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BOURDIEU'S HAMMER: ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN HABITUS AND FIELDS

ABSTRACT

The article discusses Bourdieu's conceptualisation of habitus-field relations. While describing their approaches, Bourdieu focuses on the relation between habitus and an individual field, chiefly stressing their harmonious character. By mainly concentrating on habitus with respect to an individual field, he neglects the social differentiation and autonomisation of fields that create and multiply the possibilities of habitus and fields being in a relationship of a conflict. Relying on Lenski's concept of status decrystallisation and Leder's concept of body dys-appearance, we argue that a habitus-fields mismatch may provide opportunities for a temporary suspension of a taken-for-granted attitude to the world and, by extension, for questioning the social objectified, i.e. fields, and their rules of the game.

KEY WORDS: Bourdieu, habitus, field, disposition, position, dys-position

Bourdieujevo kladivo: o razmerjih med habitusom in polji

IZVLEČEK

V prispevku obravnavamo Bourdieujevo konceptualizacijo razmerja med habitusom in polji. Bourdieu se v svoji obravnavi slednjega osredotoča na razmerje med habitusom in posamičnim poljem, pri čemer prevladujoče izpostavlja njun razmeroma harmoničen značaj. S tem ko se osredotoča na obravnavo habitusa v razmerju s posamičnim poljem, zapostavlja družbeno diferenciacijo in avtonomizacijo polji, ki vzpostavljata in multiplicirata možnosti za konfliktni značaj razmerja med habitusom in polji. Z Lenskijevim konceptom statusne dekrystalizacije in Lederjevimi konceptom

disfunkcionalno prisotnega telesa zagovarjamo tezo, da neharmoničnost med habitusom in poljem oziroma polji odpira možnosti za začasno suspenzijo odnosa samoumevnosti do sveta in s tem za prevpraševanje objektiviranega družbenega, tj. polj in njihovih pravil igre.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Bourdieu, habitus, polje, dispozicija, pozicija, dys-pozicija

1 Introduction

In the article, we consider how Bourdieu approaches the question of habitus – field(s) relations, or, expressed differently, the relations between habitus' dispositions and the position(s) that agent has in a certain field, especially by focusing on possible mismatches between them, leading to both the misfiring of the habitus and the potential for innovation that this mismatch may release. As evident from his rich theoretical and empirical work, the key elements of his theoretical apparatus are the concepts of habitus, field and capital. These are constructed in the logic of relationality or "methodological relationality" (Wacquant 1992: 15), rather than "social physics", a perspective on social life, where objective structures are seen as being independent of agents, and "social phenomenology", where social reality is conceptualised as a random product of competent and knowing agents (Ibid.: 7–11).

Some claim that his theoretical apparatus is deterministic, supposedly committing "a crime against freedom" (Yang 2014: 1531) and losing sight of the agent and agency, thereby overlooking the question of change and struggle (Calhoun 1993: 66). Paradoxically, Bourdieu tries to rescue both – agency and agent – from the hands of structuralism, which turned something "that is kind of gymnastics into a kind of algebra" (Bourdieu 2020: 149). In his defence, Bourdieu himself states that he is a "victim of fast reading" (Grenfell 2019: 7), of "systematic misreadings" (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 79), namely, of critics who read his works through exactly the same false antinomy of either agency or structure he is explicitly trying to transcend by the logic of relationality. At the same time, he acknowledges that he did indeed "twist the stick in the other way" (Bourdieu 2000: 63), toward reproduction rather than transformations.

Still, he has continuously recognised the possibilities for change and transformation¹, especially while addressing (symbolic) struggles and conflicts. Moreover,

1. We follow Bridget Fowler's analysis of Bourdieu's work (2020: 444) in regard to how the *margin of freedom*, of liberty endures and permits "innovation, collective resistance, and transformative processes", that is, how the margin of freedom may open up the potential for progressive social change and emancipatory action rather than for social

the latter are placed in the centre of his field theory by conceptualising a field as "a site of conflict" (Bourdieu 2018: 2). Namely, fields are social spaces, where struggles to impose a dominant definition of the field, including its boundary-making, are what make fields dynamic and open to change (Bourdieu 2020). Furthermore, Bourdieu's main concept of habitus was introduced to capture and understand the experience of social transformation and upheaval rather than (deterministic) reproduction of social order (Wacquant 2004; see also Gorski 2013).² Yet, due to his focus on reproduction and social regularities rather than transformation (despite grounding his work on transformation if only to end up predominantly discussing reproduction), he often left the possibilities of social changes partly discussed, under-theorised or unsystematically theorised, that is, primarily in the form of signposts instead of more developed discussions.

In this article, we attempt to follow his signposts towards discussion of (potential for) change with a focus on habitus – field(s) relations by addressing their disharmonious, mismatching, and discrepant character. To accomplish this task, we 1) rely on his parable about a hammer, described in a lecture he gave on 12 October 1982 at Collège de France in order to clarify his main approach to the habitus – field relations; 2) rethink this relation in terms of the growing social differentiation and pluralisation of fields in line with his reference to Lenski's work (1954), and 3) introduce Leder's concept of *dys-position* (1990) to help grasp and emphasise the possibility of disharmonious relationship of habitus and fields, especially as concerns innovation and the potential for change.

suffering and "enduring reproduction". Bourdieusian theoretical framework enables us to approach the question of social change and emancipatory action while having in mind both, their normative necessity (given the modality of social reproduction), but also the pulling nature of social structures that stems from the fact that the social order, including its inequalities, is not only objectified, but also embodied. Emancipation, transgression and change are thus "always difficult and painful and almost always extremely costly, both materially and psychologically" (Bourdieu 2000: 231) – and it is this costly nature that is often overlooked in contemporary discussions of social change and emancipation.

