

Pierre Bourdieu on capitals, the state and forced resettlement. A review essay

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ABSTRACT: Pierre Bourdieu distinguished two main ways to teach sociology, by either teaching the principles and formal procedures, or by revealing examples of these formal procedures at work, and preferred to harness both together. This essay attempts to adopt this approach to consider three of his books recently translated to English, using my own research on forms of capital, the state and resettlement to engage with his arguments. I suggest that the utilization of Bourdieu's powerful ideas are limited in areas like social capital and resettlement research by some inconsistencies and lack of definitional clarity.

KEYWORDS: PIERRE BOURDIEU; FORMS OF CAPITAL; THE STATE, RESETTLEMENT.

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Introduction

Polity Press has done a great service to scholarship in publishing a series of translations to English of some important works by Pierre Bourdieu, three of which I discuss in this essay (Bourdieu 2014, 2021; Bourdieu, Sayad 2020).

Pierre Bourdieu began his lectures to the prestigious Collège de France on the *Forms of Capital* (Bourdieu 2021) by reflecting on the teaching of sociology. He distinguished two main ways to do it, by either teaching the principles and formal procedures, or by revealing examples of these formal procedures at work. He structured these lectures by dividing them into two parts, the first hour devoted to wide-ranging theoretical issues, the second “showing how we can construct an object of study and elaborate a problematic, and above all bring these theoretical formulae and formal structures to bear on actual operations” (Bourdieu 2021: 2). In this essay, I follow this model using my own research interests for the latter objective. I consider first the two volumes of his Collège de France lectures, the earliest on the forms of capital, the later one on the state, and then turning to his very early (1964) research monograph on rural resettlement in colonial Algeria.

Having been generously offered my choice of four of his recently translated volumes to review by *Anuac*, I selected these three in part because they echo my own research career. I hoped that I might have something useful to say about them separately and in combination. My doctoral research was an ethnographic study of resettlement in Hong Kong, a topic I returned to through archival research in the last fifteen years. My first major postdoctoral project was focused on understanding the operation of diverse forms of capital in early reform China, while my more recent and ongoing archival work focuses particularly on making sense of governmental decision-making in colonial Hong Kong. While I attempt to avoid fixating too excessively on what the volumes say about issues of concern to myself, some of that seems inevitable if my review essay is to usefully go beyond summaries. Adequate summaries of the sprawling Collège de France volumes, with their multitudes of insights and provocations, would be a challenging proposition. My preference is rather to engage with some of the ideas and concepts in ways that offer some thoughts about how they can be put to work on “actual operations” of research. However, some summarization of key arguments will be necessary, occasionally at some length, and these focus particularly on his ideas about major species of capital, the role of symbolic capital in the consolidation of the dynastic state, and situating the study of resettlement in Algeria in the broader resettlement literature.

Collège de France, 1983-84

Forms of Capital followed on from two earlier Collège lecture series, the first on the constitution of groups and social classes, the second on his key concepts of habitus and field. Bourdieu's ideas on the diverse kinds of capital are closely linked to these issues, and *Forms of Capital* builds on the prior lecture series to take his conceptualization of capitals in some new directions. In a following essay in the volume, Julien Duval very usefully situates the capital lectures in relation to the prior (and subsequent) Collège lectures and more generally in the context of Bourdieu's career and critical reception. This excellent essay can serve to fill in some of the biographical and bibliographic details that I gratefully avoid doing here, concentrating instead on the key ideas themselves and their applicability.

Bourdieu stresses the co-constitution of field and capital so that “we cannot define a field without at the same time defining the capital that is at work in it. Consequently, all capital is specific” (Bourdieu 2021:16). Fields are defined by a structure of social relations that allow or afford distinctive “games” that operate within them. Among other features, a field sets terms for entry: the properties that a “new entrant must possess to produce effects in the field” (Bourdieu 2021:15). The concept of field implies specific capitals and interests (Bourdieu 2021: 109). However, the claim that all forms of capital are specific is problematic: is cultural capital specific in the same way that literary capital is bounded and defined by the characteristics of the French-language literary field? Bourdieu deals with this problem by introducing another category: major species of capital, “of which the others are particular forms” (Bourdieu 2021: 132). In contrast to his earlier work, he reduces these more general categories from four to two: economic capital and cultural capital, the latter of which is the main focus of the volume. He does say in passing that there might be “two and a half” if he includes social capital, but he argues that the principle of parsimony and Occam's razor “would dispense with it and it could be subsumed under cultural capital” (Bourdieu 2021: 160). To accommodate the expansion and generalization, he adopts the modified term of “informational capital” (but not consistently, since the thorough index includes only six entries for the new term, compared to dozens for the old label). Because of this, I will continue to refer to cultural capital, except in order to discuss what the new term means for Bourdieu.

