stimulating bits of knowledge about a relatively large sample of national/regional cases, both central and peripheral ones, together with more general and comparative data and reflections on the patterns of this circulation, and its meaning for the present and the future of sociology as a discipline.

A global, i.e. not provincial, perspective is clearly required for this task [see also Steinmetz 2008]. As a matter of fact, the circulation of Bourdieu's ideas and concepts out of France greatly exceeds their transatlantic importation, both temporally and spatially His works had a chance to circulate in different parts of the "old Europe" often well before than in the US, especially in countries geographically, historically and culturally near to France, like Spain, Germany or Italy. The patterns of transfer in these countries – each with its own intellectual tradition and academic organization – have been varied, both temporally and in intellectual contents, following paths unpredictable and often surprising in many respects, with consequences in terms of status and identity of the transferred ideas equally diversified and not immediately understandable.

To give just an example, the Italian translation of foundational books of Bourdieu's intellectual project like *Les Heritiers*, *L'Amour de l'art*, *La Photographie, Le métier de sociologue*, and *La Reproduction* dates back to the early 1970s, a few years before US sociologists discovered him [e.g. Peterson 1976; DiMaggio 1979], and almost two decades in advance with respect to their English editions – with the relevant exception of *La Reproduction*, already translated for the Anglo-American

[8] The equivalent figure – which can be read as a sort of rough indicator of localism – for other influential French sociologists is much greater (e.g. for Boudon is 18%, for Crozier is 13%, for Touraine is 11%, for Boltanski is 33%).

market in 1977 (still five years after the Italian edition). This does not mean that Italian readers have experienced a deeper and wider knowledge of Bourdieu, as they had to wait 2003 to have in their language the equally if not more foundational *Esquisse de une theorie de la pratique*, (whose English revised edition was issued in that same 1977 as *Outline of a Theory of Practice*) and 2005 for reading in Italian *Le Sense Pratique* (translated in English already in 1990). Instead, this means that Americans and Italians received the same author "Bourdieu" in different ways: in the US first as an anthropologist and social theorist and only later as an empirical sociologist, while in Italy originally as a (critical and empirical) sociologist and only subsequently (and also very recently) as the author of ethnographic works and of a full social theory built on the concepts of practice, *habitus*, field, social space, capital(s) and reflexivity.[9]

At the same time, the delay in reception and current marginality in Italy of a trans-disciplinary field like "cultural studies" [in this respect much like France, see Neveu 2005] – well established in both the UK (where it was born in the '70) and the US academic world (where it spread in the 1990s) – means that the Italian circulation has been deprived of a powerful institutional vehicle, which was instead highly instrumental for the import, and framing, of that work in the Anglo-American world [e.g. Garnham and Williams 1980; McRobbie 2005].[10] That the transatlantic importation of Bourdieu occurred in the same period in which in the US a new field of cultural sociology was under construction gaining every year new adepts and a stronger influence on the whole discipline [Smith 1998; Santoro 2008] has not been without consequences also for the identification of his work as a reference for the emerging sub-discipline. But this process of intra-discipline transformation has been much less consequential and visible in other parts of the world, Italy included. Finally, the status of (cultural) anthropology as a discipline is much different in Italy from the UK and US: what in these countries is historically a vibrant, influential and densely populated intellectual field is in Italy just a small and little visible community, mainly based in Humanities faculties and schools, with very few relationships with

[9] For general presentations and discussions of Bourdieu's theoretical architecture see, selected from a growing literature, in English, Brubaker 1985; Calhoun *et al.* 1993; Swartz 1997; Schusterman 1999; Rahkonen 1999; Robbins 2000; Lane 2000; Brown and Szeman 2000; Jenkins 2002; Swartz and Zolberg 2004; Reed-Donahay 2005; Wacquant 2007; Grenfell 2008; in French Pinto 1997, Lahire 1999, Addi 2002; in Spanish Alonso *et al.* 2004, Baranger 2004; in German Rehnbein 2006; in Italian Marsiglia 2002; Boschetti 2003.

[10] Bourdieu has expressed in many occasions his suspicion for the so-called "cultural studies." But this has not prevented cultural studies scholars to read his works, to use them and to incorporate them – or better, their readings of them – into their field (a field, indeed, constitutively permeable and changing). It is anyway a fact that Bourdieu has in many occasions favoured the introduction of cultural studies' authors in French culture, through translations of their texts in his journal "Actes de la recherche en science sociales."

the other social sciences, sociology included. The combined result of these processes and features is that in Italy the name of Bourdieu and the image of his work is much less associated to "culture" and "cultural analysis" – and still more to a structural kind of sociology and social class analysis, also with a Marxist aura – than they are in the Anglo-American world.

What is more striking, even an impressionistic comparison between Italy and US (or UK, for that matter) would clearly show how the same author could enjoy – notwithstanding a similar presence in bookshops and libraries, even if probably resulting from a very different reception story – a diverse intellectual status and a different meaning on the (apparently) same (academic) field: highly reputed and influential in the US and UK, still marginal and seen with suspicion in Italy – where Bourdieu's name has perhaps more currency in the media field (newspapers and magazines, especially but not exclusively on the left)[11] than in intellectual disciplines and scientific communities.