2. The concept of habitus was first introduced in his empirical work in war-torn Algeria to account for social upheaval of decolonisation and imposition of capitalist economy on a largely peasant society (Bourdieu 1962), followed by his work on Bearn (see *The bachelors' ball* 2008a). Regarding his account of "dispeasanted peasants", also see Bourdieu & Sayad (2004: 471).

2 The parable of the hammer

In a lecture at Collège de France, Bourdieu discussed “the double life of the social” (2020: 24) where he stated that the “social” – meaning social institution (social as instituted) – exists in its double nature, 1) in an objectified, materialised form that may be invisible or visible (for example, tangible objects like books, or mechanisms, like as rules of the game, a field’s objective conditions and structures of a social space³), that is, an *objectified social*, and 2) as embodied in habitus,⁴ in “dispositions that are permanent life styles resulting from learning, training and incorporation” (Ibid.: 26), namely, an *embodied social* (Ibid.: 29; see also Bourdieu 2018: 119–120). In order to avoid any “fast” reading of habitus or a system of dispositions that might be implied in using the term “life styles”, we should immediately stress the ‘pulling’ nature of habitus. Rather than being ‘just a lifestyle’, habitus is a “lasting modification of the organism” (Bourdieu 2020: 125). It consists of embodied dispositions, of history transcending an agent and simultaneously being embodied in the agent (Ibid.). As such, dispositions can be reconfigured largely through the intense “counter-training” instead of voluntarist “decisions” (Bourdieu 2000: 172).

By using the parable, Bourdieu invites us to imagine an agent finding an object – a hammer – whose function remains unknown to her. As the agent’s habitus lacks the proper orientation towards the object, she cannot “inhabit it”, put it to life and Bourdieu therefore concludes that the object remains reduced to physical existence, stripped of its social meaning. The parable enables Bourdieu to explicate two key dimensions of habitus: “inclination to” and the “ability to” (Ibid.: 25). Both dimensions may be summarised as a particular *practical* orientation towards the world: it is the *ability* to put that *inclination* into practice, and it is this practical orientation that turns a “lifeless object into living realities” (Ibid.: 25). The parable continues by describing an archaeologist, who – precisely because she is a scientist – is endowed with a specific (scientific) habitus. It is this very scientific habitus which, Bourdieu states, enables her to raise questions about the

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3. Bourdieu cautiously compares a field with a game: similar to a game, in a field there are stakes, a competition for limited resources (various forms of capital) and an element of following regularities (rather than explicitly stated rules) (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98–100).
 4. Similarly, yet from a different perspective – putting an individual rather than ‘social’ at the centre – is described in Durkheim’s discussion of the “dualism of human nature” (2005: 37). According to Durkheim, human nature consists of personal and impersonal parts, the latter being the social incorporated: “the self cannot be altogether and exclusively itself, for then it would be empty of all content” or, as formulated in *The elementary forms of religious life* (1995: 447): “there is something impersonal in us because there is something social in us”.

social conditions of the hammer's making, about everything that makes a hammer and hammering possible, everything that otherwise remains unquestioned: "[f]aced with a hammer, we don't act like an archaeologist and ask: 'What is that for?'; we pick it up and bang on a nail" (Ibid.: 37).

The above quote shows that it is the particular (practical) relation of habitus and a "hammer" – with the latter representing the objectified social, namely, objects and mechanisms, rules of the game (i.e. of a specific field) – that constitutes the taken-for-granted attitude to the world. It is this attitude that enables a relatively smooth practice with no questions asked. Bourdieu stated (Ibid.: 72): "it is because the user of the instrument has adapted to the instrument that the instrument seems adapted to him". It is an immediate and spontaneous comprehension, understanding of the world, approaching the world as self-evident, which is made possible by the fact that the agent's dispositions are themselves the product of the same world (Bourdieu 2000: 135–136; see also 2020: 38). The parable takes interesting turns as we proceed from 1) an agent lacking a proper habitus to turn an object into a living reality (Bourdieu 2020: 26), to 2) an archaeologist, capable of asking (scientific) questions about the object, and ending up with 3) an agent whose practical orientation enables her to "function properly" and to bang on a nail with no questions asked. In the latter case, no questions are raised about either the function or its relevance nor about social conditions. Namely, Bourdieu presupposes an agent with a proper habitus that enables the agent to approach the object in the immediate practical manner of hammering without asking questions, that is, to immediately have the necessary practical knowledge of hammering.