My first engagement with Pierre Bourdieu's ideas was in an essay published in 1993, in which I tried to operationalize the proliferating varieties of capital

in his work. I suggested that we could limit these to four basic types of capital, with a variety of other more specific kinds defined by the kind of social field in which they operated, such as the literary field (which receives the most attention in Bourdieu 2021). In this attempt at operationalization, I saw economic capital as based on ownership which is enforceable by law or equivalent state action. Cultural capital is embodied knowledge that supports the claim to the ability to engage in certain types of practices. Symbolic capital involves claims by the possessor that he or she be treated in particular ways by classes of others. Social capital consists of claims to reciprocation and solidarity from particular others. Forms of capital specific to a field are generally combinations of all four, but with limitations depending on the rules of the game, such as limiting the amount of money that can be used in pursuing political capital in elections. Each capital is vested in a distinct kind of phenomenon: state supported ownership (economic capital), embodied knowledge and skills (cultural capital), general social reputation (symbolic capital), and interpersonal relations (social capital). While ontologically distinct, there are field-specific ways of converting one into another (Smart 1993).

While not challenging the productivity and excitement of this work by Bourdieu on the forms of capital, I am not convinced that collapsing these four types into only two major species (or 2.5) is useful. Too much is being packed into cultural capital, conflating quite different kinds of phenomenon, from reputation to personal obligation. Is it useful to collapse both personal discipline and social networks into the same concept, or to reduce prestige to knowledge about how to behave in ways to obtain greater prestige?

Bourdieu's distinction between major species of capital and specific capital would suggest a taxonomy that the lower classificatory level is included only in its higher hierarchical level and in no others, such as all rodents being mammals. However, academic capital is not composed only of cultural capital, but also relies on economic capital (to pay for training, books, etc.), social capital (colleagues and supporters who provide opportunities, advice and constructive criticism) and symbolic capital (the prestige of the institutions in which you were trained and are employed). The relation between the major species and specific capitals is not Linnean. Instead, each specific capital is constituted by localized and specialized versions of the two, three or four major species.

Bourdieu stresses the existence of three distinct forms of cultural capital: incorporated, objectified, and institutionalized. The first concerns embodied "dispositions" or the cultivated habitus, and is described as "what we call 'cul-

ture' in the ordinary, somewhat vague sense" (Bourdieu 2021: 161). Since a considerable portion of embodied cultural capital is tacit, rather than discursive or explicit, such as knowing how to dribble a basketball, it is not clear if describing all of this as "information" is fully accurate. Cultural capital also refers to objectified cultural goods such as paintings, books, computers and software. Since at least in Western countries, the law enforces ownership of such goods, it is unclear to me why these cultural goods should not instead be considered to be economic capital. Institutionalized cultural capital is "both objectified and legally guaranteed" such as in the form of titles which "is to cultural capital what the title-deed is to economic capital" (Bourdieu 2021: 162). Bourdieu also devotes several pages to distinguishing his approach from that of the neoclassical idea of human capital.

My discussion so far may seem unduly critical, or even nitpicking. This critique was not undertaken because of dislike of Bourdieu's forms of capital, but rather because I feel that the approach is remarkably useful and generates fascinating accounts of the practical operation of social fields, particularly in the form of the conversions of one kind of capital to another as part of what he calls the economy of practices. Rather, I fear that, like myself, many who are attracted to the concepts and theories are reluctant to seriously apply them to their concrete analyses, because of the uncertainties of the precise nature and boundaries of the concepts. My efforts have been directed at forging more precise tools with which we can work with the inspiring visions opened by Bourdieu's theoretical efforts. Unlike the dominant versions of social capital analysis, one of the most influential approaches in social policy, Bourdieu's approach does not focus on social capital as an all-inclusive category of assets beyond strictly economic capital. Instead, he sees it as only one among a variety of different forms of capital that have the potential to be converted from one to another. This perspective has the advantage of distinguishing between obligations between individuals (social capital), broader civic obligations or one's reputation for trustworthiness or honor (symbolic capital), and knowledge, including knowing how networks can be utilized (cultural capital). Ben Fine has suggested that "Social capital can only reign supreme by excising the cultural, the symbolic—and Bourdieu" (cited in Harriss 2006: 193). Bourdieu asserts that it is impossible to explain the social world "unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory" (Bourdieu 1986: 242). If policy researchers neglect the "economy of practices" within which members of the elite convert social, cul-

