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Research Article

Relational Epistemology in the Social Sciences: Pierre Bourdieu's Epistemological Legacy

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Abstract: The distinction between subjectivist and objectivist approaches has persisted as a fundamental dichotomy in sociological theory for many years. Pierre Bourdieu's epistemological sociology challenges these opposing approaches and aims to overcome the artificial dichotomies that have long plagued the social sciences. In this article, we argue that Bourdieu opens a third epistemological path, effectively ending the conflict between objectivism and subjectivism that has divided the social sciences into two poles. To achieve this, we explore the influence of the French historical epistemological tradition on Bourdieu's sociological production, emphasizing the importance of recognizing this tradition in shaping Bourdieu's sociological theory. After clarifying the basic epistemological principles that scientifically grounded sociological studies should follow, we delve into Bourdieu's critique of subjectivism and objectivism. Finally, we emphasize the importance and potential of adopting Bourdieu's relational epistemology, which he proposes to do away with essentialist thinking.

Keywords: Epistemology, Objectivism, Subjectivism, Relationalism

1. Initial Principle: "The Sociology of Sociology"

When reading the works of Pierre Bourdieu, two main problematic attitudes emerge among researchers who focus directly on Bourdieu's sociological production or who work on another research object using the conceptual framework derived from him. The first is the theoreticist attitude. It portrays Bourdieu as the 'great theorist' of concepts such as symbolic violence and reproduction. The second is the empiricist attitude, which emphasizes methodological tools such as habitus, field, and capital, often overlooking the relational logic that exists between them. Neither of these readings, however, takes into account the fact that Bourdieu's sociology derives its strength from its inherent integration of the construction of the object (theory), the means of its construction (methodology) and its critique (epistemology) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 30). Furthermore, Bourdieu does not perceive the advancement of scientific knowledge as independent from the advancement in our understanding of the conditions of scientific knowledge, i.e., epistemological progress (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 1).

Theory, just like method, cannot stand without the epistemological foundation on which it is constructed. It is ironic that a sociologist like Bourdieu, who seeks to "rehabilitate the practical dimension of practice as an object of knowledge" and wishes to "recover the practical side of theory as a knowledge-producing activity" is perceived through this dual attitude that he intends to eliminate (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 30). For Bourdieu, who reformulates the renowned maxim from Immanuel Kant's *First Critique*, asserting that "theory without empirical research is empty, empirical research without theory is blind" (Bourdieu, 1988, pp. 774–775), establishing sociological research on a robust epistemological basis is one of the most fundamental objectives for a researcher—arguably the foremost one (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 68–69; Swartz, 1997, p. 29).

It is illogical to analyse scientific products as if they exist in isolation, without acknowledging their producers and, more significantly, the structure and conditions of the field in which they originate—

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especially the power dynamics among these producers within the field. This implies that all three dimensions contributing to the production of scientific knowledge—namely, theory, methodology, and epistemology—are not isolated layers in the process of scientific inquiry; instead, they are interwoven at every stage of the research process. They are inherently linked to the social conditions of production, including the power dynamics among the individuals who produce them. Any scientific product that is divorced from the social context in which it is produced is bound to take on a different meaning.[1] In the process of scientific research, knowing what one is doing —an idea that Bourdieu simplifies as the most basic definition of epistemology—requires an understanding of how the problems that are the focus, the tools that are used, the methods and the concepts have been historically constructed (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 50). In light of these considerations, it would be far from credible for a researcher who does not subject their work to this form of epistemological self-audit to assert that their research possesses scientific rigor (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 29).

The parallels between Pierre Bourdieu's "genetic sociology" and Michel Foucault's "genealogy" are striking, particularly in terms of their "epistemological sensitivity." However, a general tendency in which each tries to undermine the theoretical foundations of the other obscures the practical compatibility of their methodologies. This phenomenon is partly a result of their shared direct influence from French historians and philosophers of science, such as Georges Canguilhem, Gaston Bachelard, and Alexandre Koyré. Both Bourdieu and Foucault emphasized the significance of the French tradition of historical epistemology at different times, as embodied in their work. This influence extends not only to the individual intellectual orientations of them but also to French intellectual thought as a whole.

This tradition, largely unfamiliar to social scientists in English-speaking countries and even seemingly overlooked by the prominent philosophers of science from the 1960s, predates the competing tradition of philosophy of science. The foundational epistemological elements that shape Bourdieu's theory cannot be comprehensively understood if this tradition is disregarded. In *The Craft of Sociology*, co-authored by Bourdieu alongside Jean-Claude Chamboredon and Jean-Claude Passeron and published in 1968, Bourdieu endeavours to transpose this tradition, represented by Bachelard, Canguilhem, and Koyré, into the realm of social sciences. Simultaneously, he articulates the fundamental epistemological principles that every sociological study striving for scientific validity must adhere to in order to gain recognition as scientifically grounded (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 15).

2. The Craft of Sociology: Three Epistemological Principles

The earliest considerations regarding the principles that sociology needed to adhere to in order to attain recognition as a science were formulated by Émile Durkheim towards the end of the nineteenth century. In *The Rules of Sociological Method*, the French sociologist searched for an answer to the question of whether achieving scientific knowledge about the social world was feasible. Durkheim's answer was that it was indeed possible to attain scientific knowledge about the social world, but this investigative effort should be founded on applied methods rather than being dependent on the characteristics of the research subject. Seventy-three years after the publication of this work, Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Chamboredon, and Jean-Claude Passeron authored *The Craft of Sociology* with a similar concern, drawing on Durkheim's ideas that had been partially forgotten, particularly in France.[2] Like Durkheim,

[1]Intellectual products in the social sciences and humanities are often introduced into circulation without sufficient consideration of the context in which they are produced. Instead, they tend to be interpreted according to the structure of the field in which they are received. This can result in misunderstandings, which may have either positive or negative consequences. Those who import these intellectual products—let us call them "entrepreneurs"—not only have a vested interest in this importation, which they convert into symbolic capital, but they also employ these imported products for specific purposes. They often do so with an instrumentalist logic, a practice that the original producers would likely reject in their home countries (Bourdieu, 2002).