Despite discussing various forms of relation between the agent and the hammer and hammering, (at least) two possible paths are left out of the parable. The first one relates to an agent whose habitus is not of a scientific character and who approaches an object without proper practical orientation, that is, an agent whose habitus mismatches a particular field, a "space of potential and active forces /.../ a field of struggles aimed at preserving or transforming the configuration of these forces" (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 101), and its rules of the game. We argue that it is this agent who can – precisely because of a mismatch and despite her subjective habitus lacking a scientific grounding – raise questions on the object. The second possible path is of an agent whose habitus generally matches a particular field, but who nonetheless manages to question the social objectified.⁵ It is the first under-discussed form of habitus – field(s) relation we are most interested in.

5. It is in this sense that Mouzelis (2007: 4) discusses reflexivity unrelated to contradictions, reflexivity that stems from "special disposition".

3 Gymnastics of habitus and field relations

When discussing the relationship between habitus and field, Bourdieu primarily focuses on their harmonious character on the assumption of habitus *realising* itself in conditions that are similar – homologous – to conditions of its *formation*. It is exactly this homology between habitus (dispositions) and field(s), in which an agent participates that enables the taken-for-granted attitude to the social world, and a knowledgeable and knowing agent: “the person who has the typical habitus for the field is like a fish swimming in water /.../ meaning that they have no awareness of gravity” (Bourdieu 2020: 14). It is an orchestration of habitus and field (Ibid.), built on the assumption of a relatively ‘straight’ and typical life trajectory that is predicted and predictable exactly because of its placement and movement across similar fields or across fields of “resemblance within a difference” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 106). Thus, the assumption is that an agent’s habitus is formed *and* realised within a field or across homologous fields, and it is this homology that solicits an “effective match” of habitus and fields which habitus encounters (Bourdieu 2020: 259). This matching “orchestration” enables an agent to seemingly “float” in socially weightless space precisely due to lacking experiences of “playing out of tune”, of conflicts and “crashes” with a field’s objective conditions, which would make them more tangible and less invisible.

In order to shed more light on his use of “homology”, various uses of this principle must be put forward. Namely, Bourdieu refers to homology in slightly different ways throughout his works. He generally refers to homology in the sense of fields being similarly internally structured, consisting of the similar principles of hierarchies (including distinctions on dominant and dominated positions, capital conversion, etc.). In this context, Bourdieu uses the term *structural* homology (between fields). However, he also refers to the principle of homology while addressing the harmonious relation between an agent’s *practices* (i.e. consumption) and agent’s *positions* in social space (see Bourdieu 1989: 19). In this case, he refers to homology between stance-takings (dispositions) and positions (Bourdieu 1989: 158). In *Distinction* (2010: 238), he states that “[t]o each position there correspond presuppositions, a doxa”, meaning that each position supposedly corresponds with position-specific dispositions, that is, a type of orientation to the world. Still, he acknowledges that the relation between disposition and position is not one of mechanics but of transfiguration (Bourdieu 2020: 276). While Bourdieu does not explicitly name this principle other than that of “homology” (2000: 157) or “logic of homology” (2010: 237), we can name this type of principle as *dis-/positional* homology.

This allows us to stress the relationship of their similarity, of the homology between positions and dispositions rather than between fields and their structures as occurs with the principle of *structural* homology. Yet, it is this very double bind of structural and dis-/positional homology that in extension shapes a coherent habitus as a system of dispositions, a habitus that is a product of similar fields' conditions, which allows easier adaptation to "resemblance within a difference" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 106) – across multiple but similar fields. Thus, Bourdieu states that even if habitus is realised in conditions other than the conditions of its formation, it is the similarity of the fields – their structural homology – which enables habitus to function appropriately across fields: "habitus [is] adapted to the field but acquired in the homologous social space" (Bourdieu 2020: 258). This structural homology produces dis-/positional homology – a homology between dispositions and positions – alongside the taken-for-granted attitude to the world as a by-product of the match between an agent's habitus and the fields as well as the wider social space.

Despite focusing on homology, recognising it as a regularity of social life, Bourdieu (2000: 159) also pays attention to possible mismatches between habitus and field, stating that "[t]he adjustment, in advance, of habitus to the objective conditions is a *particular case*, no doubt particularly frequent (in the universes familiar to us), but it should not be treated as a universal rule". He also considers certain instances of habitus-field mismatches. For example, in his lectures 1982–1983 (2020), he discusses a mismatch of entering a foreign society. This mismatch makes an agent experience the intolerable tension of habitus being out of its "place", and this tension is – exactly because it is intolerable – immediately dissolved by the agent's incorporation of the 'foreign' field's structures as well as objective conditions of social space as such into existing dispositions. Put differently, an agent is said to resolve the tension by misreading and misunderstanding the field in line with her subjective habitus, by adjusting that being perceived (foreign society) to her already existing schemes of perception (dispositions) (Bourdieu 2020: 38).⁶ A similar case of entering a foreign society is considered in Pascalian meditations (2000a) as well. In both cases, entering a "foreign" social space – a foreign society – is accompanied by feelings of disorientation (Bourdieu 2000a; 2020), grounded in "countless little discrepancies /.../ between the world /.../ and a system of dispositions" (Bourdieu 2000: 176).