tural, and symbolic capital into political influence and economic capital, their ability to act effectively on the real political economy will be limited, although the destruction wrought by policies they promote might not be. As anthropologists, we can appreciate the greater nuance of Bourdieu's approach, even if it is less easily operationalized into an index that can be acted upon by social policy (Li 2007). A more differentiated approach to noneconomic capital is less prone to confusions and problematic causal inferences. Lumping all of the non-economic forms into the single one of informational capital, though, seems to me to undermine the strengths of Bourdieu's general approach.

A clear definition of informational capital is not provided in the book. Munk (2009: 5) has defined the term as "academic capital that includes dimensions of skills and recognized symbolic capital". In *Forms of capital*, though, I believe that he saw the idea as much broader in scope, including, for example, juridical rule-making. He hoped that it would help communicate the ways in which the "incorporated, objectified information that defines cultural capital is information that is both structured and structuring". Its use is seen as particularly crucial for "designating dispositions that compose a habitus" (Bourdieu 2021: 243). While this might be seen as true for all the diverse forms of capital, his meaning appears to be a bit more specific here. Informational capital is stored in the brain but also as wordly things or institutions. Such "stored and structured information will have the property of structuring any new information as it is received" (Bourdieu 2021: 244) and thereby operates as a code in both legal and linguistic senses which can in turn be embodied and objectified. To illustrate his idea, he gives an extended example of "codification or formalization".

Bourdieu rejects the legalistic tendency to explain behaviour by reference to rules, relying instead on the habitus, but acknowledges that codification has social effects that must be considered. Specifically, there is what he calls the "officialization effect of formalization" (Bourdieu 2021: 247). To officialize is at its most basic putting something into the public domain, such as notification of marriages or recognizing a child. Officializing turns patterns of thought into formal rules, which may strengthen their imposition but may not, since "explicit rules can be attacked, whereas implicit rules have a kind of clandestine force of persuasion" (Bourdieu 2021: 248). He addresses the force of form, and suggests that when formalization is generalized to all citizens and combined with the "symbolic magic effect of officialization" (Bourdieu 2021: 249) the result is symbolic violence. Formalization facilitates bureaucratic accom-

plishment of actions with greater certainty and ease, such as communicating over a long distance. Moving from “regularity grounded in confidence in ethical dispositions to a rule-bound society” enables a great saving in time and energy” (Bourdieu 2021: 82). One of the differences between fields involves the extent to which its forces are “codified and sanctioned by explicit rules of a legal nature” (Bourdieu 2021:17). The banking field is extremely formalized, while the literary field is among the least officialized.

I have some reservations about Bourdieu’s treatment of formalization, a topic that I have devoted attention to in a forthcoming book about colonial Hong Kong (Smart, Fung in press). He claims that when we say that a dinner or a relationship is informal, “we are saying that there is no etiquette, no deontological code, no objectives rules”. There is a formality effect of making something “objective, written, published and public” (Bourdieu 2021: 31). This dualism is hard to sustain, except by using a narrow definition of formality. Consider etiquette, for example. Harold Garfinkel, one of the pioneers of ethnomethodology, revealed how seriously apparently informal rules of politeness can be taken. As one of his infamous “breaching experiments” that he assigned his classes in order to demonstrate the unacknowledged rules and procedures of everyday life, he asked students who lived at home to interact with their family as if they were lodgers in a boarding house (Garfinkel 1967). Their exaggerated politeness was in a number of cases treated as mockery, and resulted in serious fights within the family. Bourdieu does recognize that there are patterns within informality. For example, he notes that the difference between “politeness of the heart and formal politeness or good manners, is the opposition between form and formlessness” and that this opposition is between “what is objective and what is regular but lacking form” and is found in every social space (Bourdieu 2021: 77). This might be simply a semantic matter of what is meant by formlessness, but studies of informality and illegality show that interactional formality may actually be greater when legal formalities and recourses are not available (Heyman 1999; Koster, Smart 2019). Of even greater importance is the neglected informalities within government (Smart 2018; Smart, Zerilli 2014). I return to these questions in the next section, where I address Bourdieu’s book on the State.