[2]Containing a selection of texts that exemplify the main theses of Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, Marcel Mauss, Vilfredo Pareto, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, C.W. Mills, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, as well as Gaston Bachelard, Georges Canguilhem, and

they aimed to provide contemporary sociologists with the opportunity to reach a consensus on what constituted their discipline as a science, shedding light on the general principles that should guide all sociological work (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, pp. 16–17).

The conception of science presented in this book relies upon the identification, diagnosis, and, if possible, eradication of epistemological obstacles. Bachelard (1966) defines these obstacles as societal and mental barriers that hinder scientific knowledge. The epistemology proposed by the authors serves as a reminder that sociology should be approached much like other sciences. Therefore, sociologists must consequently confront certain distinctive barriers of sociological science, such as "the curse of a speaking object", "sociocentrism", "the temptation of prophecy", etc.

Similar to Lévi-Strauss, who, towards the end of the 1950s, restored the "reputation" of ethnology and social sciences in a period almost completely dominated by philosophy, Bourdieu, through this work, provides a guide for a sociological research program that reorganizes the field of French sociology in the aftermath of World War II (Ünsaldı & Ural, 2015, p. 200). The work dismantles the positivist atmosphere that prevailed in the French sociology field from the beginning of the 1950s to the end of the 1960s (Swartz, 1997, p. 34). However, just like Bachelard, Bourdieu also maintains a critical stance against both empiricism and positivism. Yet, following in Bachelard's footsteps, he "transcends positivism by passing through it" (Bachelard, 1966, p. 103).

Focusing on an epistemological preparation for the "craft of sociology," in other words, on both the epistemological and social conditions that contribute to the production of sociological knowledge, Bourdieu and his colleagues utilize the insights offered by the masters of classical sociological thought (Marx, Weber, and Durkheim). On the one hand, they endeavour to overcome assumptions that hinder the attainment of scientific knowledge about the social world, which are more aptly termed "epistemological obstacles." On the other hand, drawing from the philosophical contributions of Canguilhem and particularly Bachelard, they outline three fundamental epistemological principles that would serve as guidance for the production of scientific knowledge:

1) The Principle of Non-consciousness: Bourdieu partially shares the idea with Durkheim that social actors are determined by a social structure beyond them. However, unlike Durkheim, who set aside agency due to its epistemological unreliability, Bourdieu does not close the door to a perspective that restores agents' accountability for their actions. In other words, as emphasized in Harold Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, he refrains from treating social agents as "cultural idiots." According to Bourdieu, even when social agents are subjected to determinants, they are, to some extent, aware that the activity determining them contributes to producing the mechanisms that structure them, thus influencing them (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 167–168). In simpler terms, while agents often lack a clear understanding of the consequences of their actions, they frequently possess an awareness of their actions and the reasons behind them. However, this awareness gains meaning in relation to agents' position within the social space—specifically at a level of second-order objectivity referred to as the "habitus." This is precisely what Bourdieu means by the "principle of non-consciousness." The aesthetic preferences of social agents, what they consider just and unjust, and similar judgments are objectively defined based on their position within the social space and the trajectory they follow. At this juncture, Bourdieu seems to adopt Marx's renowned statement in the preface to his *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness" (Marx, 1904, pp. 11–12). Consequently, in constructing sociological knowledge, the sociologist must exercise "epistemological caution" when approaching the classifications and representations of social agents in their everyday lives.

Alexandre Koyré, this work is central to understanding Bourdieu's epistemological development (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 95).

2) The Principle of Rupture: The central concern here, as highlighted by Adelino Braz, revolves around the necessity to break away from initial notions and biases that become ingrained within the social functions fulfilled by social phenomena. To put it differently, "epistemological vigilance" necessitates manifesting itself as a rupture from the prevailing reality of "common consensus" (Braz, 2017, p. 34). Otherwise, the implicit risk inherent in reducing social science to merely recording common consensus or common-sense explanations that construct the world, as ethnometodologists do, is clear (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 238): Instead of disconnecting from the images they provide to reconstruct the "social conditions" that make things possible and the "historical laws that govern their construction," researchers are led to accept things as they appear, pre-constructed, or, to put it more accurately, "pre-constituted," much like a clerk in a registry office, do (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 414).

3) The Principle of the Primacy of Relations: The relational method situates the constitutive elements of reality not in isolation but within an intricate framework of reciprocal relations, which, in turn, unveil the distinctive attributes of each element. According to Bourdieu, the relational mode of thought, a pivotal contribution of structuralist thinking to the realm of social sciences, forms the bedrock of all scientific disciplines, notably mathematics and physics. Just as in geometry, points and lines derive their meanings not from the inherent properties of each element but from the relationships that connect them, the patterns of the social world should also be constructed in this manner (Swartz, 1997, pp. 61–62). Indeed, Bourdieu, who reformulates Hegel's dictum "What is rational is real, and what is real is rational" in the preface of *Principles of the Philosophy of Law*, asserts that reality is fundamentally relational (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 3–9): "What exist in the social world are relations—not interactions between agents or intersubjective ties between individuals, but objective relations which exist "independently of individual consciousness and will," as Marx said" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 97).

"Fact is conquered, constructed, and verified" is a dictum that sums up the main ideas of Bachelard's applied rationalism. Three sociologists use it to refer to three "epistemological acts" that are the core of sociological knowledge production practice (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, & Passeron, 1991, p. 11). Bourdieu envisages a logical rather than a temporal sequence for these three epistemological acts. These acts do not correspond to three distinct moments of inquiry in a sociological investigation; instead, they are inherently present at every stage (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 27). Primarily, scientific knowledge must disengage from established visions of the social world, whether stemming from the exigencies of daily life or unquestioned theoretical perspectives (Swartz, 1997, p. 35). This disengagement is made possible through the researcher's detachment from spontaneous sociology in order to conquer the sociological object in the face of the illusion of direct knowledge (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 28, 69).