6. It remains unclear how such a misreading on the part of an agent would dissolve an intolerable tension, as the agent's practical orientation is still misaligned with the field and social space. Namely, when an agent incorporates objective structures by adjusting them to the already existing subjective dispositions, the field and its rules are still being misread, precisely because being read through an agent's existing still "inappropriate"

Moreover, in his work on Algeria and Bearn he mainly discusses the “hysteresis effect” (Bourdieu 2013: 83) as a cause of disharmonious relation between habitus and field: “agents whose mental structures have been moulded by these prior structures become obsolete and act inopportunistically and at cross purposes” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 130). In this case, it is habitus that lacks the flexibility to enable it to adjust according to the now-changed objective conditions (as it is the case with imposition of the capitalist economy in Algeria, of urbanisation along with economic changes and changes to the matrimonial market in Bearn) (Bourdieu 1962; 2008a). This lack of flexibility is a result of habitus’ tendency for inertia, of actively seeking out the social conditions of its realisation that are as similar to the conditions of its formation as possible – of the tendency to conform rather than change its dispositions. When discussing the “lagging behind” of habitus in relation to now-changed objective conditions, he often also refers to social ageing (Bourdieu 2000: 168; Bourdieu 2020: 128–129). In other words, the emphasis is put on “external” changes, on objective conditions, a field’s structure, rules of the game, rather than changes in habitus.

Yet, he occasionally acknowledges the importance of various degrees of habitus’ “flexibility or rigidity” (2000: 161). While discussing habitus’ flexibility, he distinguishes between habitus’ main tendencies for either 1) accommodation (of objective conditions, at the level of misreading them through the agent’s dispositions as described above), which may lead to an over-integrated habitus, and 2) adjustment (to the objective conditions an agent encounters throughout her social trajectory), which may lead to an under-integrated habitus. Moreover, habitus’ level of flexibility depends on an agent’s social position within a particular field and her potential “distance from necessity” (Bourdieu 2020: 124) or “taste of luxury (or freedom)” (Bourdieu 2010: 173) which permits the agent to navigate social “necessity” imposed on her (Ibid.: 131). Such freedom from necessity is conditioned by the various forms of capital an agent possesses, especially those that count (more) in a given field, according to its legitimate principle of domination. Accordingly, agents whose habitus is “liberated” (Bourdieu 2020: 124) by holding the right form(s) of capital which are appreciated and valued

dispositions that are disharmonious with the fields’ and social space’s structures. Perhaps this way of dissolving the tension carries only a temporary relief up to the point when an agent is confronted with various “calls to order” by others (Bourdieu 2000: 176). It is possible though, as stated by Bourdieu, that calls to order function only for those who are (already) “predisposed to notice them” (Ibid.: 176). Even if so, this argument only resolves the question of dissolving an agent’s *subjectively* felt tension, while an “objective” mismatch of agent’s practices and field’s demands continue to persist, and it is this question that is left unanswered.

within a certain field can play the rules of the game, if only to take advantage of them.⁷ Bourdieu generally discusses this freedom from necessity also in relation to a scientific habitus, as seen in the above parable about the hammer and the archaeologist, and in his description of, for example, sociology as “taking liberties”, as adopting “an attitude normally excluded in practice by belonging to that universe” (Bourdieu 2020: 176). After all, in the parable it is only the archaeologist who is perceived to hold the necessary skills to question social reality.

Nonetheless, in his 1982–1983 lectures, Bourdieu (2020: 186) looked at a particular meeting of habitus and a given field, recognising the possibility of an agent with an inappropriate, uncalled-for habitus being placed and entering the field, whose demands she is unable to (fully) fulfil precisely due to the mismatch. This “meeting” can either end in 1) a position successfully redefined; or 2) dispositions adjusted, namely, in dispositions conforming to the position’s demands (Ibid.).⁸ Possible scenarios depends on 1) varying levels of position’s regulation, objectification, stability and rigidity or instability, especially where the position is still in the making and thus attracts heterogeneous dispositions as the field’s demands have yet to be fully developed and crystallised, and 2) capitals in the agent’s possession: “sometimes people bring to an inferior, dominated position a capital considerable enough to transform the position into something corresponding to the dispositions that they are importing” (Ibid.: 186). However, when a position’s demands have not yet been fully developed, we can hardly speak of a mismatch. It is more a type of “vagueness” (of habitus), especially characteristic for a ‘liberated’ habitus meeting with the other type of “vagueness” (of a field and of a position in a field). With such vagueness, a mismatch can in fact be completely avoided. Moreover and as evident from the above quote, the possibility of a position being reconfigured is left in the hands of those who experience “downclassing”, those who are descending from a dominant to a dominated position. This is, once again, the story of an agent with a ‘liberated’ habitus as discussed in-depth in Bourdieu’s study on Flaubert’s *Sentimental*

7. This is what enables those agents who were supposed to be the ‘inheritors’ of dominant positions, now threatened due to changes in objective conditions (i.e. democratisation of schooling and consequent devaluation of diplomas) to hold loosely defined (redefined and newly invented) positions in not yet consolidated and fully institutionalised fields and to “escape downclassing”, thus, to retain at least some of the “inheritance” (Bourdieu 2010: 143–145; also in Bourdieu 1996: 288, and in 2020: 186, 192).

8. As discussed below, he recognises the possibility of a ‘tormented’, strained habitus as another option for a mismatch in his other works (see, for example, Bourdieu 2000; 2008).

education in *The Rules of Art* (1995: 11)⁹: “But there are also heirs with stories, those who, like Frédéric, refuse, if not to inherit, at least to be inherited by their inheritance”.