Lectures at the Collège de France, 1989-1992

There is a striking contrast between the 1983-84 lectures and those translated in *On the State* (Bourdieu 2014). The commitment to a parsimony of

major species of capital has disappeared, and the two (or 2.5) major species has been eclipsed by the prior four forms, restoring social capital, and placing symbolic capital at the heart of his pursuit of understanding the state through its historical genesis. This reversal isn't explained. Though I was tempted to pursue this change of course through his other publications of the period, this essay isn't the place for that inquiry. I decided to stay with the project of engaging with the three books, rather than Bourdieu's work in general.

Bourdieu's arguments on the state would have been difficult to sustain without a resurrection of symbolic capital, as he modifies Max Weber's definition of the state as an entity with the monopoly of legitimate violence by expanding it to "the monopoly of legitimate physical and symbolic violence". Symbolic violence is elevated above its twin, since it is "the condition for possession of the exercise of the monopoly of physical violence itself" (Bourdieu 2014: 4). Of course, with the modifier of "legitimate" Weber had already included symbolic claims and struggles. Bourdieu perhaps takes the analysis of the symbolic dimension of the state farther and deeper. He presents the state, "either in a nascent state or in an institutionalized one, as a kind of reserve of symbolic resources, or symbolic capital, which is both an instrument for agents of a certain type, and the stake in struggles between these agents" (Bourdieu 2014: 65). Much of his book concentrates on describing the concentration of symbolic capital from the twelfth century onwards, primarily in France and England, and on demonstrating this concentration as being "just as important if not more so" (Bourdieu 2014: 70) than material resource concentration, since it makes accumulation of the latter possible. To understand the genesis of the state, "priority has to be given to symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 2014: 193). The state is produced by first "concentrating around the king" (or presumably other kinds of rulers) the various forms of capital (Bourdieu 2014: 192). This multiple capital concentration generates a "meta-capital" with the ability to exercise power over other forms of capital, for example by determining the rules within which economic transactions are legal.

Another continuity with Bourdieu's work on forms of capital is that for him the state is not a bloc of powerholders, but a field of power. The administrative field is a "space structured according to oppositions linked to specific forms of capital with differing interests" (Bourdieu 2014: 20). The modern state (considered as initiated by the French Revolution) is presented as pioneering movement towards increased "universalization (de-localization, de-particularization, etc.)" simultaneous with "a progress towards monopolization, the

concentration of power, thus towards the establishment of the condition of a central domination” (Bourdieu 2014: 222). A substantial part of the book focuses on the dynamics that lead from the feudal order to the dynastic state and subsequently to the modern nation-state. Interested agents, particularly jurists and other individuals with skills but without inherited positions, gradually created the state as an entity that “authorizes its possessors [...] to proclaim the official [...] backed by the force of the official” (Bourdieu 2014: 33). This concentration of authority led to the construction of the territorial state, with a population contained within frontiers, which gradually produced a nation as a unified population speaking the same language. Rather than sequential, however, the authority of the state is itself made by unifying the nation (Bourdieu 2020: 123). Making the state and making the nation involves “managing two sets of relatively independent phenomena” (Bourdieu 2014: 359), but doing so in a way that makes concentration and unification seem an inevitable result of the history of a people, with that history and culture inculcated through socialization and eventually mandatory education. Without such integration and assimilation of regional difference, the nation-state is said to be permanently beset by the risk of secession. Bourdieu himself seems too inculcated in the French history of cultural unification and administrative centralization here, neglecting countries like Canada and Belgium, and federal states more generally, that can be quite effective administratively and stable for long periods of time without a shared national culture. John Ralston Saul (1988) described Canada as a “failed nation” that was not only an effective state, but one that he thought was a good model for a globalized world of increasing diversity within countries.

The key to the modern state is the transition from feudalism to the dynastic state. This transition struggled with inherent contradictions between the king’s house and the emerging publicness of the state. At first, the king is simply one among a field of nobles or warlords, but one who is more successful at expropriating powers. The task of jurists, clerics and intellectuals is to universalize this concentration of powers and resources, to say that the king’s domain is not a private interest like the others. Instead, “this private is public” (Bourdieu 2014: 259). This ideology exposes another contradiction: the royal family “perpetuate a mode of reproduction of the domestic type [...] in a world in which a different mode of reproduction is in the process of being established”. This new mode is based on officials, competence and education (Bourdieu 2014: 259). To compete with other emerging monarchs, the con-

centrating power of the state could not be diffused among family members. Rather, to defend the dynastic principle, the king had to rely on the services of those with competences that relied on a non-dynastic principle of education and training. This fostered conflicts between blood and merit. The battlelines of the administrative field were set and fostered a new ideology of public interest opposed to private interests (other than those of the king and his heir).