Hence, in Bourdieu's perspective as well, the primary objective of science is to contribute to the critique of the immediate object, thus challenging the illusion of immediate knowledge. This endeavour signifies an epistemological break, a concept aptly captured in the following quotation from Bachelard:

> *"… scientific thought requires the progressive mind to detach itself on both sides. The progressive scientific mind must detach itself from the single object, from the immediate object—and it must detach itself from the subject who is subservient to a single point of view, to a point of view that too quickly postulates identities. Hence the need for a double conversion that sets us free from too quickly assumed realism and free from naively committed idealism. Applied rationalism is, dare we say it, unreflective. It constantly demands that we become aware of well-defined abstractions. It cannot give instructional value to an absolute identity, to a fully realized identity; hence its criticism of the object. It is also a constant criticism of the always partial empirical observation, thus a criticism of the subject. A simple observation of identity cannot determine the movement of the other within the same that we feel coming to*

> *life in the course of a demonstration. Only a sequence of identities, a chain of identifications, can move the evidence from the data of the problem to the solution of the problem"* (Bachelard, 1966, p. 85).

In neither the social sciences nor the natural sciences does a "pure" phenomenon exist that is devoid of a particular theoretical foundation. Evaluation is inseparable from the process of constructing the object of research, a construction that is inevitably theoretical. The formulation of theoretical problems is a prerequisite for addressing questions about reality. Just as there is no pure phenomenon, there is no entirely pure observation (Becker, 1998, p. 18). Observations are inevitably shaped by the concepts employed. Hence, any observation demanding the exercise of choice and reflecting a specific viewpoint is inherently theory-laden. However, the inability to entirely eradicate the necessity of making choices and the viewpoints they entail does not negate the existence of varying degrees of interpretation or the potential for certain evaluations to be less interpretive (Becker, 1998, p. 79). For a sociologist to engage in observation, they rely on hypotheses that shape their perspective. To form an evaluation, one must first comprehend the object being observed. The model of observation that defines what aspects the sociologist must consider constitutes their theoretical hypotheses. The questions in sociological research are rooted in these theory-laden hypotheses, which tend to shape the outcomes. The responses sought are contingent on the questions posed, and the transformation of research into a scientific endeavour commences once the attainable outcomes are delineated (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 28).

As Bachelard puts it:

> *"It will be objected that we are proposing a very delicate distinction between common knowledge and scientific knowledge. However, it is necessary to understand that the nuances here are philosophically decisive. What is at stake here is nothing less than the primacy of reflection over perception, and nothing less than the noumenal preparation of technically understood phenomena. The trajectories that enable isotopes to be separated in the mass spectroscope do not exist in nature; they have to be produced technically. They are reified theorems. We will need to demonstrate that what humans achieve in a scientific technique … does not exist in nature and is not even a natural sequence of phenomena"* (Bachelard, 1966, p. 103).

The research object is grounded in the theoretical problem and, thus, in the methodology. Consequently, its value is derived from its connection to them, which means it cannot be defined *a priori*. The object is constructed in accordance with the theoretical framework within which the chosen research method is embedded (Bourdieu, 1996, pp. 131–132).

Such understanding empowers the sociologist to opt for a research technique and methodology with heightened representativeness capable of shedding light on the phenomenon under investigation. This approach facilitates the validation of the research object against reality, effectively subjecting it to testing and confirmation (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, pp. 27–28). Consequently, an epistemologically vigilant social scientist, rather than contenting themselves with mere empirical observation or the interpretations assigned by individuals to their actions, must perceive scientific reality as a dynamic process that involves conquering, constructing, and verifying—precisely as elucidated by Bachelard and underscored even more explicitly by Bourdieu.

3. Transcending Dualities: The Third Epistemological Path

The mainstream approaches in sociology exhibit fundamental differences in their treatment of human action. Subjectivists adopt a position that emphasizes the rationality or freedom of individuals in society, while objectivists focus on the external mechanisms of social determination that act upon individuals (Bourdieu, 1987, pp. 1–2; Bourdieu, 1989, pp. 14–15; Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 38). One of the most notable aspects of Pierre Bourdieu's sociology is his persistent effort to transcend the artificial

dichotomies and oppositions that have permeated nearly all social sciences. These divisions often manifest as subjectivism-objectivism, micro-analysis-macro-analysis, agent-structure, social static-social dynamic, idealism-materialism, theory-practice, individualism-collectivism, material-symbolic, and others. In this context, Bourdieu's work takes a stance against positivism, empiricism, structuralism, existentialism, phenomenology, and symbolic interactionism. It also distances itself from Marxism, ethnomethodology, and methodological individualism.

Particularly in opposition to the fragmented and partial perspectives of social reality stemming from the subjective-objective conflict, a state of "epistemological vigilance" is a pervasive attitude across Bourdieu's work (Swartz, 1997, p. 54). Bourdieu positions himself within a comprehensive framework that rejects these conflicting paradigms. He consistently challenges the substantialist comprehension of reality, which he believes characterizes approaches influenced by both subjectivist and objectivist modes of knowledge (Swartz, 1997, pp. 8–9).

According to Bourdieu, underlying the construction of the social world lies a methodological and simultaneously theoretical awareness of its constructivist nature. This awareness encompasses mediation, or more precisely, reflectivity, within the domain of social sciences, contrasting with the misconception of a direct object-knowledge relationship. Put simply, the theoretical depiction of the social world differs from its practical manifestation in social life, as described by the sociologist. The sociological representation does not mirror social reality itself but rather takes on a "reified" form of it. However, it is essential to keep in mind that this process of "reification" is itself carried out under the influence of specific social conditions. Consequently, the sociologist must consistently maintain an awareness of the divide between theory and practice (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 69–70; Swartz, 1997, p. 58).

For Bourdieu, the sociologist's genuine task is to unveil the concealed structures entrenched within the deepest layers of the diverse social worlds that collectively constitute the social universe. These structures encompass the mechanisms of determination that facilitate the perpetuation and/or transformation of this universe. The most distinctive characteristic of this universe lies in the fact that its constituent structures possess, so to speak, 'double lives':

1) These structures exist within a 'first-order objectivity,' shaped by the distribution of material resources and the means of possessing socially limited values and commodities (referred to as various forms of capital in Bourdieu's terminology).
2) Simultaneously, they exist within 'second-order objectivity,' taking the form of 'classification systems.' These systems are internalized models that function as a symbolic framework, influencing the perceptions, emotions, thoughts, practical endeavours, attitudes, and behaviours of agents (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 7).