To be fair, Bourdieu nonetheless also recognises the possibility of reconfiguring positions rather than dispositions in the case of dominated agents. It is they, who – by reacting to their dispossession – “can be led to try to transform the structure, on certain conditions and in certain contexts, when the usual match between objectified structures and incorporated structures has been suspended” (Bourdieu 2020: 267). It is noteworthy that Bourdieu, besides the hysteresis effect discussed above, largely stays silent on both the nature of the conditions that lead to a suspended match between habitus and field and the conditions that lead to an attempt to transform objective conditions.

4 Following the signposts

We can, however, follow his signposts, given in another context, namely in his discussion on the divided position of sociology. While addressing “bimodal, fragmented and split position of sociology” as a result of its low position in reality (i.e. in scientific field) and its simultaneous high aspirations (Ibid.: 183) that lead to very disparate people holding positions in the field of sociology, manifested as different and multiple ways of ‘doing sociology’, “in its very productions, in the style and behaviour of sociologists” (Ibid.: 183), he refers to Lenski’s concept of status decrystallization (1954).

If we follow the reference fully, we notice that the status crystallisation and decrystallisation reflect Weber’s multidimensional rather than unidimensional view on types of power (1958), that is “the coexistence of a number of parallel vertical hierarchies which usually are imperfectly correlated with one another” (Lenski 1954: 405). Status decrystallisation refers to interrelations of several positions in various hierarchies, to the inconsistent (high and low), rather than consistent, vertically placed positions that an agent holds. In contrast, status crystallisation refers to consistent (high or low) individual’s status across various dimensions.

As Lenski (1954) discusses in his study of four vertical dimensions (the income hierarchy, the occupation hierarchy, the education hierarchy, and ethnic hierarchy) on a sample of 613 individuals, approximately 28.4 % of participants were placed in the category of a *low status crystallisation* (status decrystallisation).

9. For a comment on Bourdieu’s analysis on Flaubert’s creation of a new position in the cultural field (avant-garde literature), see also Gorski (2013: 9–10).

Thus, those participants were positioned in inconsistent positions¹⁰ across selected vertical dimensions. Further, it is this type of inconsistent and simultaneous positions that produces certain particularities: "Apparently the individual with poorly crystallized status is a particular type of marginal men, and is subjected to certain pressures by the social order which are not felt (at least to the same degree) by individuals with a more highly crystallized status" (Ibid.: 412). While Lenski (Ibid.: 412) is cautious when relating such marginal positions to the possibility of reaching and aiming for social change, as individuals may misplace their tension and "unpleasant experiences" by blaming other individuals or by blaming themselves, it is still clear that such inconsistent trajectory and positions held by an agent create particular tensions that cannot be explained solely in terms of the agent's position in an individual field.

Speaking Bourdieusian, status decrystallisation refers to structural and dis-/positional heterology rather than (structural) homology. As Bourdieu acknowledges in relation to the field of sociology, this heterology manifests in heterogeneous and multiple ways of "doing positions" in a given field. However, the importance of status decrystallisation (of being in a dominant position in one field and in a dominated position in another) in our opinion lies not only in simultaneous vertically inconsistent positions, which Bourdieu did recognise, especially in relation to "downclassing" and "self-made" agents, experiencing upward social mobility, but also in acknowledgment of positions' non-vertical *heterogeneity*.

Bourdieu limits his discussion to paths of descent (or ascent) within an individual (i.e. scientific) field, for example, descending from a dominant position of philosophy to a dominated position of sociology, which was in fact his own path into sociology,¹¹ stating that "To engage in this kind of improbable venture, you have to have *special properties*. You have to be slightly weird and be *dominated from another angle* – say, your social background" (Bourdieu 2020: 172).¹² The quote shows that Bourdieu explicitly recognises the importance of wider social background, which transcends an individual position within a field, of particularities of the social trajectory leading to such awkward and inconsistent positions of "atypical agents" with peculiar dispositions that may even lead

10. For example, low ethnic status (derived from evaluation of the social standing of a certain ethnic group, with northwest European groups achieving higher ethnic status in contrast to non-white communities) in combination with a higher standing in income, occupational and educational hierarchy; or a combination of a higher educational standing and a lower income (Lenski 1954).

11. As he discusses in his Sketch for a self-analysis (2008), see also Wacquant (1992; 2002).

12. Emphasis added by the author.

to “great scientific innovations” (Ibid.). Yet, he fails to expand the discussion on an agent’s simultaneous positioning within *multiple* fields, especially when these multiple fields are not aligned according to the principle of structural and dispositional homology (see also Bourdieu 1996: 183–187).

To put it differently, he acknowledges the “baggage” that an agent’s (past) social trajectory may represent for a current position within a field, i.e. coming from a low original social background and managing to ascend as a *parvenu*, a self-made agent who reaches higher than she was socially destined to (Bourdieu 2000: 163; see also Bourdieu 2008b).¹³ Moreover, he even assigns that kind of “baggage” a certain weight for the agent’s later positioning, stating that the past being different from the present position brings a greater likelihood of “bringing to consciousness that which, for others, is taken for granted” (2000: 163). Still, despite conceptualising position within the social space as being conditioned by the positions an agent “occupies in the different fields” (Bourdieu 1985: 724), he does not further theoretically elaborate on social position that is potentially constituted in a “decrystallised” way due to the agent’s inconsistent positions across multiple fields.

