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Abstract and Keywords

Pierre Bourdieu is the quintessential theorist of domination and social order. South Africa presents an exemplar from the Global South—fractured, contested, disputative, disorderly, violent. This chapter examines Bourdieu's concepts of order through the jagged realities of South African society, at the same time exploring South African society through the conceptual lenses provided by Bourdieu, and in the process rethinking both. The author uses this double reflection to rethink Bourdieu from a Southern perspective, recovering a potent passage from Bourdieu regarding the "margin of freedom" from the tyranny of habitus and field provided by the concept of symbolic power. The chapter reconstructs the concept of political field to provide for multiple overlapping, mutually unintelligible, and subversive fields of practice occupying the same social space, thus accounting for double meaning, ambiguity, violence, and subaltern agency in the making and unmaking of social order.

Keywords: Bourdieu, South Africa, Global South, habitus, subaltern, social order

[1]READING Bourdieu in South Africa alerts one to how his texts capture textures of social order, how acutely conscious they are of the accumulated weight of centuries of social structure that define "the way things are," and how light that weight seems, embedded as it is in language and embodied in practices that have evolved gradually over time. His analysis is fine-tuned to the intimacies of domination and subordination—to the way they are inscribed in bodies, language, and psyches.

The social reality of contemporary South Africa appears to be the polar opposite—fractured, contested, disputative, disorderly, violent. In contrast to Bourdieu's account of profoundly stable domination, reproduced as it is through the social structure of field, habitus, and symbolic violence, we have here challenge, reversal, and constant shifts in meaning. The oppressive order of apartheid was ruptured and overthrown by countless initiatives that entailed not only resistance, but the formation of counter-orders. Symbolic violence is "a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims" (Bourdieu 2001 [1998]: 2); South African violence has been, throughout its colonial history and into the present, rough, physical, and all too visible in terms of battered, punctured, and dying bodies, whether in the form of police violence against strikers, subaltern violence against foreigners, or domestic violence against women.

Why Read Bourdieu in South Africa?

The Problem of Order

It may be that Bourdieu's attentiveness to the question of order helps us to think about the *limits* of order and the contestation over these limits. One of our problems is how (p. 106) to think about resistance, about social fragmentation, about disorder, about pervasive violence—which means paying attention to different kinds of order as well. Local orders that emerge from below, formed by subaltern communities and activities and shaped by elements of pre-colonial culture and practice, as well as by new networks and organizational forms, may support or subvert state orders. All too often, the master categories of sociology—state and society, bureaucracy and industrialization, class, development, modernity—struggle to encompass the realities of contemporary South Africa, and instead of illuminating them, impose a grid of concepts that leave us dissatisfied and with the sense that something crucial has been left out. Such sociology gives the impression that South African society is something less than "normal", or that we have not yet arrived at our true destination, at a place we can feel is somehow whole and explicable.

Leaving these issues aside, Bourdieu's focus on the mechanisms of order and the concepts he finds it necessary to elaborate in order to explore this—field, habitus, classification, symbolic power, and symbolic violence—may point us toward *exactly* the

sites that must be examined if we are to think about the limits of order. Symbolic violence may help us to think about physical violence; habitus may help us to think about resistance.

It is also possible that the subtlety of Bourdieu's thinking about domination and order may alert us to the processes of ordering that exist beneath a surface that appears unruly and fragmented, pointing toward deep continuities of domination and racial ordering derived from the colonial and apartheid past, as well as subaltern formations of resistance and counter-order. Many aspects of South African society—from the brutal facts of economic control and the distribution of poverty to the subtle ordering produced in language and symbols—are deeply shaped by this history, but in ways that remain opaque in public discourse precisely as a consequence of symbolic violence. One hopes that continuing interrogation of Bourdieu's work in the light of our social reality has the potential not only to generate new insights in our own research, but also to unsettle metropolitan sociology and shake up its master categories, contributing to a robust engagement—whether in the form of combat sport or dialogue—between center and periphery, North and South, the West and "most of the world," as Partha Chatterjee (2004) puts it.

The Body of Defiance

Bourdieu is interested in the subordinated body that the subaltern habitus predisposes to manual labor, as well as to deference, humility, and a physical stance of submission. This immediately poses the question of the body in resistance. The body on strike is already a body of defiance, refusing the routines of subordination and of the supervisor's instruction, disrupting authority. Striking workers in South Africa today chant songs with roots in the freedom songs of the 1980s, dance the *toyi-toyi* war dance that originated in the military camps of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and carry sticks that they understand to symbolize acts of fighting or war.

(p. 107) Where does this—the refusal, the defiance—fit into the idea of habitus, which predisposes the dominated to find domination invisible and submit to it? Does the body of resistance only come into being at the moment of explicit collective mobilization? In my study of worker struggles at Highveld Steel in the apartheid era, workers talked about a continual resistance to the pace of white managers and their machinery, about an "apartheid go-slow" on the part of African workers. At the height of the period of mass struggles in the 1980s, workers at the Daimler-Benz plant in East London wore wooden AK-47s strapped to their bodies on the production line, symbolizing the connection between their struggles and the military struggle of the African National Congress (ANC), while supervisors locked themselves in their offices (Von Holdt 1990). Can Bourdieu's theory account for the resistant body, the body that refuses the machinery and structures of domination?

Reading Bourdieu in South Africa: Order Meets Disorder

According to Bourdieu (2000 [1997]: 182), historical critique is "a major weapon of reflexiveness" which "makes it possible to neutralize the effects of naturalization." For Bourdieu, it is the scholar who has the time and who occupies a location that makes it possible to pursue this task. The first strike I went to after arriving in Johannesburg in 1986 was an occupation strike in a large engineering works. Hundreds of workers were gathered in a solid and disciplined phalanx, "*toyi-toying*" slowly up the main road between the factory buildings. Many were bearing cardboard shields and steel replicas of spears turned on factory lathes, and in front of them whirled and danced two of the strike leaders, their factory overalls supplemented with animal furs and beads, referencing pre-colonial culture and resistance to colonial conquest.

History is not something that is solely available to social scientists toiling away in scholarly fields; it is available to be appropriated and reinvented and marshaled afresh by subalterns. In the colony, history is embodied. The bodies of the colonized constitute a site of struggle in the form of conquest and resistance, and in the various endeavors of colonial authority to order and subdue the subject body. Racial classification systems—which reached their apogee under apartheid—provide the foundation for physical and symbolic assault. When the railway strikers in 1987 made use of traditional medicine to protect them before going out to confront the guns of the police (Baskin 1991), they were drawing on all the resources of their history. Bullets drew blood nevertheless, but if the medicine gave the strikers the strength to challenge the apartheid order, is that not how apartheid was brought to the negotiating table?