Most social scientists would concur that the subjective-objective opposition, in its broadest sense, stands as one of the perennial dichotomies in the realm of social sciences. Furthermore, very few social scientists would disagree with Bourdieu that this constitutes one of the greatest epistemological obstacles to constructing a comprehensive theory of social reality. The awareness of challenges stemming from this issue at an abstract theoretical level was rekindled during the 1970s and 1980s through the works of scholars such as Anthony Giddens (the duality of structure), Pierre Bourdieu (habitus), Alain Touraine (actor and a subject-oriented society), and Margaret Archer (the morphogenetic approach).[3] Furthermore, from Georg Simmel to Norbert Elias, and from Talcott Parsons to Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the issue of the relationship between social structure and individual action has occupied the agenda of numerous sociologists.

[3]For a detailed discussion (Girling, 2004, pp. 149–156).

Similar to the enduring debate surrounding the nature of light (wave/particle duality) that has captivated modern physics for over two centuries, this debate, framed by the inquiry 'what motives guide human actions?' (agent/structure duality), has constrained social theory's attention for a considerable period. Do individuals truly act under the influence of external pressures, as many sociological approaches from different traditions inquire? Or do individuals act based on motives of which they are consciously aware, as phenomenological and interpretivist approaches, or rational choice theory, propose? Those who follow the trajectories set by Durkheim and Marx—asserting that social phenomena emerge due to external and compelling influences—respond affirmatively to the first question. Conversely, those who tread the path represented by Weber—a perspective perceiving social phenomena as meaningful outcomes of human actions—provide a positive answer to the second question.

The sociological proposal developed by Bourdieu offers an alternative to approaches centred around these two axes. It proposes an understanding of social action in which the individual is conceived within the context of objective social effects and relations. Simultaneously, it represents an ambitious attempt to transcend these two forms of knowledge production regarding the social world (Calhoun, 2010, p. 93). He strives to overcome the artificial opposition constructed by objectivists and subjectivists, considering it the direct *raison d'être* of sociology (Bourdieu, Boltanski, Castel, Chamboredon, & Schnapper, 1990, p. 2). In his own words, "… the task of sociology is to construct a system of relations that encompasses both the objective meaning of actions organized according to measurable regularities, and the specific relations that subjects have with the objective conditions of their existence and the objective meaning of their behavior" (Bourdieu et al., 1990, p. 4). Consequently, this proposal presents a third way to surpass the dichotomies produced by both approaches by harnessing the strengths of each approach (Bourdieu, 1973, pp. 53–53, Bourdieu, 1992, p. 25):

> *"The social world can be the subject of three modes of theoretical knowledge, each of which implies a set of anthropological theses, often tacitly held. … The first mode of knowledge, which we might refer to as phenomenological …, seeks to explicitly elucidate the fundamental experience of the social world—the relationship of familiarity with one's immediate surroundings. … The second mode, which can be termed objectivist …, endeavours to construct the objective relationships (e.g., economic or linguistic) that underlie social practices and representations of these practices. In doing so, it necessarily severs ties with the primary, practical, and implicit knowledge of the familiar world. This rupture comes at the cost of challenging the tacitly accepted assumptions that imbue the social world with its self-evident and natural character. … Lastly, the third mode, referred to as praxeological knowledge, not only concerns itself with the objective relations established by the objectivist mode but also delves into the dialectical interplay between these objective structures and the structured arrangements in which they manifest. This dual process involves the internalization of exterior influences and the externalization of internal elements, ultimately contributing to the reproduction of these objective structures."* (Bourdieu, 2000, pp. 234–235).

There are two fundamental elements that distinguish Bourdieu's approach in this context: Firstly, Bourdieu concurrently draws attention to the external mechanisms through which agents indirectly apprehend objective truths and how these truths are simultaneously realized within their subjective experiences. Secondly, as anticipated from a sociologist of domination like him, he underscores that these antagonisms are not simply philosophical or scientific issues, but rather emphasizes that they are political issues with social foundations (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 34; Swartz, 1997, p. 97).

However, this dichotomy, which essentially divides social scientists into two poles, and which Bourdieu frequently highlights when referring to various themes and intellectual traditions, also encapsulates the

specific methodological and epistemological issues, each of which he takes a distinct stance on (Swartz, 1997, p. 55):

1) The dichotomy between theory and empirical research;
2) The contrast between approaches focusing on the symbolic aspects of social life and those centred on its material dimension;
3) The opposition between micro-level and macro-level analysis.

As evident, Bourdieu formulated numerous critiques that underscore epistemological predicaments within the realm of the social sciences. His sociology emerges as an endeavour to transcend these dichotomies among social scientists. In this context, I will address the most profound and disruptive of these divisions that artificially fragment the social sciences, according to Bourdieu—namely, the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 25). Nonetheless, I will also demonstrate how the French sociologist adeptly moves beyond this dichotomy while retaining the benefits he garnered from both modes of knowledge.

4. The Critique of Objectivism

The critique of objectivism, one of the two components comprising the subjectivism-objectivism dichotomy, and the break from objectivism constitute Bourdieu's initial steps toward forging his sociological epistemology. While Bourdieu primarily directs his critique of objectivism towards French structuralism under figures like Claude Lévi-Strauss, and structuralist Marxism exemplified by Louis Althusser, Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx—pioneers of the objectivist perspective in sociological thought—also face their share of his scrutiny on occasion.

According to Bourdieu, a sociologist adopting the objectivist approach tends to, in a somewhat caricatured manner, merely record facts passively, almost as if assuming these facts can speak for themselves. In this context, objectivism can be seen as embodying an epistemological stance oriented towards systematically seeking out the laws that shape social reality, akin to the laws governing physical reality. As Durkheim articulated, the [objectivist] sociologist must consistently bear in mind that "social phenomena obey certain laws and that these laws can be determined" (Durkheim, 1979, p. 202). For the objectivist perspective, the social phenomenon metaphorically resembles a pearl encased within an oyster shell, ready to be unearthed, or an apple hanging from a branch, poised for picking. From this standpoint, the objectivist view envisions a social reality that remains detached from the consciousness, mental representations, or perceptual categories of individuals.