Economic capital is turned into symbolic capital in this process. Kings and other notables gain prestige by receiving gifts as well as by giving them (Yan 1993). The transition from feudalism to monarchy was endangered by the centrifugal trends of local powerholders (both inherited noble positions and appointed positions) seeking to divert resources to their own benefit and prestige. These form leaks in the centralization of capitals, and may threaten the throne when they are redistributed by local powers misappropriating resources from the king (Bourdieu 2014: 275, 281). Such leaks in redistributive flows can be seen as corruption, but may also be routinized bureaucratic obstacles to direct central authority. Success in concentrating resources and minimizing their diversion to alternative fields of power resulted in the “genesis of public power” where reproduction of power holders is achieved through bureaucratic mediation rather than blood. Regarding this process, Bourdieu asks “how was a de-privatized, de-feudalized, de-personalized power established?” (Bourdieu 2014: 292). Part of this is a consequence of the extension of the reach of power, reliant on the appointment of non-inheriting functionaries. But this extension generates a “withering away” of absolute power, limited by new demands evoked by treating the king’s resources as public (Bourdieu 2014: 303). Delegation is necessary to rule broadly, but limits the center’s ability to control the chains of action. However, this delegation to the emerging “state nobility” (in Bourdieu’s terms) contains its own contradiction, since office-holders often wanted to make their offices transmissible to their progeny, and frequently succeeded. Later, the further advance of bureaucratization made it necessary for officials to transfer their status to their children and proteges indirectly through the education systems, if possible. Legacy admissions to Ivy League universities are a contemporary example of such elite transmissions of cultural capital.

Jurists found themselves in an ambiguous situation, a “double bind”. As jurists, they were on the “side of law against nature by definition”. The jurist should be on the side of “duplication of what is”, expressing “what must be”. He cannot “simply adhere to the dynastic formula of natural transmis-

sion from father to son”. As possessors of privileges and cultural capital “that opposed them to the nobles, jurists were on the side of merit, the side of the acquired as against the innate”. Bourdieu claims that they “could not justify the royal power without de facto limiting it”. When they gave “reasons for obeying the king, they tied the king by the reasons that they gave for obeying the king”. I suspect these last two claims underestimate abilities to live with self-contradictions and to obfuscate. Another feature of the emerging administrative state was that jurists as holders of technical competence operated in a particular territory, “implying limits and a conflict over limits” (Bourdieu 2014: 320). Specialization and its attendant bureaucratic turf politics emerged and expanded.

Bourdieu’s treatment of these processes offers a wide range of fascinating insights, too many to consider here. One area that requires some attention is his careful examination of the emergence of disinterestedness within the administration. Bureaucratic institutions, for Bourdieu, are designed to operate with automatism, existing independently of the people who occupy these institutions (Bourdieu 2014: 37). While in England until the 19th century “functionaries performed a function with the (accepted) idea of enriching himself on the back of the function”, Napoleon’s projects “tried to reduce the role of personality so that it was abolished in the [...] autonomous logic of the bureaucratic function” (*ivi*). The public became opposed to the “particular, to the singular” (Bourdieu 2014: 49). While bureaucrats regularly promote public policies and practices from which they may personally benefit, the logic of the system requires that they do so by arguing for the public benefit and keeping silent on the advantage it offers, for example, to their children through systems of educational preference in administrative recruitment.

This abstract logic conflicts in some ways with his discussion of corruption and political scandal. The extension of the sovereign’s power required the king to devolve part of his power to others, which created “chains of dependence and at each link in the chain there is a new possibility of misappropriation” (Bourdieu 2014: 274). The potential for corruption is inherent in this process.