In the colonial experience, history has a bodily presence that must be accommodated in any attempt to make use of Bourdieu's concept of habitus or of bodily dispositions.

In Bourdieu's writings, for the most part, habitus and symbolic violence fit the embodied individual—the social body—seamlessly into social structure, so that social reality appears most of the time as ordered and coherent, and domination becomes natural and invisible. This is how Bourdieu resolves the opposition between agency and structure, but he does so in a way that is in danger of removing agency from the picture. "The body is in the social world but the social world is in the body," so that the body can only act in accordance with the social world, by which it is "*pre-occupied*" before it acts (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 142, 152). This comes close to constituting a tautological circle that allows little room for agency or volition.

(p. 108) In contrast, the colony poses the question of the *limits* of order and the limits of authority's power to occupy the body. The body's potential for defiance is present within the body of submission, corresponding to the distinction Scott (1990) draws between "the public transcript" of deference and the "hidden transcripts" of resistance. It is quite intriguing to read Bourdieu's early works on the anti-colonial struggle in Algeria: in his account of settler colonialism, racialized oppression is totally transparent and resistance is inevitable—to the extent that it requires no explanation (Bourdieu 1962 [1958]). This is, of course, too simple an account of colonial domination (Burawoy and von Holdt 2012;

Von Holdt 2013), but its interest lies in the contrast with his later work on the invisibility of domination in the West.

When Bourdieusian theory, drawing on anthropological insights into indigenous society in the colonies and elaborated in the advanced capitalism of France, is returned to Johannesburg and South Africa, it is confronted by disjunction, fragmentation, and subversion.

Colonial and post-colonial realities that are deeply structured by their founding violence, by domination and by the uneven distribution of power, suggest that the social world may better be understood as contradictory, inconsistent, polyvocal, paradoxical, and full of tensions and uncertainties. In this case, the habitus also should be regarded as complex and contradictory, where different dispositions may be at odds with one another and a particular disposition may even be dogged by a shadow counter-disposition, to which at times the individual may give way. When considered in this way, the relationship between habitus and social world, while structured, is not seamless. The potentiality of the body of defiance is present within the body of submission (Fanon 2001 [1967]: Chap. 1; Von Holdt 2003).

Paradoxically, in his work on colonial Algeria at the beginning of his scholarly life, Bourdieu himself provides pointers in this direction. The disjunctions of colonization produce a contradictory world in which all behavior can be interpreted according to two different and clashing logics, generating "a double inner life," a tension between compliance and revolt, and facilitating conscious awareness of models that were previously taken for granted; however, these empirical insights are not carried through into his later theoretical work (Hilgers and Mangez 2015b: 270).[2]

The "Margin of Freedom"

Pascalian Meditations is Bourdieu's culminating theoretical work, in which he draws together and elaborates on the core concepts developed in a lifetime's research and reflection, while referring back to his wide-ranging empirical studies. The main force of the book's arguments is to explain the stability and durability of social order: field, habitus, and symbolic violence form an interlocking whole that tends to reproduce existing hierarchies and social orders.[3]

Yet there is a counter-current to the main argument that emerges briefly but vividly at certain points—a probing of the conditions under which the weight of social order may (p. 109) be destabilized or challenged, and echoes of the Algerian experience surface as such moments. Some of these concern the potential of a destabilized field, or a contradictory habitus, to generate dynamics of change.

Contradictory positions in social structure may generate "destabilized habitus, torn by contradiction and internal division, generating suffering," and the same effect may occur "when a field undergoes a major crisis and its regularities (even its rules) are profoundly

changed"; this happens "in situations of crisis or sudden change, especially those seen at the time of abrupt encounters between civilizations linked to the colonial situation or too-rapid movements in social space." But, strangely, this disjunction does not culminate in collective struggle; instead, Bourdieu emphasizes the difficulty agents then have "in adjusting to the newly established order," and the durability of these now maladjusted dispositions creates the "Don Quixote effect": the disoriented individual is reduced to tilting at windmills, and the possibility of subaltern mobilization to restructure the field itself is elided (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 160–161).

But the question of subaltern agency cannot be so easily disposed of, and it reappears several times in *Pascalian Meditations*, mostly as a possibility to be gestured toward, rather than something fully explored. Thus, 20 pages from the passage discussed in the preceding, we find the following:

> The specifically political action of legitimation is always carried out on the basis of the fundamental given of original acceptance of the world as it is, and the work of the guardians of the symbolic order, whose interests are bound up with common sense, consists in trying to restore the initial self-evidences of *doxa*. By contrast, the political action of subversion aims to liberate the potential capacity for refusal which is neutralized by misrecognition, by performing, aided by a crisis, a critical unveiling of the founding violence that is masked by the adjustment between the order of things and the order of bodies. (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 181)

Here we read that it is only intellectuals who can see through the silent "self-evidences" of the given order of things. But what if, in the colonial world, it is domination that is self-evident? Then what becomes of subaltern agency and intellectuals' monopoly of the power to understand?

Such passages seem to gain an added charge of theoretical explosiveness precisely because of their sparseness and elliptical brevity, surrounded as they are by the overwhelming accumulated weight of domination that is the main emphasis of his texts.

In the final chapter of *Pascalian Meditations*, Bourdieu returns to symbolic struggle, and in this account he introduces an entirely new dimension: the symbolic order constitutes *a space of relative autonomy with a margin of freedom for redefining the world* and opening up new possibilities:

> But there is also the relative autonomy of the symbolic order, which, in all circumstances and especially in periods in which expectations and chances fall out of line, can leave a margin of freedom for political action aimed at reopening the space of possibles. Symbolic power, which can manipulate hopes and (p. 110) expectations, especially through a more or less inspired and uplifting performative evocation of the future—prophecy, forecast or prediction—can introduce a degree of play into the correspondence between expectations and chances and open up a

space of freedom through the more or less voluntarist positioning of more or less improbable possibles—utopia, project, programme or plan—which the pure logic of probabilities would lead one to regard as practically excluded. (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 234)

The symbolic order introduces a crucial new dimension into an analysis of social reality dominated by the concepts of field and habitus: a flexibility or freedom through which the determinism of structure can be challenged by imagining alternatives. It is worth exploring Bourdieu's meaning as far as possible:

> . . . symbolic power . . . intervenes in that uncertain site of social existence where practice is converted into signs, symbols, discourses, and it introduces a margin of freedom between their objective chances, or the implicit dispositions that are tacitly adjusted to them, and *explicit aspirations*, people's representations and manifestations. (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 235)

That is, symbolic power implies "a margin of freedom" between habitus and field, a space for interpretation and therefore contestation. This becomes a site of "twofold uncertainty" because the meaning of the social structure remains open to several interpretations, while at the same time, agents are capable of multiple ways of understanding their actions. In other words, both habitus and field become sites of uncertainty, in radical contrast to the full and forceful weight of Bourdieu's main line of argument:

> This margin of freedom is the basis of the autonomy of struggles over the sense of the social world, its meaning and orientation, its present and its future, one of the major stakes in symbolic struggles. The belief that this or that future, either desired or feared, is possible, probable or inevitable can, in some historical conditions, mobilize a group around it and so help to favour or prevent the coming of that future. (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 235)

This account differs from those mentioned previously, in that it does not end with the alienated, maladjusted individual, left disoriented by changing fields, nor does it rely on the intellectual who has the power to unmask domination to mobilize the masses, but rather suggests a significant indeterminacy in which a group can mobilize to shape the future. Here we have the collective agency to imagine a different future and disrupt the social order. Finally,

> . . . the discourses or actions of subversion . . . have the functions and in any case the effect of showing in practice that it is possible to transgress the limits imposed, in particular the most inflexible ones, which are set in people's minds. . . . The symbolic transgression of a social frontier has a liberatory effect in its own right because it enacts the unthinkable. (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 236)

(p. 111) At these moments in *Pascalian Meditations*, Bourdieu was evidently grappling with his own theoretical framework, probing it for the points where disruption and change might occur within his interlocking system of concepts; and, in the passages

quoted here, he finds a possibility of critical consciousness on the part of the dominated, in the indeterminacy of symbolic order. Imagination calls forth a potential agency beyond the determinism of structure, although, to be comprehensible rather than "unreal and foolhardy" (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 236), it must call on dispositions and structural possibilities that already exist in the world. This insight is hardly developed or integrated into his theoretical logic, but nonetheless these passages might hold the clues we require in bringing Bourdieu to bear on South Africa—or in bringing South Africa to bear on Bourdieu.

How would we do this? It is clear that in the preceding version of Bourdieu's thinking, symbolic power escapes the logic of field and habitus, at least to some extent. And this illustrates one of the problems with Bourdieusian theory—it provides powerful and systematic tools for thinking about the kinds of clearly demarcated and relatively autonomous activities described as "fields," but is less adequate for thinking about the bigger "social space" or society more broadly. This is one reason that Bourdieu lacks a theory of social change—he does of course have a theory of how fields change, and how agents struggle for change within fields, but what he lacks is a concept of larger social struggles and transformations. I return to this question later in this chapter, but for now it is sufficient to note that by virtue of its more general attempt to account for his theory, *Pascalian Meditations* does raise these bigger historical questions, in ways that I have summarized in the preceding discussion.

One reason that symbolic power escapes the logic of field is that it operates within a larger sociopolitical space that we might call society. Thus it enables us to think about anti-apartheid resistance and transition in South Africa. In the next section I will attempt to show how this idea of society-wide symbolic order and symbolic power might help us to think about resistance and the transition in South Africa. In the following section I return more specifically to the challenge of thinking about the political field in South Africa.

Resistance and Transition

It would be impossible to understand the re-emergence of resistance to apartheid in the 1970s and 1980s, after the defeat of the liberation movement in the 1960s, in terms of the dynamic between field and habitus. Certainly, changing social structures—the rapid growth of a mass semi-skilled working class based in the expansion of manufacturing, and the dramatic increase in the student population concentrated in township secondary schools and in "bush universities"[4]—meant that sectors of the black population had increased structural power in the economy and in communities, while the capitalist expansion of the 1950s and 1960s was mired in structural constraints.

These factors provided the material foundation for the formation of the two key forces in the new resistance—the black working class and its new trade unions, and the (p. 112) students and their organizations. In both cases, though, the substance of their struggles was a challenge to the symbolic and physical order of apartheid. For workers, the trade

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union struggle was fundamentally a struggle to be treated as a *human being*: "Today I see myself as a human being because of the union," said one illiterate steelworker; and, "Now you can actually tell the white man what you want, you can speak for yourself; those things were impossible in the dark years of the past, especially for the people before us, our fathers," said another (Von Holdt 2003: 299).

For students, there was the elaboration of Black Consciousness as a symbolic counter-discourse to the racism of apartheid, and then the revolt against apartheid schooling triggered by the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction—again, a highly charged moment of symbolic struggle. To the extent that these assertions of agency could be said to involve habitus, the crucial factor is the "margin of freedom" that symbolic struggles over the definition of social reality afforded first activists, and then growing numbers of supporters, to reimagine themselves—to "see [themselves] as . . . human being[s]" against a system that denigrated and commodified blacks.

As Bourdieu writes, the "symbolic transgression of a social frontier has a liberatory effect in its own right because it enacts the unthinkable" (2000 [1997]: 236); and, indeed, with every such transgression, the popular movement won wider support and the granite-like solidity of the apartheid system was seen to be illusory. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the popular movement was increasingly drawing on the symbolic resources provided by earlier waves of mass resistance. I well remember a public meeting in the Western Cape in 1981, where the symbols of the banned ANC were first displayed. At the entrances into the hall, young activists proffered baskets of ANC ribbons, and soon the audience of 3,000 was wearing ANC colors. Halfway through the meeting, three young activists, their identities concealed with balaclavas, marched the ANC flag down the aisle and onto the stage in a moment of extraordinarily potent political symbolism as the popular movement "unbanned" an organization that was at the time illegal, exiled, and prosecuting an underground political and military struggle against the regime. This was "symbolic transgression" at its most charged.[5]

Symbolic transgression and mobilization were profoundly *embodied*, from the ritual raising of clenched fists and call-and-response salute of "amandla," answered with "ngawethu," to the chanting of freedom songs and marching to their rhythms, a practice that reached its apogee with the *toyi-toyi*, a militant, chanted battle dance that originated in the Umkhonto we Sizwe camps outside the country and rapidly spread through the internal popular movement. Such rituals, songs, and dances conveyed both exuberance and resolve, welding huge gatherings of people in halls, factories, mines, streets, and funerals into mass phalanxes of resistance and insurgency. Indeed, public performance was a central dimension of the popular movement's power. Every death led to a funeral that became a mass theater of community unity and refusal to submit. It could be said that a new habitus, one composed of dispositions to resistance, bravery, and defiance, was forged out of these bodily performances—and that such a habitus was necessary if people were to face the hazards of bullets, detention, and torture that the struggle entailed.