This epistemological and methodological approach, the earliest and strongest manifestations of which can be found in Durkheim's *The Rules of Sociological Method*, is present in the work of numerous social scientists, particularly evident in the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss and the analyses of Althusser:

> *"… the sociologist, either when he decides upon the object of his research or in the course of his investigations, must resolutely deny himself the use of those concepts formed outside science and for needs entirely unscientific. He must free himself from … fallacious notions which hold sway over the mind of the ordinary person, shaking off, once and for all, the yoke of those empirical categories that long habit often makes tyrannical. If necessity sometimes forces him to resort to them, let him at least do so in full cognizance of the little value they possess, so as not to assign to them in the investigation a role which they are unfit to play"* (Durkheim, 1979, p. 73).

Durkheim's inclination toward systematically rejecting the practical apprehension of the world from the perspective of the acting subject is apparent even in the introductory sentences of his *magnum opus*, *Suicide*:

> *"Since the word 'suicide' recurs constantly in the course of conversation, it might be thought that its sense is universally known and that definition is superfluous. Actually, the words of everyday language, like the concepts they express, are always susceptible of more than one meaning, and the scholar employing them in their accepted use without further definition would risk serious misunderstanding"* (Durkheim, 2005, p. xxxix).

Objectivism, therefore, adopts an approach that closely parallels that of the natural sciences, particularly physics. The application of this approach to sociology and, consequently, to the realm of social sciences can be summarized as the pursuit of objective laws governing all human behaviour, regardless of individuals and their mental representations (Bonnewitz, 2002, p. 30). In line with this, objectivists emphasize external factors that influence social actions and prioritize the structural analysis of these determining mechanisms (Calhoun, 2010, pp. 97–98).

However, Bourdieu, who opposes this objectivist emphasis, challenges all forms and theories of knowledge rooted in objectivism. He contends that understanding social action depends not only on objective structures but also on the subjective mental representations held by its agents. Bourdieu underscores that social science is distinct from social physics (Mounier, 2001, p. 32). Furthermore, as Pierre Mounier puts it, "by objectifying the objectivization employed by objectivist theories, Bourdieu shows that this is an operation of transmutation that attempts to apprehend the logic of practice from the point of view of theoretical logic, which is the best way of making it impossible to understand" (Mounier, 2001, p. 37). To put it simply, Bourdieu argues that both the productive and situational aspects of social action require concurrent critical examination. This viewpoint implies that social structures have an impact on social action and that agents' actions in daily life socially construct these structures (Swartz, 1997, p. 57).

This is why he wants to introduce, so to speak, the concept of 'bearers', which many structuralists, including Lévi-Strauss and Althusser, often dismiss as a mere 'shadow phenomenon' of the structure. This is why the French sociologist uses the term 'agents,' referring to perpetrators, instead of the notion of 'subject,' commonly found in structuralist vocabulary. According to him, social action is not about conforming to specific social norms or complying with certain standards (Bourdieu, 2014, p. 96).

With reference to Durkheim's conceptualization, whether it is in highly differentiated societies where organic solidarity prevails or in archaic societies where mechanical solidarity is evident and thus social functional differentiation is relatively minimal, agents are not blindly obedient to laws they do not understand or functioning as parts of a flawless mechanical clock (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 9). Therefore, to comprehend the reciprocal relationship between objective structures and subjective structures, the meanings attributed by agents to their actions must also be included in the analysis within this context. Otherwise, the social scientist runs the risk of reifying abstract categories like class, culture, etc., treating them as if they were realities (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 39).

However, according to Bourdieu, the objectivist sociologist faces a different threat, one that they might even be part of creating:

> *"One of the obstacles to scientific knowledge … is the illusion of immediate knowledge. But secondly, it is true that the conviction of having to construct against common-sense may in turn favour a scientistic illusion, the illusion of absolute knowledge. That illusion is very clearly expressed in Durkheim's approach: agents are in error, which is deprivation; deprived of knowledge of the whole, they have a first-degree, entirely naive knowledge. Then along comes the scientist who grasps the whole and who is a sort of God compared to the mere mortals who understand nothing"* (Bourdieu & Krais, 1991, p. 250).

Indeed, it is precisely at this juncture that the most significant peril of the objectivist perspective becomes evident. When the objectivist sociologist fails to establish overarching principles concerning

the emergence of the laws they strive to identify, they foster a relationship with the object of their research that proves difficult to control. They misconstrue the connection they establish with the research object as the research object itself, leading to an inadvertent oscillation between the realm of representation and the realm of reality—much akin to the pendulum of a clock (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 253). Moreover, by formulating abstract categories capable of cogitating and functioning as historical agents, they might attribute particular missions to the constituents encompassed within these categories (Swartz, 1997, pp. 59–60). Similarly, they might become entranced by the research object, or, if they recognize that the object is not fulfilling the missions they have assigned, they could become frustrated and disengage. Thus, this perspective forfeits an essential facet of the reality it seeks to comprehend, precisely at the juncture where it believes it has grasped it (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 8).

A thorough scrutiny of the cognitive and social foundations of theoretical practices stands as a prerequisite for obtaining a deeper understanding of everyday practices: "If, as Bachelard says, 'every chemist has to struggle with the alchemist within himself', then every sociologist has to fight the social prophet that his audience wants him to be" (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 25). Without this epistemological endeavour, the sociologist faces the risk of projecting their individual cognitive and social inclinations onto non-theoretical processes of practical action (Swartz, 1997, p. 58). In summary, Bourdieu emphasizes the need for the development of a theoretical language that enables social scientists to monitor the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge. He also underscores the importance of the researcher's focus, not only on the research object but also on the relationship established between the researcher and the research object (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 15).