A related, but more precisely argued, approach to the state can be seen in Margaret Levi’s (1988) work. Similarly recognizing that the agents of rulers have diverging interests, she hypothesizes that rulers “maximize the revenue accruing to the state subject to the constraints of their relative bargaining power, transaction costs, and discount rates” (*ibidem*: 2). Revenue-maximizing rulers can accept situations where subordinates siphon off resources for their

personal purposes, since suppressing it might undermine their coalition of support, while uncertain futures increase the discount rate, encouraging the sacrifice of future for present gains. Most crucially, she demonstrates how excessive control of revenues by rulers can inhibit the expansion of the pie to be divided, whereas the economic consequences of centralization and corruption are largely neglected by Bourdieu. While corruption is usually predatory, such local leakage of resources can in certain circumstances promote development (Smart 1999).

One of the most common and important resources to combat the risk of resource leakage and corruption is an intensification of the use of law and formal rules. Acts of delegation are accompanied or followed by “more explicit rules governing how those commissioned are commissioned” (Bourdieu 2014: 296). While those who are noble by birth prefer vagueness and avoid bureaucratic strictness, the rise of jurists and experts leads to a growing coverage of law which gradually envelopes the sovereign himself, leading eventually to constitutional monarchies. However, greater elaboration of rules can often create an accompanying proliferation of ways to manipulate the system to the advantage of those at the pinnacle of the administrative field (Smart 2018).

The greatest contribution of Bourdieu’s book on the state is to encourage us to reconsider the fundamental features of the administrative state, things that he stresses that we do not see or think about because the state is already in our heads. Bourdieu suggests that tracing the history of the state is the best way to avoid these fundamental taken for granted conceptualizations, since “the state poses a particular problem for us because we have state ideas that we apply to the state” (Bourdieu 2014: 56). Going back to the early history of an institution makes the “arbitrariness of beginnings resurface” (Bourdieu 2014: 115). This arbitrariness or contingency is precisely what I found in my historical research on the origins of Hong Kong’s public housing system and, currently, on the bureaucratic innovations that made it possible to end new squatting in Hong Kong in 1984 (Smart, Fung in press). These innovations result from “policy mangles” where disparate and heterogeneous issues get mangled together in the deliberations of constituted commissions or working parties. For Bourdieu (Bourdieu 2014: 27), a commission brings together people to “elaborate a new legitimate definition of a public problem”. The establishment and operation of a commission involves complex calculations of who needs to be included, and those choices are intended to generate decisions that strengthen or undermine a “certain state of the balance of forces”

(Bourdieu 2014: 111). For most policy mangles, though, the inputs are not simply those that concern the apparent policy issues, but also other kinds of issues that are tangled up with the problem contexts of the decision makers at that point in time.

Hong Kong was a very different kind of colony than Algeria, much more divergent than the respective colonizers, Britain and France. For Bourdieu, though, French nationalism is distinctly committed to belief in the universality of the demands of the French Revolution, and as a result “the particularly vicious character of French imperialism lay in its imperialism of the universal”, a kind of imperialism that he says “has been transferred today from France to the United States” (Bourdieu 2014: 159). I turn to colonization in Algeria in the next section on Bourdieu’s third book, published in French in 1964 (following two prior books on Algeria), but restricting the analysis to resettlement (*regroupement*).

Uprooting: The crisis of traditional agriculture in Algeria

Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad (2020) make the brutality of colonization in Algeria very clear, although they do not provide any comparisons with other instances elsewhere. Between 1847 and 1863, the peasants and farmers were uprooted from their ancestral settlements and relocated in much less, and poorer quality, land. Prior to French appropriation in 1830, there was no individual private agricultural land, so when collective ownership was banned in 1873, the indigenous population were allocated tiny, mostly unproductive, plots. By 1950, 2,700,000 hectares, equivalent to eighty per cent of agricultural land, was controlled by French settlers (Rapini 2016). Bourdieu and Sayad focus on the program of forced resettlement (*regroupement*) from 1954 to the end of French control in 1962. This resettlement affected about a quarter of the total population, 2,157,000. They describe this displacement as “one of the most brutal in history” (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 2).

The Algerian displacement is indeed on an appalling scale, but does not exceed the devastation imposed on indigenous populations in the Americas or West Africa. During the same period, 1830 to 1850, the United States forcibly removed the entire population of five tribes from their southeastern homelands to west of the Mississippi River. Perhaps 80 to 95 per cent of the North American indigenous population died in the 150 years after colonization began in 1492. Disease was the main cause, but other brutalities such as enslavement and loss of land heightened their vulnerability (Nunn, Qian 2010).