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Public performance of the popular movement also provided an arena in which was forged a new symbolic universe ordered around ideas of freedom, democracy, non-racialism, people's power, women's rights, workers' rights, socialism, armed struggle, making apartheid "ungovernable," and so on. In the face of this symbolic universe and the organizational power that underlay it, the symbolic order of apartheid lost its hold and coherence, and in the end the regime became less and less able to speak and therefore incapable of acting, beyond the spasmodic bouts of repression facilitated by national states of emergency.

This brief account of the re-emergence of resistance in South Africa illustrates the range of symbolic resources available to subalterns as they struggle to reframe and symbolically transform reality—ranging from deep histories, to the emergence of networks and organizations in schools, universities, and workplaces, to multiple subversive intellectual sources, hidden transcripts, and native languages. The social world emerges as profoundly contradictory—not least in the dissonance between daily reality and the apartheid symbolic order. Neither habitus nor field explains the emergence of resistance to apartheid. It might, of course, be possible to argue that the eruption of the popular movement into politics dramatically expanded the political field and increased the range of symbolic struggle over its terms—but that would be to stretch the concept of field beyond its usefulness, to include most spheres of society and indeed most other fields. Rather, we should think of habitus and fields as locations—uncertain and contested—among others for symbolic struggle between the embodied submission demanded by apartheid and the embodied defiance evoked by resistance and democracy. In explaining the large-scale durability or overthrow of regimes, habitus can only be a secondary concept; of central importance are symbolic order and resistance, and their relation to structural and material power in the economy and society.

Transition and After

The symbolic struggle between the popular movement and the apartheid regime continued through the process of negotiated transition (1990–1996) and was stabilized in the form of a new democratic constitution, which laid the basis for the emergence of a new symbolic order centered on the idea of democracy and the transformation of the social structures of racial domination in the economy and society.

While at one level the new constitutional order, backed by broader national consensus, did appear to stabilize the symbolic universe of a new South Africa, at other levels it opened up new arenas of contestation, particularly racial contestation over institutional and economic transformation. But the destabilization of symbolic order is not confined to racial contestation over the meaning of social reality in post-apartheid South Africa. Side by side with these transformations has come a rapid process of black elite formation out of which a new black middle class, a new black business class, and a political elite are crystallizing. At the same time, the growth of unemployment and the expansion of insecure work has driven the fragmentation of the working class and the expansion of the poor, condemned to informal subsistence activities or idleness.

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The formation of historically new classes is not simply a material process of accumulation, on the one hand, and dispossession, on the other, of struggles to enter one class or to avoid being forced into another, and of attendant social dislocation; it also entails the disturbance or disruption of the existing symbolic order, and formative projects to reconstitute symbolic order so as to make sense of new hierarchies and distinctions, new interests, and new social distances.

How will it be known who has power, who is a member of the elite, who has status? This is a particularly urgent question when elite formation is so rapid and the trajectory from poverty and subaltern status to powerful elite is so steep. A long-established ruling class or a long-drawn-out intergenerational process of class formation may evolve more discreet or subtle expressions of status and distinction, but a class or classes that tear themselves forth from the subalterns through internecine struggles, and in which individuals remain subject to sudden reversals of fortune, necessarily have to rely on more robust, and even brash, assertions of status. This is doubly so in South Africa, given the nature of apartheid, which consistently denigrated and undermined the capabilities of black South Africans. Thus emerges what Jacob Dlamini (2011) calls "the politics of excess": conspicuous consumption, the emphasis on marks of distinction that bear witness to high levels of disposable income—designer clothes, powerful cars, large homes, expensive parties, and largesse to friends and associates. These are the signs through which the new elite attempts to stabilize its power and assuage its uncertainties (Bourdieu 1984).

The emerging symbolic order of the new elite is oppressive—and contested—in other ways as well. Young male protesters in one town related angrily how the mayor had publicly dismissed the protesters as "unemployed, unwashed boys who smoke *dagga* [marijuana], *abongcolingcoli* [puppets] who are not members of the community." They pointed out, as did many others, that the mayor herself did not live in the town and that she had minimal schooling (Langa, Dlamini, and Von Holdt 2011; Langa and Von Holdt 2012).

In a second town, the mayor initially refused to meet the community, and when she did, she told them that residents were like Eno digestive salts: they might bubble up in protest, but that would quickly die away. Councilors "disdained us, and said *asiphucukanga, sizohlala singaphucukanga* [we are not civilized, we shall remain uncivilized]." But as in the first town, the mayor herself is disdained because she was for years a "tea-girl" in the post office and had only reached grade 4 at school (Dlamini 2011). Evident in these stories is the destabilization of the symbolic order and uncertainties over the meaning of different markers of status. While insecure members of the new elite seek to establish their status in the symbolic order by denigrating subalterns (i.e., by establishing the terms of symbolic violence against them), subalterns counter with efforts to contest and undermine the oppressive terms of the symbolic order articulated by the elite.

While much of this subaltern contestation of the symbolic order takes place in language, it becomes most explicit through insurgent citizenship claims that are articulated through direct protest action (Holston 2008). So, for example, the elite targets of protest _(p. 115) claim that the youth protesters have been bought by disgruntled faction leaders who have their own agendas. Young protesters respond angrily:

> It is an insult to my intelligence for people to think we are marching because someone has bought us liquor. We are not mindless. People, especially you who are educated, think we are marching because we are bored. We are dealing with real issues here. Like today we don't have electricity. We have not had water for the whole week. (Langa 2011: 61)

Insurgent citizenship in this context is defined by its claim for work and housing, for an improvement in municipal services, and to be heard and recognized. The repertoires of protest resemble those that were used in the struggle for full citizenship rights against the racially closed citizenship defined by apartheid, and the protesters in post-apartheid South Africa explicitly claim the rights of democracy and citizenship, especially in relation to police violence against their protests:

> The Freedom Charter says people shall govern, but now we are not governing, we are being governed. (Langa 2011: 51)

> The constitution says we must have rights. Freedom of speech, freedom of religion. . . . We have many freedoms . . . but we get shot at for walking around at night. (Langa, Dlamini, and Von Holdt 2011: 24)

> The police want us to be in bed by midnight. It's taking us to the old days of curfews against blacks. What if I have been paid and want to enjoy my money? (Langa, Dlamini, and Von Holdt 2011: 51)

The elite engages in symbolic struggle in order to stabilize the material inequality between classes—what Holston calls "differential citizenship"(in the form of differential access to basic services, housing, jobs, and incomes between the poor and the elite)—and to render it normal. However, the normality and justice of this state of things are contested by subalterns who qualify and reject the discourse of the elite, countering it with their own notions of a fair and just hierarchy and markers of status. The protest movements constitute an insurgent citizenship that demands the expansion of citizenship rights in the form of services and jobs, as well as in the form of respect by authority for all citizens, and protest action is itself a disruption of the symbolic order of the elite that controls the state.