Before delving into Bourdieu's critique of objectivism and subsequently exploring his critique of subjectivism, along with his proposal for a break from subjectivism, it would be beneficial to elucidate the French sociologist's relationship with structuralism in order to pre-empt any potential misconceptions.[4] Bourdieu's trajectory towards an objective perspective becomes evident as early as his work as a young ethnologist in Algeria.[5] For instance, in a text published in 1970,[6] the influence of Lévi-Strauss and, consequently, structuralism on Bourdieu is strikingly evident (Robbins, 2003, p. 25). Within this work, Bourdieu employs structuralist analysis to elucidate the contrast between the predominantly feminine "inside the house" and the primarily masculine "outside the house" (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, p. 39). However, with another text published in 1972, Bourdieu bids farewell to the structuralist paradigm, as he transitions, in his own words, "from rule to strategy," "from structure to habitus," and "from system to socialized agent." (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 59–75; Bourdieu, 2008, pp. 63–64). Nevertheless, this shift does not imply that he entirely embraces a purely interpretive and relativistic approach to comprehending the social world, thereby completely forsaking the potential for scientific objectivity.

5. The Critique of Subjectivism

Bourdieu adopts the Durkheimian principle that science must distance itself from everyday concepts and representations of social life in order to produce a scientific explanation. He equally shares Durkheim's aspiration to establish sociology not as a form of social philosophy but as an independent science with its own methods and foundation (Swartz, 1997, p. 46). The following quotation from the

[4]Elise Gruau's radio broadcast, which featured a conversation with Didier Eribon on August 15, 2018, can offer valuable insights into Pierre Bourdieu's connection with structuralism, particularly through his relationship with Claude Lévi-Strauss: "L'héritage structuraliste" (avec: Didier Eribon), https://www.radiofrance.fr/franceculture/podcasts/avoir-raison-avec-claude-levi-strauss/l-heritage-structuraliste-7781283 (29.09.2022).

[5]The publication of Claude Lévi-Strauss's 1958 work, in which he first introduced the structuralist paradigm, and Bourdieu's turn towards ethnology were simultaneous. Bourdieu also attended Lévi-Strauss' lectures upon his return to Algeria. However, with the publication of *Outline of a Theory of Practice* in 1972, Bourdieu decisively distanced himself from the structuralism of the French anthropologist, whose path he had followed for many years, and embarked on the development of his own conceptual framework, claiming to present an original theoretical synthesis.

[6]It is also worth noting that this text was published in a book subtitled "*Mélanges offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss*".

French sociologist, as well as his objectives in *Distinction* itself, serves as evidence of his determination to realize—or more precisely, to further—this endeavour: "Sociology as I conceive it consists in transforming metaphysical problems into problems that can be treated scientifically and therefore politically" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 28).

It is important to emphasize that Bourdieu's stance in critiquing theoretical objectivism significantly differs from other approaches within the subjectivist tradition. These alternative approaches evaluate actions based on objectives explicitly articulated by individuals (Mounier, 2001, p. 32). Bourdieu consistently opposed pure subjectivism, as exemplified most clearly by the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's assertion that "man is condemned to be free" (Sartre, 2007, p. 29). Similarly, he critiqued phenomenology (Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty), phenomenological sociology (Alfred Schutz), ethnomethodology (Harold Garfinkel), symbolic interactionism (Erving Goffman), and rational choice theory (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 9).

Just as Bourdieu predominantly directs his critique of objectivism and structuralism through Lévi-Strauss, one of the dominant figures in the French intellectual sphere until the late 1960s, he similarly conducts his criticism of subjectivism through Sartre's phenomenology. Sartre, a prominent figure at the other end of the spectrum, represents one of the two poles in the intellectual field. Bourdieu observes that, much like Lévi-Strauss adopts an extreme objectivist stance, Sartre adopts an equally radical subjectivist perspective (Bourdieu & Chartier, 2015, p. 41). Put differently, just as Lévi-Strauss cannot place the "individual" "within" society, Sartre cannot place "society" "within" the individual.

The French philosopher, often associated with existentialism (a label he resisted for a considerable period), indeed advocates a theoretical standpoint that underscores individual freedom. Sartre contends that individuals possess the ability to transcend various objective constraints through their imagination. Given that humans lack a predetermined essence, Sartre asserts that individuals define their own identity through ongoing choices. This encapsulates the concept of "Freedom Condemned," wherein individuals are compelled to make choices in every circumstance. One could even argue, based on Sartre's perspective, that even the choices individuals refrain from making are essentially choices in themselves. Thus, Sartre's attempts to explain individual actions through a form of determinism rather than taking accountability for them are viewed as indications of "insincerity" and even "hypocrisy" (Sartre, 2003, pp. 453–511).

However, the author of *The Logic of Practice* counters this simplistic notion of freedom, which he labels a "the imaginary anthropology of subjectivism" (Bourdieu, 1992, pp. 42–51). He contends that the dynamics of social existence, encompassing objective structures, remain pivotal in elucidating individuals' actions. This stance refutes the idea that social structures can be simply reduced to the aggregate of individuals' strategies and cognitive activities. Such reductionism falls short in explaining the endurance or dissipation of the objective frameworks that mould and sustain these strategies and activities (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 9–10). Sartre's oversight lies in his failure to recognize how personal desires, cognitive perceptions, preferences, and actions—resulting from the internalization of objective structures—are intricately shaped by collective social experiences and shared frameworks. Thus, to draw an analogy, the stars do not vanish merely because the blind cannot perceive them.

According to Bourdieu, subjective structures do indeed exist, but they remain constrained by the determinism of external mechanisms. This holds true whether in the context of kinship relationships within pre-capitalist societies, societies in transition to capitalism, or within a social structure where the dominant mode of production is capitalist (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 17).

Bourdieu argues that Sartre's voluntarism, as well as Garfinkel's ethnomethodology and Goffman's symbolic interactionism, restrict themselves to capturing the experience and immediate perception of the social world at the microlevel of interpersonal interactions. However, as Bourdieu emphasized in

various contexts, there is no such thing as direct perception and, consequently, no such thing as direct experience. The functioning of all forms of social experience is accompanied by intricate social mechanisms and homologies (shared logics) that contribute to the intricate inner workings of the social realm.