These different reception patterns are only two among many – as many as potentially the number of languages in which Bourdieu's works have been translated in the course of the years, or better of the countries in which his *oeuvre* has been introduced, well beyond the boundaries of the Western part of the globe. And we have to consider that translations are only one form – albeit a very crucial one – of reception of an intellectual work, which can circulate and often circulates through the simple quoting of excerpts, the adoption of ideas from the original texts, book reviews, secondary literature, and of course (albeit very difficult to document) conversation among scholars, oral presentations, lectures and lessons to students [e.g. Collins 1998; Martin and Keck 2004; and see Bourdieu 1982 for insights on the sociological meanings of the lecture as a cultural form]. In a world increasingly crisscrossed by translocal networks and flows – not only of information but of images, people and objects too [e.g. Hannerz 1992; Lash and Urry 1994; Appadurai 1996; Tomlinson 1999], where knowledge and expertise have growing economic and political implications [e.g. Giddens 1991; Beck 1992; Dezalay and Garth 2002] this spread of ideas (even sociological ones), along with their material supports and social vehicles, has to be recognized as a crucial feature of social life well beyond the traditional academic boundaries. Its patterns and meanings cannot be taken as given but ask for serious and in-depth analysis. A harsh critic of *globalization* in its neo-liberal and "capitalistic" form as well as in its intellectual dress as a pretended scientific concept

[11] Almost every newspaper in Italy – including mainstream ones – has devoted at least an article to Bourdieu after his death in January 2002 – most of them written by journalists or cultural critics. A more comprehensive and detailed discussion of the Italian patterns of reception of Bourdieu's work (and name) in both the academy and the media will be published in the second part of this Symposium.

[see e.g. Bourdieu 2001a; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999], Bourdieu is a widely read, much translated and worldwide influential scholar, that is, he is "Bourdieu" [Heinich 2007]. As such, he is at the same time, inevitably, an effect or a product of "globalization" itself, with all its complexities, variations and contradictions.[12]

Of course, studies on the circulation of Bourdieu's ideas and works in countries different from his native France are already available [see Robbins 1989, 1996, 2004; Broady and Persson 1989; Wacquant 1993; Holt 1997; Guillory 1997; Simeoni 2000; Swartz 2005, 2006; Sallaz and Zavisca 2007]. They are however typically focused on the two countries which more than others have contributed to the recent rise of Bourdieu's reputation as an influential international sociologist, i.e. the US and the UK [see Moreno Pestaña 2004 for an exception].[13] Two countries that share not only the same language, but also – in part as an effect of that language – the same relatively central position in the global field of sociology. On the US case we may count now on the empirical study by Jeff Sallaz and Jane Zavisca [2007] which offers a documented overview of the trajectory of Bourdieu's ideas in the US sociological field from 1980 to the beginning of the new millennium through a citation analysis of his works in four top journals – something which nicely complements and develops the insightful and informative but more impressionistic studies of Robbins (for the UK) and Swartz or Wacquant (for the same US). But what about the many other countries in which Bourdieu's body of work has entered in the last 40 years, including those which have contributed to the historical development of sociology as a discipline (as Germany, and Italy for some aspects) or which are today politically and intellectually "hot" places (e.g. Russia, Spain, or Israel), or which have some weight in the worldwide equilibrium between North and South, or First and Third world (like Brazil, China and India)? We do not know. As it is often the case, our knowledge is circumscribed to the most visible and central spaces, leaving all the rest in the dark, and potentially under the threat of mistaken or biased generalizations from the metropolitan areas according to their own projections [e.g. Alatas 2006].

A truly comparative study of reception patterns in the case of Bourdieu is particularly welcomed, as the author has often underlined (against his critics mainly, but no exclusively) how much his work and ideas have been misunderstood in the process of translation – not only in the sense of transposition in another language, but in the

[12] This is the intended sense of the title of this introductory article, which astonished some of its early readers.

[13] On the international reception of Bourdieu's ideas out of France, and not only in the Anglo-American world, see also Dubois, Durand and Winkin [2005], which however is not focused on the mechanisms, processes and modalities of the reception – object of the books and articles previously quoted and at the center of this Symposium – but on the application of Bourdieu's ideas in different countries.

more general sense of adoption, appropriation and use in other countries, that is in intellectual fields different from the original (French) in which that work and those ideas have been produced [see Bourdieu 1993]. Circulating without their context, Bourdieu claimed many times, his texts have been usually reinterpreted in order to fulfil functions which could be explained only by the state, the structure and the dynamic of the receiving field, generating "formidable misunderstandings" [Bourdieu 2000, 4]. As we will see, this is a claim Bourdieu makes not only for his own advantage, but which according to him has to be generalised as one of the main "structural factors" which influence international exchanges in matter of culture and disciplines.