Therefore, while recognising the “chiasmatic structure” of a field (Bourdieu 2020: 277–281) that consists of various sub-fields, each being dominated by a different principle of domination,¹⁴ he under-theorises chiasmatic positioning across fields (Adams 2006; Mouzelis 2007). Moreover, on the occasion of discussing “inter-fields” (Ibid.: 221–222) as intersections between fields, he gives an example of a literary salon and a national planning committee – places where people from different fields meet. Rather than approaching intersections of fields from the perspective of an individual agent belonging to various fields, he tackles the issue from the perspective of multiple fields’ *intersection*, with their intersection occurring via agents, each coming from a different, but apparently singular field. What is more, when such an intersection occurs – a meeting of heterogeneous fields through the meeting of heterogeneous agents, Bourdieu assumes two possible scenarios. These include 1) a confrontation between different fields to which the agents belong, or 2) the agents “leave their fields ‘in the dressing room’ and enjoy neutralised relations” (2020: 221). In the latter case, Bourdieu somehow neglects the weight of habitus being constituted in relation

13. For other Bourdieusian studies on social mobility, see for instance Reay (2005) and Friedman (2016).

14. For example, the field of cultural production could be divided into a sub-field of restricted (cultural) production with cultural capital being the dominant principle of domination, and a sub-field of broad (cultural) production with economic capital being the dominant principle of domination (Bourdieu 2020: 278).

to fields, and which cannot be simply temporarily "disposed of" and "put on waiting" or "neutralised at will", as he would surely agree with.

Despite occasionally discussing habitus as a product "of a set of intersecting fields" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 127) or even of habitus' potentially discrepant character that leads to a "divided or even torn habitus" (Ibid.), his under-theorisation of an agent's simultaneous positioning across fields might be an outcome of his emphasis on the already discussed structural and dis-/positional *homology* as part of the regularities of social world. His unsystematic approach to this kind of discrepancy between fields to which an agent belongs and which may – contrary to the principle of homology – differ in 1) the nature of their demands and appropriate habitus that would enable an agent to function appropriately, and 2) an agent's decrystallised positioning within them as discussed in relation to Lenski (1954) – is even more surprising when considering his focus on changes in objective conditions, resulting in increased social differentiation and field autonomisation.

Namely, when referring to Durkheim's (2014) work on the division of labour, Bourdieu states that a shift from mechanical to organic solidarity is accompanied by an increased "division of the labour of domination", and a "whole set of fields linked by organic solidarity, which means that they are both different and interdependent". This differentiation of fields multiplies the possibilities and opportunities for conflicts stemming from lengthening and growing complexity of circuits of legitimation (Bourdieu 2000: 102–103, 106; see also 1996: 386). It is "the diversity of conditions, the corresponding diversity of habitus and the multiplicity of intra- and intergenerational movements of ascent or decline" (Bourdieu 2000: 161–162), and "the collection of positions simultaneously occupied" (Bourdieu 2000b: 302) that provide such objective conditions that enable a mismatch of habitus and field and the consequent misfiring of habitus that may act as a "source of innovation and struggle" (Bourdieu 2020: 73).

Helping ourselves with Lenski's research (1954), a possible source of conflicts is the crossing not within an individual field (from a dominant to a dominated position or vice versa), but the heterogeneous positions an agent holds across various fields. Lenski's research that Bourdieu refers to (2020) show that such a criss-crossing and inconsistent social position, grounded in multiple fields' positioning, manifests in an agent's stance-takings, her dispositions, that cannot be explained by a particular position within an *individual* field. On the contrary, the whole mix of the agent's positions must be taken into account. Namely, an agent's habitus is formed in relation to both the fields and a meta-field, a field of fields – in short, the social space as such, which makes habitus a *multidimensional* construct (Atkinson 2015: 112; Decoteau 2016; Silva 2016; Schmitz, Witte and

Gengnagel 2017: 60). Thus, habitus is a product of the incorporation and embodiment of various demands coming from different fields (Atkinson 2016:13–14) and therefore the agent's habitus will contain a necessary degree of vagueness and incoherence, and it is this (limited) incoherence that enables a "feel for the game" in differently structured fields. In addition, this incoherence and internal complexity of habitus – now approached not as a result of descent or ascent *within* a field as more thoroughly discussed by Bourdieu, but as a consequence of multiple positioning across fields – may result in suspension of the attitude to the world, being taken for granted and natural as it is. The habitus' incoherence due to habitus being conditioned by various fields' structures – being a product of different conditions of formation and being confronted with a range of conditions of its realisation – may create possibilities to ask questions about the world as it is, as we will discuss below.