At a similar time as the *regroupements* the Malayan “Emergency” from 1948 to 1960 resulted in about one million rural dwellers, mostly squatters and 86% of them Chinese, being forcibly moved into 600 New Villages to combat the threat of Communist anti-colonial action (Sandhu 1964; Scott 1998).

Bourdieu’s early Algerian works “are among the least known, cited, and translated in the world” (Rapini 2016, 391), so it is very fortunate to have *Uprooting* translated to English. Sophie Bélot (2016: 52) suggests that “all of his writing has been influenced by his early relationship” with Algeria. Goodman and Silverstein (2009) note that Bourdieu’s theoretical concepts, particularly habitus, misrecognition, and symbolic domination, have entered mainstream social thought independently of the North African and French contexts in which they were initially developed. These issues are outside my expertise, but I can recommend these studies for those interested in the early seeds of Bourdieu’s later theoretical innovations, such as the first two books addressed in this essay. *Uprooting* has the merit of avoiding being tangled in theoretical considerations and being remarkable clearly presented compared to the later work.

Again, I focus my consideration of this book by engaging with my own work on resettlement in a colonial context. Forced movements were a major feature of imperialism (Wolf 1982). Vast populations were involved in the provision of labor through the Atlantic slave trade and the transfer of Chinese and South Asian indentured workers from one colony to another, helping to produce persisting inter-ethnic conflicts from Fiji to Guyana. People were also transferred within individual colonies to provide labor for mines and plantations. As in Algeria, people were also moved to make better land available for settlers. Such practices were found in all settler colonies, from Australia to the United States. In addition to making desirable land available for colonial development, though, the 1954 program of *regroupement* was also implemented as part of efforts at “pacification” since anti-colonial resistance had increased substantially in that period. Such pacification through displacement was common in colonialism, especially where nomadic populations were difficult to control, as well as in the new village program attempted by the Americans during the Vietnam War.

There are some important variations in resettlement programs. Firstly, not all forced movements are linked to any kind of resettlement. Forced evictions, such as squatter clearance, can simply expel residents, without any provision for where they relocate. Given that there are costs for government in even very basic rehousing, there have to be reasons to resettle evictees, beyond simply

making desired land available for new uses seen as more desirable by the government, to resettle those who are expelled (Smart 2006). Bourdieu and Sayad resort to Robert Merton's distinction between manifest and latent function to explain Algerian resettlement. The property laws that led to displacement had the "patent function of establishing conditions favorable to the development of a modern economy founded on private enterprise and individual property". However, they identify the latent function of the policy as "fostering the dispossession of Algerians by supplying the colonists with the apparently legal means of appropriation" (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 5). I would consider that this functionalist language could be avoided by replacing the latent function with an hypothesis that dispossession appeared to be the primary intent of government, even if it is not explicitly stated in public documents. A policy like this one, which persisted in various forms for a century, clearly had more than one intent. The question I am raising is which one(s) of these accounts for resettlement and not just displacement. Often it is not the actual objective that makes the difference, but the constraints on achieving that objective.

In my first book on Hong Kong squatter history, I explained the constraints on bare clearance, on evicting people without offering any resettlement. What turned displacement into resettlement in Algeria? Here I can only consider the late colonial period. Algerian colonial policy swung between two poles: simply to "destroy the structures of Algerian society" in accord with the interests of the colonizers, or to assimilate the population (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 10). At a minimum, the aim was to remove the possibility for effective resistance, but the more ambitious goal was to integrate Algerians into a colonist-dominated system by transforming individuals and the social structures within which they were socialized. In even more brutal colonial contexts, the comparable alternative was between assimilation and genocide. Assimilation accepted the destruction of traditional social formations, particularly collective property and the tribal system that enabled violent resistance, but also envisioned "improvement" (Li 2007) and civilizing. From 1957, Algerian forced resettlement became more ambitious than to simply pacify the population and open more land for colonists. Some "humanitarian" officials saw the new settlements as an opportunity to educate and spur "accelerated evolution" (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 11). Officers in charge of implementation for particular resettlement villages had considerable room for maneuver. Yet "all the forced resettlement villages essentially came to resemble each other because they resulted less from an explicit or implicit doctrine than from the application of unconscious

models, those that a century earlier had underwritten the establishment of colonial villages” (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 12). Military officers decided all the details of layout, ignoring traditional models without consultation, disciplining space in hopes of disciplining people. In 1845, a French Captain wrote that with resettlement “we will then be able to do many things that seem impossible today, and that will permit us to win their minds after we have won their bodies” (Charles Robert, in Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 13). There were minor variations in the manner of implementation. What they called “paternalist” officers tried to take some account of the wishes of the people, but concessions were very minor. “Authoritarian” officers adopted a fully alien military order. But the effects differed little (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 21).