While it is plausible – and partly already documented – that more or less intentional misreading and misunderstanding have (dis)qualified the reception of his work in his native France as much as (and even more) abroad in the US or UK, what Bourdieu does not usually consider is that every act of reading could potentially be intellectually productive, and that in a text there is usually more than the author himself knows. So, even if it is true that a translation cannot convoy the *modus operandi* which has produced the text, missing consequently one of the crucial point of Bourdieu's pedagogy and intellectual project [see Brubaker 1993 for a lucid discussion], the contribution of a translation and indeed of every single act of reception is a potentially new perspective not only on the world but also on the original text, offering at the same time a new intellectual toolkit which could enable local actors – be they scholars or more common readers – to articulate differently their visions and to better grasp their social situation *even beyond (or against) the author's intention, expectation or consciousness*.

This suggests a whole series of questions that Bourdieu rarely poses to his readers, or rarely considers in a positive vein – that is, as good things – when assessing the effects of the international circulation of his ideas: which sense(s) have these ideas for different audiences and how these senses can contribute to the enrichment, the articulation or the specification of these ideas? Which functions can these ideas fulfil in different contexts of reception, not in terms of individual profits but of *collective* consciousness and *public* knowledge, and maybe also of professional standards? Which practical effects have his ideas actually produced in the world, that is in the various national worlds/fields which they have entered in? And more generally, how can a sociological work like Bourdieu's be used in the social world – in all its great variety – and which spaces of possibilities could it opens up for both social agents and social experts?

This would be sufficient, I believe, for a project like this, specifically devoted to track the trajectories of Bourdieu's *oeuvre* and ideas in a sample of countries chosen from different continents and world regions and as culturally and institutional-

ly diverse as could be the US and Russia, Italy and India, Finland and Argentina. While contingent also on some accidental factors (like the availability of an author or the timing of delivery), the choice of the countries included in this Symposium has not been arbitrary, but was inspired by a double criterion: strategic relevance of the national field in the context of worldwide sociology, and strategic relevance of the same field in the international trajectory of Bourdieu's work for what we already know about it. For example, through the languages in which his books have been translated in the years [for a useful even if no more updated source, see Delsaut and Rivière 2002][14] or the transnational networks he was able to build, sometimes through his many students and pupils coming from different parts of the world (e.g. Brazil, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and so on), and very often acting in their native countries as translators of his works and/or as cultural and "reputational entrepreneurs" of him [see Fine 1996 for this last concept).[15] Of course, in some cases the two criteria are both easily satisfied (UK, US), but I would like to underline how for a national sociological field to be "important" worldwide it is not necessary that it is highly influential from an intellectual, and strictly bounded to the discipline, point of view. Other factors than intellectual hegemony in sociological debate are at stake here: for instance, the demographic size and the rate of growth of the sociological field, or the strategic position of the country in question in the global cultural economy, and even the potentialities of the particular national field as a means of "de-provincializing" dominant sociologies and even more of helping to see them as provincial, i.e. nationally placed ones (the US sociological field in the first place: see Burawoy [2004] for a strong claim in this sense, and Steinmetz [2008] for a suggestive application of this claim to the case of Franco-American sociological relations).

The Indian sociological field, just to give an example, may not be relevant in terms of its contributions to the current definition and practice of sociology as a discipline, but could be much relevant for its potential contribution to its reflexive rethinking – as is already happening in the field of historiography [e.g. Chakrabarty 2000]. It is not by chance that Asian social science has been the source, recently, of strong criticism against what has been termed – following Said – "sociological Orientalism" [see Alatas 2006]. But a similar charge could legitimately come, I contend, even from Western (but dominated) countries like Greece or Italy, the latter object and site in the decades after WWII of many influential studies by US scholars (from

[14] See also *HyperBourdieu*, the website devoted to Bourdieu's international bibliography created and maintained at the Johannes Kepler Universität in Linz (Austria): http://hyperbourdieu.jku.at/

[15] And we should not forget that a French leading disciple of Bourdieu – Loic Wacquant – has been able to gain a faculty position in a very central and influential academic institution in the US, and therefore in the world (the University of California, at Berkeley).

Edward Banfield to Robert Putnam) which have been much praised but also strongly criticised for their prejudices and misunderstandings of local peculiarities, while influencing whole generations of local scholars [on the application of the Orientalist category to Italy see, e.g. Schneider 1998].[16]

* * *

The project of this Symposium has also had other, and in my view not less relevant, reasons and points to a range of other objectives, which I will now briefly expose.

1) A first important aim of the series of papers that follow is to put into practice one of the central ideas of Pierre Bourdieu, that is the spatially and temporally embedded nature of intellectual life, and its being the site of a continuous struggle in order to define its hierarchies and its stakes, besides its very definition, which only a reflexive stance, or disposition, methodically practiced and cultivated could reveal and take under control. Far from being intrinsic, the meaning (and value) of a work – be it of art, of literature, of philosophy or of sociology – is contingent upon the field within which it is situated for the reader and the interpreter. In the case of transnational exchange, this implies that the meaning of a work is contingent upon not only the mental space of the author but also – and probably mainly – the cognitive space of the readers and receivers, who are themselves positioned in a field (as a structured space of possibilities and resources) and are acting in that field with its stakes and its specific structure and trajectory.