The phenomenological mode of knowledge, rather than questioning the social conditions of knowledge production—thus disregarding social power relations—focuses solely on social interaction, the various forms it takes, or the "frames" within which interactions occur. This results in a "denial" of the historical foundations of the direct correspondence between subjective and objective structures, leading to a neglect of political intricacies, or in other words, an effective "depoliticization" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 74). Phenomenology overlooks the objective context in which individuals' actions and interactions transpire, as well as the impacts of historical frameworks that have imposed themselves upon the repertoire of individual actions. According to Bourdieu, such an approach also contributes to the establishment of the perception of the rational individual who harbours the illusion of acting based on their own rational choices without emphasizing the social and objective conditions within which the action takes place (Bourdieu, 1996, pp. 29, 38).[7]

According to Bourdieu, sociology's most fundamental mission is to illuminate the mechanisms of domination, or the societal unconscious, which permeate the very core of social life and continually perpetuate themselves. But when a sociologist tries to make these mechanisms of dominance clear by studying the subjective experiences of the people they want to learn about in an uncontrolled way, like ethnomethodologists or interactionists do, they run the risk of unintentionally reproducing the dominance and power relationships they are trying to bring into the open. This risk emerges because the sociologist would directly invoke the perceptual and cognitive categories internalized by agents as products of these mechanisms. To circumvent this challenge, the sociologist must indirectly acknowledge the representations and classifications of social agents in their everyday lives by objectifying them. In this context, the primary task of the sociologist is to initiate an epistemological break from everyday explanations rooted in common sense and to restore the statistical regularities that guide societal practices. Evidently, scientific knowledge commences with an objectivist perspective, as objective conditions directly shape the environment in which social interactions unfold and subjective knowledge is generated (Swartz, 1997, p. 56).

6. The Promises of Relational Epistemology: Farewell to Substances!

The recognition of the dilemmas inherent in the conflict between objectivism and subjectivism constitutes the initial phase of Bourdieu's sociological epistemology. The subsequent stage involves the pursuit of a comprehensive epistemological resolution to transcend the divide between these two opposing approaches. This resolution not only capitalizes on the insights gleaned from objectivism but also draws upon the resources provided by subjectivism. Support in this endeavour is found in Cassirer (1953), who underscores the distinction between "substantive concepts" and "functional/relational

[7]For similar reasons, Bourdieu also takes issue with the theories of rational choice that have long dominated the mainstream discipline of economics and have defined the framework for the conception of rational action. These theories, seeking to elucidate not only economic behaviour but all human conduct, rest on the premise that individuals make rational choices grounded in calculations and the information available to them. The common feature of these theories is their reduction of the driving force behind social action to the mere notion of self-interest, depicting individuals as homo economicus who endlessly calculate to maximize their interests. In contrast, Bourdieu presents a distinct anthropology founded on the notion that there is no necessity to embrace the hypothesis that behaviour has a cause or a conscious intention of rationality as a fundamental principle for explaining actions perceived as rational (Bourdieu, 2017). Nevertheless, Bourdieu's frequent deployment, at least for a time, of concepts such as "interest" and "strategy"—terms commonly employed in the vocabulary of the theories he critiques—has been a source of considerable criticism directed at him. The French sociologist could not escape these criticisms for long, even though he did not specifically point to conscious strategies and substituted the concept of interest with alternative notions such as "*libido*" and "*illusio*".

concepts." Cassirer's directive, "Think relationally!", serves as a guiding principle for navigating this intricate terrain:

> *"A number of the misunderstandings to which sociological analysis gives rise stem from the fact that people read relational thinking substantially, to use Cassirer's distinction. … The properties attached to agents or groups that are themselves defined relationally have meaning and value only In and through the relations Into which they enter. No practice, object, or discourse is ever distinguished or vulgar, noble or common. In and of itself, as distinguished common sense would have it, but only in relation to other objects, practices, or discourses. It follows, then, that, contrary to the existentialist absolutism inherent in the legitimate experience of legitimate culture, the notions of nobility, distinction, culture, and human excellence can be linked (within a single cultural tradition and, a fortiori, in different social universes) to different, even opposing, properties, practices, and discourses at different points in time, or, at a given moment in time, according to the relation of distinction into which these essentially relational entities are practically inscribed. People have not always understood that the very word distinction refers to an essentially relational notion that, in its social use, is diverted toward a substantial, essential meaning"* (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 181).

In doing so, Bourdieu assumes a position that transcends the artificial dichotomies that have pervaded sociological theory under various guises, such as society-individual, agent- structure, theory-practice, and so forth, up until that point. Employing an analytical approach that could be characterized as "relational sociology" in its broadest sense, Bourdieu, sometimes referred this approach "anthropological structuralism," "structural constructionism," "constructivist structuralism," "genetic structuralism," or "genetic sociology." Through this approach, he establishes a connection between the examination of objective structures, conventionally regarded as the purview of macro-sociology, and social action, previously seen as the exclusive domain of micro-sociology (Bonnewitz, 2002, pp. 1–2; Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, pp. 40–41).

Bourdieu, in contrast to the inclination of language that leans towards substantialism over relations, underscores the precedence of relationships. He asserts that this principle ought to serve as the foundational cornerstone for all forms of scientific thought and activities:

> *"… the substantialist mode of thinking is perhaps most unrestrained when it comes to the search for 'explanatory factors'. Slipping from the substantive to the substance (to paraphrase Wittgenstein), from the constancy of the substantive to the constancy of the substance, it treats the properties attached to agents—occupation, age, sex, qualifications—as forces independent of the relationship within which they 'act'. This eliminates the question of what is determinant in the determinant variable and what is determined in the determined variable, in other words, the question of what, among the properties chosen, consciously or unconsciously, through the indicators under consideration, constitutes the pertinent property that is really capable of determining the relationship within which it is determined. … One has to take the relationship itself as the object of study and scrutinize its sociological significance (signification) rather than its statistical 'significantness' (significativite); only in this way is it possible to replace the relationship between a supposedly constant variable and different practices by a series of different effects—sociologically intelligible constant relationships which are simultaneously revealed and concealed in the statistical relationships between a given indicator and different practices. The truly scientific endeavour has to break with the spurious self-evidences of immediate understanding (to which the pseudo-refinements of statistical analysis—e.g., path analysis—bring unexpected reinforcement)"* (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 22).