The breakdown of the symbolic order of apartheid and contestation over its reconstruction go to the heart of many disputes in contemporary South Africa. These disputes are not simply spats between different political organizations or factions; they constitute heated disagreements over the nature of democracy and the new political order. They are, in other words, symbolic struggles over the meaning of social reality. The

ANC itself is unstable and paralyzed, not only by the rivalry between competing political factions for high office and access to patronage networks, but also because of its inability to speak for or evoke a consistent notion of symbolic order.

(p. 116) The current situation may be better described, in Bourdieu's terminology, as a symbolic or classification crisis, rather than a straightforward symbolic or classification struggle. There is, indeed, a widespread anxiety in South Africa about the breakdown of authority—within the ANC, within government, within schools, and within the family. Crime is a lightning rod for this anxiety: while citizens bemoan their insecurity and berate the government for not doing enough to protect them, each new police minister promises to use force to restore order. And indeed, while an average of about 100 police officers per year were killed on duty over a period of two years, an average of 590 people died as a result of police action over the same period, an average of 1,600 were assaulted by police, and over a one-year period 294 died in police custody, seven of them after torture and 90 due to "injuries sustained in custody" (*Mail & Guardian*, May 27–June 2, 2011). The policing of protests and strikes has also been increasingly confrontational and violent over the same period, with the massacre of 34 striking mine workers at Marikana the most shocking.

It is not clear how this impasse will be resolved. Will a coalition of social forces gradually prevail in assembling sufficient symbolic power to dominate the process of forging a new doxic symbolic order? Will the current stalemate between contending social forces persist indefinitely, producing a kind of institutionalized and chronic disorder across society and the state? Will the state resort to a strategy of force to reinstall order and establish its monopoly over symbolic violence and symbolic power—demonstrating in the process the necessary relationship between physical violence and symbolic violence?

Habitus: An Intermediate Concept?

The difficulty of the habitus concept to explain the durability or fragility of social order should be clear, notwithstanding Bourdieu's (2000 [1997]: 231) claim that it is "no doubt one of the most powerful factors of conservation of the established order." The concepts of symbolic power, symbolic order, and symbolic struggle, I have tried to show, provide considerably *more* insight into the exploration of order, disruption, resistance, and disorder. It is these that restore indeterminacy to social structure and habitus, creating a "margin of freedom," as Bourdieu describes it.

Perhaps, though, habitus is a useful concept at a more intermediate level of analysis. I'm thinking here of how the dispositions of defiance, bravery, and rebellion were embodied in the chants and dances of the *toyi-toyi*. This involved a kind of physical and emotional "countertraining" in resistance (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 172). The *toyi-toyi* persists in the repertoires of strikes and protests in post-apartheid South Africa. Past dispositions and bodily repertoires have an ambiguous durability, even in a substantially changed political context. Strikers and protesters explain that the *toyi-toyi* does not have the same meaning as in the past, when it marshaled insurrectionary struggles to overthrow the state;

nonetheless, its current meaning partakes of the symbolism of violence and warfare, disrupting the authority of the state in order to call attention to the grievances of the people.

In the time of negotiated transition, a shop steward was referring to the depth of this habitus when he told me that "a culture of resistance is inherent in the hearts and minds (p. 117) of the workers; I am sure to change that culture there has to be a process of learning" (Von Holdt 2003: 194). And in 2008, discussing strike violence in the recent public service strike, a former shop steward said,

> Since I was born, I have seen all strikes are violent. There are no such strikes as peaceful strikes. Some workers do not join a strike because of fear. By force they must join the strike. Otherwise anybody would do their own thing. (Von Holdt 2010b: 141)

This worker draws attention to a process of historical habituation through which a strike gathers certain meanings and bodily repertoires that are reproduced in new historical situations. Even more significant is the way youthful protesters in community protests, who are too young to have any direct experience of the *toyi-toyi* of the 1980s, have adopted exactly the same repertoires, chanting the same songs to the same bodily movements as they gather, throw stones at the police, barricade streets, and burn down municipal buildings. They describe the excitement, bravery, and fighting spirit that are involved in these confrontations.

In the light of these durable and embodied practices and the emotions they involve, habitus may be a useful concept for exploring the interplay of symbolic power and symbolic order with the individual psyche. It also suggests ways in which historically established repertoires of symbolic challenge may establish a durable presence in the life of a society. Such repertoires may become more or less stylized or ritualized over time, but in conditions of symbolic contestation and of the clash between contending symbolic orders, such as exist today in South Africa, they remain a resonant and widely understood element in the struggle over the structures of domination.

Fields in a Postcolonial Democracy

For Bourdieu, the symbolic violence that works through habitus is linked to the broader symbolic order through which the hierarchies of society and the meanings of those hierarchies are stabilized and made normal. Just as for Gramsci the state is central to the organization of hegemony, so in Bourdieu it is central to maintaining and naturalizing this commonsense social order. The state is the authority of authorities and, as such, imposes classification systems that sanctify prevailing hierarchies, establishes and reproduces shared symbolic forms of thought, and presides over a symbolic order that is, "in appearance at least, coherent and systematic . . . adjusted to the objectives structures of

the social world" (Bourdieu 2000 [1997]: 176). Just as the state claims a monopoly over physical violence, so it claims a monopoly over the legitimate use of symbolic violence. This is organized through the emergence of the *bureaucratic field*, which is distinguished by the way in which it aligns the individual interest of public servants with a conception of their work as a public service characterized by the values of "neutrality and disinterested loyalty to the public good," constituting the state as the "site of universality" (Bourdieu 1994).