> On croit souvent que la vie intellectuelle est spontanéament internationale. Rien n'est plus faux. La vie intellectuelle est le lieu, comme tous les autres espaces sociaux, de nationalismes et d'imperialismes, et les intellectules véhiculent, presque autant que les autres, des prejugés, des stereotypes, des idées recues, des representations très sommaires, très élémentaires, qui se nouririssent des accidents de la vie quotidienne, des incompréhensions, des maentendues, des blessures (celles par exemple que peut

[16] As a country with a relatively weak (and surely provincial) sociological profession, embedded however in a long intellectual tradition, a rich historical past and a complex political and economic present, the Italian laboratory has already offered and could still offer much to a critical program of *provincialization*, that is de-universalization, of current (Anglo-American) sociological theory. I have in mind here research programs like those on the "Third Italy," which have contributed not only to the not-so-recent debate on the contours and prospects of post-industrial society but also to current thought on cultural industries. Also, subjects like Renaissance politics or economy or Fascism, which have offered and still are offering American and British sociologists places in which to elaborate concepts and analytic frameworks with a more general scope, while contributing to the refinement and correction (sometimes rejection) of previous supposedly "general" theories.

infliger au narcissisme le fait d'etre inconnu dans un pays étranger) [Bourdieu 2002, 4] .

This is the more general idea which stands at the root of what Bourdieu would name "a program for a science of international relations in matter of culture" [*ibidem*, 3], a perspective which is contributing significantly to the renewal of the growing field of so-called "Translation Studies" thanks to Bourdieu's collaborators and students like Johan Heilbron and Giséle Sapiro [see Heilbron 1999; Heilbron and Sapiro 2002; Sapiro 2008]. The latter insist on the social, political, economic and even symbolic dimensions of the flows of translation, and their embeddedness in an international, i.e. global field of publishing, with its structures, actors and forces. Taking Bourdieu as a case study around which to explore this general perspective on intellectual life dynamics has therefore a double meaning, or implication: to test the validity of the perspective through a direct (and reflexive) application of that same perspective to the intellectual position which has produced it [on this point see also Robbins 1996].

But is the formula of an "*inter*national circulation of ideas" the only way to frame the questions at stake here now? Let me give an example. When an Italian sociologist is writing about the global impact of, say, Bourdieu and French sociology – but the same could be said of course for a French or a Brazilian scholar, or again an Italian one, debating the global impact of US ideas – for an audience comprised of English-reading scholars spread all over the world (which much exceeds the borders of their country), is it a mere circulation of ideas among different nations that is in question, or a much more complicated network of communications and flow of messages and meanings among an indefinite set and number of actors differently situated in the "ecumene," not necessarily bounded by any national sense of belonging? More in general, what can the national border mean when the Web is the everyday channel of scholarly communication, when intellectual communities work (and think) through electronic media, and when mobility around the globe is a common practice also among PhD students? Is the "nation" – the national intellectual or academic field and the national language – still a relevant viewpoint from which to examine and understand scholarly practices, especially in the case of scholars who, like Bourdieu, have often underlined the *trans*local validity of their concepts and works?[17] Or do we do better to approach the whole issue with a truly *trans*national perspective, which would be able to see and capture movements of ideas (together with persons, images and capitals) across national borders and boundaries, and the formation of

[17] As already noticed, Bourdieu's concepts are increasingly used in social research conducted well beyond the French boundaries – sometimes beyond the same boundaries of the West.

intellectual spaces which do not overlap with those of the established nations but cut across them in unpredictable ways?[18]

Moving from a criticism of an influential (and controversial) article by Bourdieu and Wacquant [1999] against US cultural imperialism and its impact on local intellectual fields, French [2003] has underlined the relevance of diasporic dialogue – or "serious transnational intellectual and political debate" – as a way to come to terms with the power relations inscribed in the global circulation of ideas [see also Healey 2003]. To be sure, that cultural life has a chance to develop also in a truly transnational space is something Bourdieu did know very well, indeed, even if in some of his scholarly works he seems sometimes to forget it, probably as an effect of his strongly realistic and critical stance, which induces him to emphasise power asimmetries and the effects of domination. Suffice to recall that in 1989 he launched an "European" literary review, *Liber*, which was published simultaneously in five different langages and featured contributors from all over Europe, with the explicit aim 'to overcome the time-lags and misunderstandings that result from barriers of language, from the tardiness of translations (if any) and from the inertia of academic traditions', and 'to resist all forms of provincialism and narrowness, both those of national traditions and coteries, and those within academic disciplines and specializations.' Stopped after a decade mainly for financial motives (a typical consequence of the subordinate and weak position that this kind of initiative usually has in the institutionalized cultural field, itself embedded in a "field of power"), *Liber's* mission and spirit has been in a certain way revived by the activities of the internet-based network "L'Espace des Sciences Sociales Européen" (ESSE) which has been founded soon after Bourdieu's death. ESSE's mission is to "create a European sphere of interdisciplinary thinking, aimed at contributing to the constitution of a permanent European sphere of scientific and intellectual dialogue" [see Casanova 2004; Speller n.d.].