More important than nuances of difference between the local officers’ approaches were the history of colonialism in the specific region. One of the most impressive contributions of this study of resettlement was the use of eleven different case studies in different regions, and a careful internal comparison of the outcomes on agriculture and local culture. Perhaps the most striking conclusion was that resettlement had resulted in short-term practices, such as the abandonment of fallowing, that undermined future production, and created a “traditionalism of despair” that expressed a “total distrust of the future, which condemns him to fatalist abandon”. Whereas the former rural society “used traditional means to ensure maximum predictability” and displayed considerable foresightness, the traditionalism of despair resorted to bare survival and a disintegration of society comparable to the lumpenproletariat “who are chained to a past that they know is dead and buried” (Bourdieu, Sayad 2020: 7). The result was simply a choice between attempting to survive or forced departure to the town, city or France. The result was either acculturation to the French culture (but with little prospect of anything other than being on the bottom rungs) or a disintegrating deculturation. I am again not qualified to judge whether this assessment is accurate. One possibility is that it reflects Jacques Rancière’s (2004) critique. He argues that Bourdieu’s portrayal of the domination of the poor reproduces such domination by denying their ability to understand their own domination without the efforts of the sociologist.

Although there are similarities, there are important differences between rural and urban resettlement. While in some situations, urban settlements are demolished and the population resettled in the countryside, such as in the Philippines and Indonesia, more commonly urban resettlement is a movement to a different part of the urban space, usually on more peripheral and less de-

sirable land. Those who are resettled are usually able to resume something like their prior urban employment, although movement to the periphery is particularly difficult for casual day workers and shopkeepers. The loss of viable agricultural land for peasant subsistence, however, can be even more disruptive. In both cases, though, questionable assumptions about how design can deliver improvements for the poor can be extremely destructive (Turner 1976).

There is now a very large literature on forced resettlement. However, a quick scan of the English literature suggests that any of the influence by Bourdieu on it is through the use of his theoretical concepts, without any clear impact of *Uprooting*. Hopefully this English translation will change the situation, making specialists aware of an impressive early study that went beyond narrow policy analysis to encompass a major multi-site project grounded in a thorough understanding of the colonial history and current situation, and helped spark some of the most important general theoretical concepts in the social sciences.

Final words

This review essay offers only selective views onto a rich tapestry of concepts, examples and expositions of Bourdieu's approach to developing and expressing ideas. One of the books allowed me to return to my earlier work on the forms of capital, and engage significant departures in Bourdieu's conceptualizations. The other two books impelled me to grapple with his ideas in relation to topics where I had not adopted Bourdieu's approach. Each book was a challenge to review, but attempting to integrate them was even more daunting.

This essay attempted to follow Bourdieu's pedagogical division of his Forms of Capital lectures into teaching the principles and formal procedures, and revealing examples of these formal procedures at work. I have mostly alluded to the latter, and pointed to publications that develop such issues. Instead, my work has focused on clarifying concepts, especially "species of capital", symbolic violence and resettlement. Bourdieu's concepts continue to be immensely productive to think with, offering pathways into opening up insights into fields that he never touched upon. But the obscurity of their definition and exposition make the use of them daunting, particularly to young academics. As a result, Bourdieu has largely been sidelined in the now-vast field of social capital research and policy prescription (Smart 2008). The greater availability of some of Bourdieu's key works in translation now, thanks to Polity

Press, may help, but the dizzying array of apparent definitions without clear boundaries between related concepts will still present obstacles to empirical deployment of the ideas. Still, it is better to have ideas that cut to the core questions and issues than it is to have precise and operationalizable theoretical terms that encompass inappropriate simplifications and chaotic concepts that merge ontologically incompatible phenomena. For these reasons, engagement with Pierre Bourdieu is indispensable for critically minded social scientists, and my own experience with these three books has reinforced my firm belief that Bourdieu is good to think with.

The translations were excellent, with helpful notes and conventions to point to where words were indecipherable from the tapes and how such problems were managed. The added essays do very good jobs in helping to situate the works in their time and fields. The complete volumes provide great assistance in making it easier to use these classic works.

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