(p. 118) South Africa presents substantial challenges to such conceptions. Here, social order has not settled into a "commonsense" shape, nor does the state monopolize violence. Both in society and in the state, the symbolic order is contested, fluid, and ambiguous. In this section I explore the incoherence and contradictions of the new bureaucratic and political fields, and suggest that we must substantially rethink the concept of field if we are to make any sense of them. Broadly speaking, two strategies are available—either we conceive of these social spaces as comprising multiple fields, overlapping, mutually entangled, and comprising contradictory logics and symbolic capitals, or we have to think of a field as a social space consisting of multiple, contradictory logics and symbolic powers, rather than a singular logic shaped by a coherent symbolic power.[6]

My approach here resonates with a number of recent studies that draw attention to the limits of Bourdieusian field theory by pointing to the range of social spaces and activities that cannot be reduced to strong fields, as well as to the complicating reality that social agents are not formed in a single field, but range across multiple fields and social spheres, combining numerous positions and competencies. Lahire, for example, argues that the use of the concept of social field should be reserved for strongly differentiated and relatively autonomous sub-universes, distinguishing highly institutionalized fields from "secondary fields" with weak field effects such as the literary field and from social spheres such as the family, which, contrary to Bourdieu's assertion, exhibits few of the characteristics of a field. Eyal turns his attention to the space between fields, arguing on the one hand that these are characterized by Latourian networks rather than fields, and on the other that the boundaries of fields should be regarded as thick spaces of boundary-making, produced through the activities of both field and non-field agents. Medvetz (2015) develops this insight to examine the role of think tanks as deriving their power from spanning and connecting a variety of fields, as well as from their own boundary-making activities, while he (Medvetz 2012, 2015) and Vauchez (2011), writing about transnational fields such as the field of "EU studies," propose the concept of "interstitial fields," which, while weakly structured and characterized by low levels of autonomy, gain their strength through constituting an essential site of coordination and homogenization. These authors, in their various ways, undertake the work of "analytic construction" (Medvetz 2015) to modify, rework, or extend Bourdieu's theory of fields.

My approach can be said to be broadly similar. However, the problem I grapple with is that of disorder in which practices, actors, and meanings in the same social space subvert and destabilize each other, generating conflict, double meaning, ambiguity, and violence.

Reading Bourdieu in South Africa: Order Meets Disorder

If that is the case, why not abandon Bourdieu altogether and find a different way of thinking about the problem? Bourdieu, after all, as I have tried to emphasize in this chapter, is the theorist of order par excellence. My reason for working with Bourdieu is that political "disorder" is not simply the absence of order. There is visible, through the dust kicked up by contention, the outlines of order—or rather of multiple orders, appearing and disappearing from view. It is the clashing of contending orders that produces disorder, a process of making and unmaking order. Thus Bourdieu's theory of fields through which order is reproduced provides a starting point for thinking about (p. 119) the unraveling or disruption of the field, and of the superimposition of multiple logics of practice and meaning, of struggle over and subversion of practices and meanings, which is what constitutes *disorder*. Where this project differs from those referred to earlier is that I propose an analysis of the political terrain in South Africa through the lens of several competing fields, entangled with each other in the same institutional space. Let me point out as well that while this may appear similar to Bourdieu's analysis of the "field of power" (Bourdieu 1996), a kind of field of fields in which subordinate and more specialized fields meet and are subordinated to the overall coordination of power in society, it is not. His analysis refers to the overlapping and coordination of social fields in quite *distinct* institutional spaces, such as state bureaucracy, corporations, and tertiary education; mine refers to superimposed and entangled fields in the *same* social space. And before outlining this approach, it is important to add that while Bourdieu's analysis of the political field provides compelling insights (Bourdieu 1991), it is not especially convincing in that it proceeds by analogy with highly professionalized and differentiated fields, and drawing on the rituals and discourse of the Catholic Church to bolster its case, rather than any sustained empirical investigation of political practice. It may be one of those cases pointed out by Lahire (2015)—where a mode of analysis appropriate for highly institutionalized professional fields has been imported into a very different social sphere. It cannot but flounder in the noisy terrain of South African politics.

Research into the state in South Africa (Von Holdt 2010a) suggests a profound contradiction between the Weberian rationales of a modern, "disinterested" bureaucracy —which is, formally speaking, what is enshrined in the constitution, legislation, regulations, and policies of the government—and informal rationales that constitute the state as the premier site of African sovereignty and black advancement. The result is a deeply racialized instability in the meaning of skill, authority, and "face" within the bureaucracy. Whereas the symbolic order of apartheid stabilized skill as an attribute of whites and fundamentally devalued the skills of blacks, the transition opened up a sharp contestation over the meaning of "skill": many whites continued to question the skills of blacks at the same time as many blacks questioned the skills of whites who, in their view, had gained their positions because of race rather than skill.

The meaning of skill has become deeply ambiguous, and in many cases managers have been appointed who lack the experience through which complex technical and managerial skills are developed. Black advancement becomes more important than questions of competence or institutional performance. In such cases, incompetence

spreads, as managers who lack the necessary skills appoint others who in turn cannot perform. There are, on the other hand, managers, policymakers, and political heads who view these developments with alarm, and attempt to craft counter-strategies to build a competent and skilled bureaucracy—with considerable success in some sectors of the state. The net consequence, though, is the destabilization of "skill" and its symbolic meanings, which opens up new opportunities for struggles over who gets appointed and why, while in too many institutions the state loses technical competence.

Similar processes have destabilized authority (Von Holdt 2010a). As well as fundamentally challenging the legitimacy of the state, the struggle against apartheid (p. 120) destabilized the racialized authority structures in workplaces in both the private and public sectors (Von Holdt 2003; Von Holdt and Maserumule 2005). The transition to democracy has stabilized neither the authority of the state nor the legitimacy of authority structures in many workplaces; on the contrary, authority at many levels of South African society remains provisional and contested. In public sector workplaces in particular, it is not only that shop stewards and significant groups of workers challenge or reject the authority of supervisors or senior managers, but senior management also appears to have deeply ambivalent attitudes toward the authority of front-line supervisors. In hospitals, for example, front-line supervisors and, indeed, hospital managers have very limited disciplinary authority and are frequently second-guessed by departmental officials ensconced in head offices.