It is not yet really clear, however, how innovative enterprises like these intersect with the (economic and political) structures and forces which rule the international circulation of ideas – and how they can complicate the whole global field of cultural and intellectual relations. Are there intellectual fields (or "genres") in which they work better, for instance? What can technology contribute and which implications has this for the quality of intellectual life? Which systems of exchange and which network forms could support them? In order to conceptualize and understand these transnational forms of cultural production and resistance which act against one-sided and unidirectional transfers of ideas (usually from the US) we could find useful

[18] For a recent claim about the relevance of a move toward a truly *transnational* approach when studying the history and workings of the social sciences see Heilbron *et al.* [2008].

intellectual endeavours which have elected them as their focal points. Even if still at the margins of the sociological discipline, the emerging field of Transnational Studies [see Levitt and Khalgram 2007] – with its focus on movements of persons and cultural items across national boundaries, and its specific attention for processes of contamination, hybridization and "creolization" [Hannerz 1996] – would contribute to our knowledge of the global circulation of ideas, while the case of Bourdieu's circulation beyond the boundaries of France could provide a good opportunity for exploring forms of transnational cultural production/consumption in the sphere of "high" and not only popular culture.

2) While crossed and complicated by growing transnational flows of persons, ideas and financial resources, national fields are still crucial spaces for the practice of a discipline like sociology – a discipline whose very subject matters make its autonomy from the economic and political fields more problematic and usually weaker than others less involved in the social game (like mathematics, or chemistry). Being sensitive to the practices and the ideas of transnationalism does not mean forgetting that sociology – like other social sciences – was institutionalized in the 19th and early 20th century according to different *national* fields, with all the implications in terms of disciplinary organization and even concept-building that this has generated (i.e. the nationalist and/or statist assumptions that have moulded grounding concepts like "society," "culture," "government" etc.). It is this national historical underpinning of the social sciences (like literature) that gives meaning to the issue – so important to Bourdieu – of an inter*national* circulation of ideas, from which we are moving here too.

National boundaries are relevant not only for economic and political issues, but for intellectual ones too, even highly esoteric. A clear example is the US-Mexican border, which has deep consequences, as Bender [2006] has shown comparing US and Mexican sociological thought styles including manners of assessing the truth, not only on the circulation of people in the labour market but also on the practices of sociological research and – we can guess – on the circulation of ideas across the two countries. This makes still meaningful if not sociologically interesting to collect information and empirical evidence about the trajectory and current state of different *national* sociological fields: something which this Symposium would gain moving from one relevant case study of intellectual production. The cognitive strategy would be this time to use the circulation of Bourdieu's ideas, works and name as a kind of *révélateur*, an "analyzer," in order to reveal the national fields' epistemological foundations, as well as their internal divisions, tensions, force lines and potentialities – a suggestion advanced some years ago by Loic Wacquant [1993] following an original

idea of Michael Pollak, who studied the reception of Weber in France as a way to sociologically reconstruct the French sociological field and its changes [Pollak 1988].

> To follow the introduction and diffusion of a foreign author permits to list the series of obstacles, but above all to find the criteria of selection which drive his reading and to trace the diversity of interpretations which are put forth of him (...) These theoretical and methodological oppositions which the analysis of references to Weber shows cannot be totally reduced neither to some political positions nor to some "hidden" philosophies. Max Weber's introduction, translation and diffusion in France did not produce therefore his integration into "one" dominant tradition. On the contrary, they have worked as engine for a transformation of the French sociological field marked by the social and intellectual differentiation of the discipline, which reduces the chances of each thought school to gain a consensual hegemonic position [Pollak 1988, 207-208; my translation].

Much like Weber in the French sociological field of the 1950s and 1960s, Bourdieu has been the main "foreign author" around whom – or against whom – many nationally based sociological communities, including the British and the US ones, have reorganised and realigned themselves in the 1980s and 1990s, revealing the fault lines and social and symbolic boundaries which are structuring them according to schools and intellectual traditions.[19] The concept of "field" – developed by Bourdieu just after a critical reading of the Weberian sociology of religion, and a central one in his social theory [e.g. Bourdieu 1992, 1993, 1994; see for useful discussions Benson 1998; Lahire 1999; Martin 2003; Hesmondhalgh 2005] – is in this context clearly a pivotal one, as a precious if not necessary device for organizing and sociologically interpreting data about authors, works and their differential positions in the intellectual space, which is always a *social* space too, working under structural conditions which have to be taken into account alongside more concrete and visible interactions among scholars [see Convert and Heilbron 2007 for a suggestive reconstruction of a new intellectual research area in sociology following a "field" theoretical approach). The same Bourdieu has offered a masterful reconstruction of the intellectual field in which he worked and which has contributed to the production – according to his

[19] To be sure, unlike from Weber (already dead at the time of his reception in France, as in other places), Bourdieu has been often the target in his lifetime of even violent attacks and ostracism – also in France [see Mauger 2004; Matonti 2004]. It is not only a matter of different interpretations or readings of a certain author, but also of her acceptance or refusal as such. A very interesting, and clear, example of how (foreign) authors could work as reference points for the operation of intellectual boundary-work could be found in the rationale written by Alexander and Smith for grounding their "strong program in cultural sociology" [see Alexander and Smith 2001]. It is worth noting that some years before Jeff Alexander had published one of the harshest (and longer) criticism of Bourdieu's whole project: see Alexander [1995].

theory – of his sociological *oeuvre*, that is the French academic field, object of *Homo Academicus* [Bourdieu 1984].