Bourdieu's effort to transcend the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism cannot be understood without considering his stance that vehemently opposes substantialist modes of thought. He contends that "in order to transcend the artificial opposition that is thus created between structures and representations, one must also break with the mode of thinking which Cassirer calls substantialist and which inclines one to recognize no reality other than those that are available to direct intuition in ordinary experience, i.e., individuals and groups" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 15) According to Bourdieu, the inclination to perceive the social world in an substantialist manner characterizes approaches to knowledge such as positivism and phenomenology, even though these perspectives may seem quite distinct on the surface. Bourdieu argues that these approaches emphasize the ontological priority of either structure or agent, system or actor, society or individual. These approaches then seek to solidify the qualities of one of these chosen pairs of concepts as singular exemplars. In doing so, they detach these concepts from their broader social and historical contexts. However, the sociologist need not necessarily favour one of these pairs of concepts over the other. The essence lies in the objective relationships between these concepts that shape the fabric of social reality (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 15).

There exists a "risk" that the methods employed to construct and unveil the social world within an substantialist framework—often perceived as "simpler" and more "natural" than relational thinking—might "obfuscate" the resulting outcomes (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 16). Bourdieu asserts that the battle against substantialism is never definitively won for sociologists. The perpetual vigilance against substantialist notions and the compelling evidence that supports them are vital (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 13). Thus, the prioritization of relations becomes imperative for a comprehensive comprehension of the social world. As Bourdieu underscores, "the principle of the primacy of relations, … must itself lead one to reject all attempts to define the truth of a cultural phenomenon independently of the system of historical and social relations in which it is located" (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 19). In fact, this principle, serving as the bedrock of Bourdieu's sociology, does not bestow ontological privilege upon structure or agent, system or actor, society or individual. Instead, it endeavours to illustrate how these components are interwoven and mutually dependent (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002, p. 81). Bourdieu contends that these pairs of concepts, rather than existing as externally isolated categories, represent interrelated dimensions of the same social reality (Swartz, 1997, p. 97).

Evidently, for Bourdieu, the relational approach offers a protective shield against substantialism. This paves the way for his development of a relational sociology of social spaces. Within this framework, elements are no longer in isolation, as absolutes, or in fixed terms; instead, they are explored through their connections with other elements. Much like how the concept of force was replaced by the concept of form in physics to eliminate any remnants of substantialism, the social sciences can discard the notion of an inherent human nature by substituting it with the underlying structure, effectively recognizing the attributes attributed to a substance as products of a relational system (Bourdieu, 1968, p. 692). Consequently, this context bolsters the notion that reality is relational rather than rational, as proposed by philosophers of consciousness.

The relational method underpins Bourdieu's approach to culture, lifestyle, class analysis, and popular culture. Thus, he analyses cultural practices as practices structured relationally along binary oppositions such as "high/low," "distinguished/vulgar," "pure/impure," "aesthetic/useful" and so forth (Swartz, 1997, p. 63). According to Bourdieu, what holds true for concepts applies to relations as well, and these relations only derive significance "within systems of relations." The reason behind Bourdieu's preference for multiple correspondence analysis, a form of factor analysis, over regression analysis lies in his belief that the philosophy underpinning this technique is more attuned to the reality of the social world. Just as he sought to do with the concept of "field," he deems this technique one that inherently thinks in terms of relations (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 96; Bourdieu, 1998, p. 31).

Despite Bourdieu's assertions to the contrary, the foundational relational perspective at the core of his sociological framework is not, in actuality, a novel theoretical innovation (Bourdieu, 1968, p. 682). Conversely, relational thought is an inclusive concept encompassing various worldviews inspired by thinkers and sociologists across different traditions. This spectrum ranges from Georg Simmel to Max Weber, George Herbert Mead to John Dewey, Ernst Cassirer to Norbert Elias, Philip Abrams to Michael Mann, Charles Tilly to Margaret Archer, Howard S. Becker to Bruno Latour, among others. To paraphrase Mustafa Emirbayer (1997), author of 'Manifesto for a Relational Sociology,' relational thought is rooted in a long tradition extending from the pre-Socratic period to the writings of Heraclitus, and it can be traced back to figures like Marx, Simmel, and even Durkheim, despite the latter's association with substantialist ideas. What sets Bourdieu apart in this context is his methodological audacity and skill in manifesting this type of understanding, particularly through his development of the concepts of habitus, capital, and field, which precisely reflect this way of thinking.

7. Conclusion

The exploration of sociological methodology, as delineated through the lens of Pierre Bourdieu, reveals a practical framework for the scientific study of social phenomena. Rooted in the foundational epistemological principles of non-consciousness, rupture, and the primacy of relations, this perspective calls for an approach that transcends the surface of social interactions and delves deep into the intricate web of societal structures and individual agency.

At the heart of Bourdieu's perspective lies an awareness of the constructed nature of the social world, where theory and practice exist in a dynamic relationship. This awareness allows sociologists to acknowledge the gap between the theoretical representation of the social world and its practical manifestations.

Bourdieu's approach, often referred to as "relational sociology," introduces a practical way of understanding social action, one that transcends the dichotomies and oppositions that have long constrained sociological inquiry. By prioritizing relationships over substances and embracing the interwoven nature of social components, Bourdieu seeks to dispel the allure of substantialist thinking. Instead of bestowing ontological privilege upon either structure or agent, system or actor, society or individual, Bourdieu's approach underscores the interconnectedness and mutual dependence of these dimensions within the same social reality. This holistic perspective, which encompasses both objective and subjective aspects of human behaviour and allows us to consider the interaction between external social influences and individual experiences, offers a "third epistemological path" beyond the traditional subjectivist-objectivist distinction, drawing on the strengths of both approaches.

In conclusion, this work highlights the nuanced and interconnected nature of Bourdieu's sociological framework, emphasizing the need to transcend simplistic categorizations of his work. Bourdieu's contributions extend beyond mere theory or methodology; they are deeply rooted in a robust epistemological foundation. This perspective underscores the importance of recognizing that the production of scientific knowledge is inseparable from the social context and power dynamics within which it emerges.

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