The result is a breakdown of discipline and the erosion of authority in many state institutions. Trade unions prevent education officials from visiting schools to assess performance. According to shop stewards interviewed in some hospitals, the majority of hospital staff participate in one or other form of "corruption." Nurses associate this situation with the broader changes brought about by democratization:

> When the ANC took over, everything became relaxed; you could do anything in the new dispensation. . . . The lowest categories control the hospital. Since the unions were introduced the shop stewards have been running the hospital, but they cannot even write their names! They get out of hand and it is difficult to handle. Management is scared to discipline and control. The shop stewards confront and victimise the nurses. We also belong to a union but we do our job. Everyone barks at us. We have no dignity; we are degraded. There is supposed to be democracy, but not in the manner of [name of hospital]. (Von Holdt and Maserumule 2005: 450)

Such a breakdown of authority coexists with a culture of extreme deference toward the administrative and political leadership within the state. Elaborate rituals of deference are linked to the necessity of defending African sovereignty in the face of a hypercritical "racial gaze." In an extreme case, a white doctor, hearing the KwaZulu-Natal member of the executive council (MEC) for health tell staff that white doctors are only interested in profit, threw a picture of the MEC into a dustbin. The doctor was suspended pending a disciplinary inquiry, the MEC publicly accused white doctors of racism, while the health

minister told reporters that the incident "smells of anarchy" (*Mail & Guardian*, April 25–May 1, 2008; May 2–8, 2008; *Business Day*, May 6, 2008). In this case, the picture had become a highly charged symbol of respect and face. From one side, the incident appears as a typical case of how the concern with face overshadows crucial delivery concerns, while from another, an agent of the racial gaze is deliberately undermining the authority and credibility of the state (Von Holdt 2010a).

The instability and contestation within state institutions over the state's meaning and purposes undermine its ability to establish and sustain a coherent structure of symbolic domination. Skills and authority are not simply technical matters, but are crucial dimensions of a classification system and its symbolic order; if the state is internally divided (p. 121) with respect to such dimensions of symbolic order, there is very little prospect that it will be able to enforce and stabilize symbolic order throughout society.

But even this layer of instability tells only half the story. In the two decades of democracy in South Africa, an unofficial political system has emerged, centered on a process of black elite formation and using the state to access resources for accumulation and patronage. From the point of view of the constitution, the relevant legislation and government policy, this is "corruption"—but from the point of view of those involved and the broader circles in which they are embedded, this is a legitimate source of black wealth formation in the face of continued white control of the formal economy.

How, then, do we think about the bureaucratic field in a state characterized by such contradictory symbolic orders and practices? Clearly there is not a single coherent field organized by the distribution of a mutually intelligible symbolic capital characterized by values of neutrality, disinterested loyalty to the public good, and universality—instead, there are multiple competing interpretations of the purposes of the state, each embedded in mutually subversive and unintelligible practices. In the light of this, we could simply abandon Bourdieu's concept of a social field, concluding that it does not apply to the kind of contentious realities presented by colonial and post-colonial society.

However, as argued earlier, it may be rather more fruitful to rework the theory, and to explore whether this might shed light on practices within the state. Here there are two different ways we could proceed. As the first option, we argue that a field may be characterized by mutually contradictory logics and forms of symbolic capital, each with their own histories and origins, such that it provides a treacherous terrain for civil servants embedded in this field to negotiate, as any choice or action may have diverse meanings and hold unpredictable hazards for their future. It may be possible to characterize such a field as an *emerging* one, but that would be to predict a movement or direction toward a more coherent field, and it's not clear that such a prediction would be justified.

Or, as the second option, we argue for several overlapping fields operating in the same institutional space and incorporating the same agents—each of them with different historical origins, each internally coherent, but mutually contradictory and subversive. In this case, civil servants would still be negotiating treacherous terrain, but this time

across mutually entangled and unintelligible fields occupying the same institutional and social space. The concept of field as a coherent set of practices and capitals is retained, but it is continually diverted and subverted by overlapping fields with different practices and capitals, and the practices of agents lose their coherence by virtue of being embedded in contradictory logics. It is possible, again, that a single field emerges as the dominant one and pushes the others to the margins, imposing a regularity and coherence on the institution—but it is also possible that the presence of competing fields in one space remains constant.

The advantage of the second option, analytically, is that it allows for a clearer account of each of the competing logics, and therefore a clearer sense of the forces driving each logic, before they are subverted or become hybrid. In other words, it allows for an analysis of the competing orders through which unintelligibility and disorder are generated, and therefore of the complex processes of order-making and unmaking that are at (p. 122) play, deepening our understanding of a profoundly contradictory and polyvocal reality deriving from the colonial imposition of Western "modernity."

A similar problem occurs when we try to understand the complexities of the political field in South Africa, which entails extending the logic of the bureaucratic field into the broader political arena, and supplementing it with a tradition of subaltern politics that has its roots in the anti-apartheid struggle. Research into the increasing trends of localized but militant protests, focused mostly on local municipal councils across the country, reveals the complexity of the field.

Generally, protests begin with the mobilization of communities, often by a committee of "concerned residents," over grievances such as corruption, lack of water or electricity, unfair allocation of houses, and so on. At times, local authorities, councilors, and the local ANC are unresponsive, or make promises to address grievances and then fail to keep to them, and then, after several rounds of peaceful protest, frustration or heavy-handed police responses result in a turn to violence, with street battles between youths and police, and council properties such as halls, clinics, or libraries, and sometimes the houses of offending councilors, being targeted and burned down.

There is, in such protests, a clear sense of insurgent agency from below, and protesters draw on a range of repertoires forged in the 1980s to mobilize and put pressure on authorities—community meetings, the singing of freedom songs, *toyi-toying*, marches, stayaways, street barricades and battles with the police, and the burning down of symbols of authority—as do the police, using tear gas, batons, rubber bullets, arrests, and gunfire. But there is something else. Often enough for it to be a pattern, we found that the leadership of such protests involved (among others) key figures in specific factions of the ANC who had either lost positions of power in the local ANC branch or the municipal council, or who saw an opportunity to access power for the first time. There was, in other words, a dual character to the protests—on the one hand, subaltern mobilization and action over substantial grievances, and on the other, the positioning of factions within the ANC in an attempt to reconfigure power relations locally and to gain access thereby to

powerful positions and lucrative sources of income in local government. Such figures made use of the crowds, confrontations, and violence in order to strengthen their own hand in the ANC, while the subalterns and protesters made use of such ANC figures to gain voice and articulate their grievances within the ANC.