To be honest, none of the contributions to the Symposium can offer something really comparable to the interpretive subtleties and empirical richness of Bourdieu's analysis of the French academic field. In other words, none of them really "take the socioanalytic tools it [the book *Homo Academicus*] supplies to construct an equally rigorous and uncompromising political economy" of the pertinent intellectual field "in order to uncover its invisible structure, to locate the specific forms of capital that are efficient in it, and to raise our collective awareness of the hidden determinisms that regulate our practices as symbolic producers" [Wacquant 1990, 687].[20] Probably, a whole book would have been necessary for each of the national field under scrutiny for such an ambitious objective. But even if not replicas of *Homo academicus*, and even if not all equally strong and reflexive as exercises in the sociology of sociology, all the papers collected contribute relevant and precious bits of knowledge useful for this kind of operation, and can be considered as [further, but sometimes even first) important steps toward that end. Surely, our knowledge about sociology as a discipline locally constituted, socially structured and culturally diversified is increased by reading this Symposium and its papers about distant and generally poorly known (not only from the English-speaking centre) fields of sociological practice like the Russian, Israelite, Spanish, Brazialian and Italian ones – all reconstructed through the lens or at least the inspiration of Bourdieu's social theory of intellectual space and dynamics.

I can only hope that at least some of the papers here included will stimulate in the next future – in their author or some of their colleagues – the desire to have more extended case studies about single national fields of intellectual life, much in the spirit of Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and through a rigorous (albeit not necessarily a-critical and uncreative) use of its socio-analytical toolbox [Bourdieu 2001b; see also Bourdieu 2004].

3) There is a third motive, a more general one, which inspired this Symposium, that is to contribute through an objectively interesting case study to our sociological understanding of the social mechanisms of diffusion and legitimation of knowledge, and of sociological knowledge in particular. Read in this light, the symposium is a (reflexive) contribution to the "sociology of ideas," a research field Bourdieu himself has contributed to establish with his studies on the French academic field, on Heidegger, on the production of the arts, and on the social histories of the social sciences [see e.g. Bourdieu 1984; Bourdieu 1988; Bourdieu 1993; Heilbron *et al.* 2004]. This

[20] Wacquant [1990, 687] calls this a "truly *generative reading*" of *Homo academicus* and, for extension, of Bourdieu's other research books.

field has been enjoying a growing interest and development in the last two decades mainly in American sociology.[21]

Following the insights of this emerging field of research, for instance, we can read the international circulation of Bourdieu's ideas and works as (the result of) a transnational intellectual network [see Charle *et al.* 2004] which links different scholars and groups or circles endowed with differentiated cultural, economic and even political resources, based in different institutions, and with something as an informal organizational structure – i.e. leaders, both intellectual and organizational, central and peripheral (even marginal) members, gatekeepers etc. – as well as a jargon and common rituals [Mullins 1973; Farrell 2001]. And we can easily conceptualize this network as a "scientific/intellectual movement" [see Baumann 2005; Frickel and Gross 2007], applying to it the insights of social movement theory in order to explain the success (or failure) of its actions as strategies of cultural and intellectual legitimation as well as means of knowledge production. Still, moving toward a more macrostructural level, we could argue that the growth of this transnational intellectual movement – together with the growing relevance and influence of its inspiring intellectual reference – is not without solid links with the epochal changes which are occurring in the system of articulation of the human and social sciences with social and economic formations. With its call for reflexivity and its acknowledgement of the historicity of social life, Bourdieu's *oeuvre* is considered today as one the most compelling and conscious exemplar of a *post*-positivist social science, able to accommodate many of the epistemological limits of empiricist ontology and methodological positivism [e.g. Swartz 1997; Baranger 2004; Robbins 2007]. Of course, he is not alone in this intellectual movement toward a post-positivist social science, where we can find intellectual stances variously labelled albeit often interwoven like structuralism, post-structuralism, feminism, postmodernism, critical realism and post-colonial-