5 From dis-position to dys-position

Simultaneous belonging to multiple fields might demand a sufficiently flexible or vague habitus, depending on the discrepancy (or lack of it) between fields as such. As long as the games an agent plays within these fields are similar enough, specifically in terms of both the positions an agent holds within them and the nature of the games, the principle of structural and dis-/positional homology applies. In this case, an agent's habitus avoids being strained and confronted with tensions arising from the need to juggle discrepant fields' demands and rules of the game. Bourdieu stresses that a "perfect match" of habitus and field is far from being a "law", although its "matching-enough" character is the main modality of being in the social world as secured and safe-guarded by various mechanisms and countless calls to order (Bourdieu 2020: 259; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 131). On the other hand, if an agent either 1) belongs to fields whose games confront an agent's habitus with discrepant or even conflictual, contradictory demands; or 2) an agent's positions within these fields are "decrystallised" and criss-crossed, as discussed by Lenski (1954) and Bourdieu (see above), the appropriate functioning of habitus, carrying marks and traces of the agent's past social trajectory and social positions, may be disrupted, although disruption is far from being a necessary outcome of a discrepant field's belonging.

Moreover, it is possible that moving and being placed across various fields result in a high level of habitus' complexity, which in its flexible nature – demanded by multiple fields' games – manages to retain a necessary degree of coherency and stability. Moving across various fields may thus even lead to an expanded practical knowledge of having a feel for multiple games. Taking into account the

refraction rather than reflection or “translation” of fields’ objective conditions (their rules and principles) which are themselves a refraction of objective conditions in the social space, via habitus that functions as a “prism” (Bourdieu 1993: 147; on refraction also see 1996: 220), an agent brings a peculiar set of practical skills to each field, because transposing practical knowledge from one field to another. Knowing that games are played differently (in various fields) may in itself act as a source of innovation and transformation, possibly leading to questions about why a particular field is being structured by a certain – rather than some other – form of rules and principles. Taking into account that habitus is a refractory product of a particular (and limited) set of conditions of *formation* (primary fields, including family, its social class and similar that constitute an agent’s primary habitus), a discrepancy between an agent’s dispositions and positions may occur when it is called into action in a range of conditions of *realisation* (variously structured multiple fields) which are not necessarily homologous or do not correspond with the conditions of its formation due to fields’ differentiation, autonomisation and pluralisation.

To return to our parable on the hammer, where Bourdieu (2020) recognises the possibility of scholastic reflexivity – grounding the possibility of questioning social reality in a scientific (archaeologist) habitus – it is as if the agent approaches a hammer with practical knowledge that does not enable her to make use of it. It is this mismatch of practical knowledge, of the agent’s dispositions and position(s), that prevents the agent or at least makes it difficult, awkward and clumsy for her to simply “pick [a hammer] up and bang on a nail” (Ibid.: 37). This suspension – a temporal¹⁵ and practical gap in the otherwise spontaneous spring-action of habitus¹⁶ – may enable an objectified social (a field and its rules, social objects) to be perceived as an *object* and thus to be turned into an object of questioning, with a possibility of arriving at innovative and alternative answers. In order to highlight the relationship between (mismatching) practical knowledge or dispositions, and an objectified social, that is, fields and positions within it, we turn to Leder’s work (1990), while also building on Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of habitus as embodied, incorporated social (Bourdieu 2000: 130; see also Bourdieu 1991: 81; Wacquant 2015).

15. For a broader and in-depth discussion on temporal experience and its social structuring – field rhythms and pace, imposed timing and time binds – in a bourdieusian theoretical framework, see Atkinson (2019).

16. On habitus as a spring, see Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992: 135): “We must think of [habitus] as a sort of spring that needs a trigger and, depending upon the stimuli and structure of the field, the very same habitus will generate different, even opposite outcomes”.

A key point in Leder's phenomenologically grounded discussion (1990: 25–27) is that the body is absent and forgotten when it enables an agent to function appropriately. Here it is characterised by "focal disappearance" (disappearance of those bodily parts that serve as an actional point, like the eyes when perceiving and gazing) and "depth disappearance" (disappearance of bodily depths, such as functioning of internal organs, including vital functions). An agent's body is hence divided into 1) an ecstatic body – a body that "stands out", extending towards the world and, by doing so, disappears into the actional background –, and 2) a recessive body in terms of its depths being unperceived and unexperienceable (Ibid.: 53): "As ecstatic / recessive being-in-the-world, the lived body is necessarily self-effacing" (Ibid.: 69). It is the ecstatic body, containing the practical knowledge of reaching out to the world and being in the world that is pulled from disappearance and pushed to appearance, when an embodied agent is confronted with the lack or a mismatch of practical skills. It is the previously absent (unacknowledged) body that becomes present at times of its dysfunctions, or, as Leder (Ibid.) expresses, the body *dys*-appears rather than disappears (not-appear).¹⁷ Leder also acknowledges that not all body-appearances are necessarily dysfunctional in character, like hunger or sleepiness, although in other instances such as pain, illness and similar it is the dysfunctionality of the body that calls it into question: "Only by virtue of my habitual action patterns can I tacitly inhabit the world. When my embodiment radically diverges from the habitual, *dys*-appearance is likely to result" (Ibid.: 89). What distinguishes the broadly defined bodily thematisation (such as looking at oneself in a mirror) from these types of bodily *dys*-appearances discussed above is the telic, non-optional demand inherent in the latter: "instances of *dys*-appearance demand attention. I am seized by a powerful pain or illness in a way that is unavoidable" (Ibid.: 92). Therefore, *dys*-appearance is a tension that needs to be either 1) addressed, which in our Bourdiesian context means that dispositions need to be adjusted or positions reconfigured, or 2) suffered through as evident in Bourdieu's synonymous notions of cleft (2008b), divided or tormented habitus (2000), or 3) even approached with an awkward combination of both in order to achieve a stable-enough grounding of habitus despite its persisting incoherence.