[21] A development of the (old) sociology of knowledge, much more sensitive to institutional and organizational issues and less prone to philosophical speculation, the (sometimes labelled "new") sociology of ideas could be identified as that research area of sociology which studies "actors specialized in the production of cognitive, evaluative, and expressive ideas (e.g. claims, arguments, concepts, beliefs, assumptions, etc.) and the social processes by which their ideas emerge, develop, and change [Camic and Gross 2002, 97]. See Lamont 1987, Camic 1992, McLaughlin 1998 and Collins 1998 for influential early contributions, and Camic and Gross 2001 for a general and programmatic statement about the new field. To be sure, Bourdieu has always been very critical of the idealistic (i.e. scholastic) approach to the study of ideas, and has often criticised those critics (or *lectors*) of his work who were unable to discuss his ideas and concepts as tools – very mundane – of a research practice which has to be reflexive but is always *practice* [see for a lucid discussion Brubaker 1993; Robbins 2007]. I think that the "new" sociology of ideas, with its focus on institutions, social identities and careers, is able to cope with this criticism, offering at the same time a perspective from which to reflexively "objectify" the same claims as Bourdieu's. Indeed, this could be one of the issues to be debated.

ism [Seidman and Wagner 1992; Alexander 1995; Steinmetz 2005] – even if Bourdieu is somewhat unique or atypical in its claim for a reflexivity combined with a plea for a still more rigorous and "objective" science.

How to explain, independently of its variance, this wide intellectual move? An insightful, and much debated, argument sees the transition from a Fordist to a Post-Fordist mode of regulation as crucial to accounting for both the growing crisis of methodological positivism and the many attempts to radically go beyond it or to readjust it in a less naively empiricist and philosophically more persuading realist vein [Steinmetz 2005; Steinmetz 2007; see also Sewell 2005]. A comparative perspective focused on a single *oeuvre* is particularly promising in this case, as it offers the opportunity to control for the validity and define the scope conditions of the explanatory hypothesis looking at more than a single intellectual field (the US one, usually), i.e. comparing countries differently regulated, and historically posited in different points in their trajectory from Fordist to Post-Fordist models of social organization, or differently located in both the world-economy [Wallerstein 1974] and the world-society [see Meyer *et al.* 1997].

At the same time, we could sociologically reflect on the power and appeal of Bourdieu's ideas – including his enduring faith in the possibilities of a *science* of social life – referring them to the social condition of both their production and their reception in structural terms. Bourdieu's already noticed relative marginality in the French institutional academic system has arguably contributed – together with his intellectual formation and career across disciplines, from philosophy to ethnology to sociology – to make his intellectual work strongly oriented toward creativity and innovation, at the same generating the social conditions for its reception and reading – even in France – as both an outsider and an original scholar.[22] If intellectual innovation comes out of intense struggle and conflict, as Collins [1998] reminds us, we can imagine that Bourdieu's conflictual attitude and style of writing has something to do with the interest that his ideas and his writings have generated as original contributions to sociological theory. And if intellectual innovation comes from academic mobility across clear disciplinary borders, from "creative marginality" as Dogan and Pahre [1990] call it, then we can argue that Bourdieu's intellectual voyage from philosophy to ethnography to sociological research, as well his interest for history, has offered him the tools and the sensitivity to create something easily identifiable as "new." But we can also argue that the marginal institutional condition of Bourdieu and his school in the French system has generated that "optimal marginality" (nor

[22] Of course, what is "original" changes across space, time, and disciplines: see Guetzkow *et al.* 2004.

too little nor too much) which McLaughlin [2001] has proposed as a key ideal-typical factor for understanding intellectual innovation, moving from the case of Erich Fromm. An "optimal marginality" – we should add – which could work for understanding not only intellectual production, but also intellectual appropriation (i.e. the marginal condition of the receivers, translators, adopters and so on) and therefore intellectual legitimation.

We already have studies on the career, reception and (even trans-national) legitimation of scholars near to Bourdieu for generational and/or intellectual reasons – like Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault or Richard Rorty [see respectively Lamont 1987; Moreno Pestaña 2006; Gross 2008] – and social studies of intellectual movements in sociology which have been inspired at least in part by Bourdieu and to which Bourdieu has strongly contributed, as the production of culture perspective [DiMaggio 2000; Santoro 2008] or the "new economic sociology" [Convert and Heilbron 2007]. Curiously enough, however, a sociological analysis of the cultural legitimation of Bourdieu's work and a sociological explanation of his exceptionally rising international status in the global field are not yet available, at least not in the form that we could expect given his status, influence and even capacity to generate debate, if not conflict [but see Heinich 2007 for some steps in this direction with reference to France]. It is an aim of this Symposium to offer a first, truly comparative survey of the variety of strategies, mechanisms and outcomes in terms of recognition and legitimation which have accompanied Bourdieu's career worldwide.

Anyway, while empirically focused on a single, and for many aspects exceptional individual case of intellectual production and reception, the Symposium can raise questions and issues of more general scope. Which processes, mechanisms and institutional features contribute to the production of intellectual status in the field of sociology, and how much these processes and mechanisms vary spatially and temporally? Is the timing of status acquisition – its *eventful* temporality [Sewell 2005] – relevant in order to explain that status? Are there, and how can we detect them, homologies among different local fields which could explains similar patterns of reception in different, even distant places? Is marginality a condition which can help to explain patterns of reception? And which kind of impact has the marginality – or alternatively the centrality – of receivers on the success, and the kind of success, of an intellectual transfer? If it is true – as many say – that marginality has some virtues in intellectual production, how much does it cost in terms of legitimation? Above all, when marginality stops being "optimal" and becomes "suboptimal" – for instance transforming what is arguably an effervescent intellectual group into a sect-like orga-

nization?[23] Still: which effects can have the status acquired in a certain national field on the transfer, and re-production, of that status in some other national context? And are there variations in these effects in accordance with the different mechanisms at work in the original country? Which role could play intellectual brokers and entrepreneurs in this movement, be they other scholars (including ex students and pupils) or publishers, differently endowed with social and cultural capital (i.e. more or less central/marginal) and variously organized? And which is the impact of its different audiences (for demographic size, social organization, degree of segmentation, reading practices, kind of specialization and so on) on the trajectory of a sociological work or author? How it is possible that the same ideas could be received in a certain (sub)field as innovative and original, and in others as merely trivial – an ambivalent reputation which applies not only to Bourdieu [e.g. see Abbott 2001, about himself] but that Bourdieu's work (and person) seems to generate in a particularly strong degree [e.g. Goldthorpe 2007; *contra* see DiMaggio 2007, Savage *et al.* 2007, and Lizardo 2008]?

These are some of the questions that a "sociology of ideas" perspective can raise. Even if not specifically focused on them, some of the following contributions address more or less directly these and similar issues, offering empirical evidence and insights from which it would be possible, I believe, to build a comparative sociology of the intellectual legitimation of social science theories and ideas, taking as a case study arguably the single most influential sociologist of our age.

The Symposium: Part One

A project still in the making, the Symposium is being published in various parts, and in different issues of the journal. In this issue (Part one) are included contributions on both Europe and America, and in particular on the US, UK, Spain, Finland and Argentina. A renowned Bourdieu's specialist, Derek Robbins offers what is at present his most general and complete reconstruction and interpretation of Bourdieu's trajectory in British sociology. In their contribution, Jane Zavisca and Jeff Sallaz further expand their seminal work on US reception, suggesting some interesting research paths for the development of their joint work as well as for the

[23] A charge of closure and dogmatism which has been often raised, in the last years, against Bourdieu's school: see Verdès-Leroux 1998 for a particularly passionate instance, and Heinich 2007 for an attempt to offer a sociological explanation (in terms of the Weberian theory of charismatic prophecy) of this charge with reference to both French sociological field and Bourdieu's trajectory and (presumed) personality. Both the authors have been students of Bourdieu at the beginning of their career, and this accounts, I believe, for both the strengths (i.e. participant observation) and weaknesses (i.e. personal biases) of their texts, their differences notwithstanding.

future sociological study of patterns of reception. A specialist in media and culture consumption, but also a student of one of the most influential sociologists (i.e. Jesús Ibáñez) who introduced Bourdieu in Spain, Javier Callejo outlines the structure and dynamics of the Spanish sociological field according to the manners and timing in which the work of the French sociologist has been locally adopted and used. The Finnish case, an interesting one for its linguistic and geographic marginality which does not impede a strategic positioning in contemporary European social and cultural studies, is the focus of Keijo Rahkonen' article. Author of many empirical research endeavours which apply Bourdieu's conceptual architecture to his country's social life, Rahkonen offers us a concise but at the same time precise picture of the place of Bourdieu in contemporary Finnish sociology. As an anthropologist specialized in epistemological matters, and author of an insightful book on Bourdieu's methodology and epistemology, Denis Baranger tracks the patterns of reception of Bourdieu's work in Argentina (with some first comparative references also to Brazil), grounding his reconstruction on his ongoing empirical research on the topic.

In the next parts of the Symposium, to be published in following issues of this journal, are scheduled articles on Italy, Russia, Germany, Canada, India, Israel, Brazil, Arab countries, China, and Australia – together with a few articles that are not specifically linked to a country or region, but address strategic topics in the international reception of Bourdieu's work.

However, as usual Socio*logica* proposes this Symposium as an open one, and invites scholars to make proposals (and submissions) for national or regional case studies not yet included.

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Putting Bourdieu in the Global Field

Introduction to the Symposium

Abstract: Focusing on the case of Pierre Bourdieu, and as an introduction to a symposium devoted to his place worldwide, this paper offers some insights about the processes, mechanisms and temporalities in the international transfer of sociological ideas and of sociological authors. After a documented assessment of the raising status enjoyed worldwide by Bourdieu in contemporary social and human sciences, the paper advances some first hypothesis about the nature and patterns of this success which capitalize, critically, on Bourdieu's reflections about the social condition of the international circulation of ideas. Finally, the paper discusses three interwoven strategic areas to which a comparative study on the worldwide circulation of Bourdieu's ideas could contribute: the research on the translation and transnationalization of knowledge, the sociology of sociology (in terms of both reflexivity and the spatial and social organization of the discipline), and the sociology of intellectual legitimation and of ideas.

Keywords: Bourdieu, reception, translation, transnationalization of science, sociology of sociology, sociology of ideas.

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