While Leder (Ibid.) generally focuses on the attention being turned to the now *dys*-appeared body, becoming alien to the agent, rather than questioning the conditions that initially turn it into an alien body – similar to Lenski's (1954) cautious statement of individuals' seeking responsibility for the tension and discomfort, grounded in status decrystallization in themselves rather than in the social order

17. A prefix *dys*-, in Greek, stands precisely for "bad, hard, or ill" (Leder 1990: 87).

- the temporary suspension of the taken-for-granted attitude to the world, the gap in time entailed in the hesitation, of rethinking the practice through, still gives a possibility of turning the gaze toward the hammer (a field, its positions and expectations, social space), rather than an agent, in a peculiar and alternative way by reconfiguring, regaining and regathering practical knowledge at one's disposal.

Applying Leder's bodily *dys*-appearance to the context of habitus - fields' relation, we may thus speak of *dis*-positions when the relations between habitus and fields are homologous enough to enable the habitus to spontaneously spring into action, and of *dys*-positions, capturing their disharmonious, discrepant, heterologous and even conflictual and contradictory relationship between agent's dispositions and positions. As the body described by Leder (1990) is forcefully pushed to awareness because of its various forms of dysfunctions - of not functioning appropriately -, it is the relation between the agent's habitus, her dispositions, and various (dis)harmonious positions that demand the agent's attention. This allows us to encapsulate both elements that are mutually constitutive for the agent's wider social life and her practices in the multiple fields and social space she is participating in - dispositions and positions, while simultaneously allowing us to highlight the differing, non-homologous nature of their relationships.

This is immensely important especially when considering potential for resistance and transformation existing in those everyday life situations where taken-for-granted attitude is suspended. It is this potential that is somehow lost in Bourdieu's focus on, perhaps better said, his stumbling upon the reproduction of social order while researching and actively working for social changes (see Lane 2006), and on scholastic reflexivity. This led him to under-discuss the possibility of non-scientific questioning of the social conditions, of taking "social" as an object, when it takes place in a "strained" habitus which is constituted by and with tensions. These originate also from a) structural heterology, as discussed in relation to Lenski's research (1954), from being positioned in inconsistent ways across various fields, i.e. in a dominant position in one field, for example education, and in a dominated position in another, for example economic field; or b) from non-vertical heterogeneous positions across various fields that exert pressures on habitus by demanding discrepant and conflicting sets of practical knowledge.

6 Conclusion

In the article, we have tried to follow signposts left behind by Bourdieu, even if he himself did not follow them fully. Contrary to criticism of his work that perceives it as "deterministic", we acknowledge his main discussion on social reproduction, even at the neglect of social transformation and change, as a matter of focus

rather than theoretical shortcomings. With that in mind, we have considered his work so as to highlight possible sources of innovation and to sketch out conditions for its making. After all, this is a task that Bourdieu himself emphasised: “there is no denying that there exist dispositions to resist; and one of the tasks of sociology is precisely to examine under what conditions these dispositions are socially constituted, effectively triggered, and rendered politically efficient” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 81). Instead of speaking in terms of “dispositions to resist” and following the logic of relationality, we stress the peculiar nature of relationships between dispositions and positions – either in terms of heterogeneous non-vertical positions across fields or inconsistent and vertically burdened positions. In the first case, an agent’s heterogeneous positions in fields may exert discrepant demands on her practices, pulling her habitus in incompatible ways, thereby producing a *dys*-positional relation, grounded in dis-/positional heterology, which precisely due to the lack of appropriate “know-how” does not immediately know how to pick up the hammer and “just bang”. It is this disorientation due to the temporary suspension of the spring-action of habitus that might lead to the questioning of an object, that is, of an objectified social. But even if such tension between habitus and fields is absent, an agent’s practical knowledge, consisting of various practical “skills-set” and “feel for the games”, may provide resources that enable her to question the taken-for-granted rules of the game, exactly because she has experienced various games and their rules. In the case of heterogeneous and vertically burdened positions, which Bourdieu paid more attention to, even if mostly in relation to ascent and descent within an individual field, it is the tension of structural and dispositional heterology, resulting in *dys*-positions, which may give opportunities for the misfiring of habitus. Even if these occasions are irregular, they may result in questioning the objective conditions of habitus’ formation and realisation rather than of the agent as such.

To effectively apply Bourdieusian theoretical apparatus to the analysis of social change, further consideration is needed of the social trajectories leading to structural and dis-positional heterology alongside the objective conditions of fields’ differentiation and of the effects of such heterology on an agent’s practices and their resonance within wider social life. In other words: acknowledging that “[a]ll progress in knowledge of necessity is a progress in *possible freedom*” (Bourdieu 1993: 25), it is necessary to hammer out the conditions of the irregular habitus-fields’ relations not only to deepen the knowledge of the regular and of social necessity – as Bourdieu thoroughly did –, but also to understand the conditions of possible freedom and emancipation from social necessity.

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