As we probed more deeply, we found that the political arena was shaped by three different logics or symbolic powers. First, there was the constitutional democratic political field, functioning according to the formal institutions of the democratic state, constituting the official political system. Second, there was an unofficial political system composed of patronage networks, factionalism within the ANC and its alliance, and the use of violence against opponents. Third, there was a set of insurgent practices constituting a symbolic system, which drew strongly from the repertoires and symbols of resistance under apartheid, while at the same time mobilizing some of the symbolic force of the democratic constitution that structures the official political system, with its rights to basic public goods as well as democratic rights of assembly, protest, and speech. All of (p. 123) these three logics intersected at the point of protest, generating complex and contradictory practices, motivations, interpretations, and meanings.

This summary outline illustrates the inadequacies of Bourdieu's theory of the political field for understanding popular politics in South Africa. There is in this process, of course, much that corresponds to Bourdieu's description of the "double game" of politics and the process of dispossession of the political power of the people, which requires that they delegate power to politicians (1991: 182–183, 204–205)—often minor leaders—from within the ANC to provide them with the political voice they believe will give them influence with the prevailing political power—that is, *inside* the ANC.

At the same time, however, other dynamics and logics are operating. The unofficial political system organized according to logics of patronage, factionalism, and violence also helps shape the trajectory of protests, with faction leaders indicating to followers that they too can benefit from a change of leadership. And—sharply differentiating this scenario from Bourdieu—the practices of insurgent agency from below enables subalterns to exert strong pressure on politics. Insurgent citizenship draws from repertoires made popular by the ANC and sister organizations in the struggle against apartheid, and provides the symbolic force and rationales for militant collective actions and at times violence, thereby strengthening the claims of not only subalterns, but also the insurgent faction against the incumbent faction, which invariably attempts to delegitimize such repertoires as being out of place in a democracy.

The political or symbolic power available within each of these logics differs, and may be mutually antagonistic or subversive. For example, an ANC leader in the field of insurgent citizenship can mobilize the symbolic power to destroy the political capital of the mayor or other prominent councilors whose capital has been accumulated in the official democratic sphere, and then translate this symbolic power into political capital by becoming a councilor himself. Or a powerful figure in the unofficial political system of patronage—in which wealth and the power to dispose of revenues constitute a particular

kind of symbolic capital marked by conspicuous consumption—may find this capital destroyed when it surfaces within the democratic political system as "corruption." Burning down a clinic or municipal hall in the logic of insurgent citizenship, where it bolsters the power of the aggrieved who have no other way of speaking, may translate into a criminal act in the democratic political field, while contributing to the disruptive power through which a marginalized faction seeks to make its claim on the ANC. Symbolic power thus has contradictory values and meanings, depending on which logic makes it visible.

Here we face dilemmas similar to those posed by the analysis of the internal dynamics of the state. Quite clearly, an analysis that starts from the assumption of a unified and coherent political field based on the analogy of the political field as it has historically emerged in countries of the West will be misleading, suggesting an analysis of "aberration" from "normal politics," which are fueled by corruption, lack of personal integrity, weak systems, and weak law enforcement. None of these lines of inquiry gets to the heart of the matter, which is the formation of an unofficial political system linked to elite formation in a context where the accumulated wealth of the society remains in (p. 124) the hands of colonial settlers. It is the logic and operation of this unofficial system, and its intersections with the official political system, including the factional capture of sections of the police, the prosecuting authority, tax authorities, and so on, that need to be understood—and compared with the similar political systems that characterize most societies in the Global South under not dissimilar conditions, rather than with an idealized Western version of democratic politics (Von Holdt 2014).

I propose that we approach this reality by positing the existence of three intertwined but contradictory political fields—the field of democratic constitutional politics, a field of patronage characterized by factionalism and violence, and a field of insurgent politics shaped by an antagonism between political authority and popular mobilization. We do need to remember, however, that these three fields are embedded in the same institutional space as each other and incorporate the same agents, and this is what distinguishes the political arena from anything considered by Bourdieu.

Reworking Bourdieu in order to make use of him in this way provides concepts and a language, I think, which enable us to develop a compelling analysis of the contradictory reality presented by post-colonial society, particularly its ambiguous and contending meanings. Here it is worth reflecting on the valuable essay by Hilgers and Mangez (2015b: 264–265) on the theory of fields in the post-colonial world. They argue that some post-colonial societies may be "marked by tendencies valorizing ambivalence, playing on multiple registers, living with ruse or conscious but non-problematic contradictory associations," giving rise to dispositional pluralism and what may appear from outside (or from the perspective of European social science) to be dissonant or discordant practices. In other words, what appears from the Bourdieusian or broader European standpoint to be incoherence or disorder may in fact be a perfectly tolerable social world composed of multiple heterogenous orders. Whether the strategy I have proposed could be

productively deployed in such situations remains an empirical question open to further research.

In the meantime, three points can be elaborated:

1. Colonial and post-colonial society is *essentially* contradictory, as Bourdieu himself points out in his early Algerian work—and this derives from a colonial history of dispossession and the violence and forcible imposition of elements of modernity. The result is that many "modern" institutions—the state, law, education, and so on—are poly-vocal, giving rise to dissonance, ambiguity, and contested meaning, located in contrasting moral orders and modes of legitimation. This reality has far-reaching implications for concepts of habitus and disposition. The problem is not simply the existence side by side of "traditional" society and "modern' society, posing a problem of "modernization" as is traditionally the sociological conclusion, one which Bourdieu too reproduces in much of his Algerian work, but rather a problem generated by a violent colonial modernity. As Hilgers and Mangez (2015b: 263) argue, in many societies of the South the "great variety of the legitimacies that shape the hierarchies makes it difficult to establish an overall hierarchy spanning the whole of the social space."

(p. 125) **2.** As I have argued, there is considerable scope in this political terrain for agency from below. Subalterns have access to symbolic power of their own with which they can develop critiques and imagine alternatives, unlike the dominated in Bourdieu, who are unable to obtain "the instruments of symbolic production that are necessary in order for them to express their own point of view on the social space" except when intellectuals break with the dominant class and provide them with the means of cultural production and institutions of representation, such as trade unions and political parties (Bourdieu 1991: 244–245). In our research, subalterns mobilized symbolic power with its origins in the history of struggle against colonialism and apartheid, as well as the symbolic power represented by the democratic rights in the post-apartheid constitution, together with a subaltern "hidden transcript" (Scott 1990) of grievance and outrage. The existence of contending symbolic orders, fields, and logics of legitimation tend to render these orders and logics more visible, more transparent, as well as providing the symbolic means to challenge the prevailing order and imagine alternatives.

3. It may be that the sharpness of the disjunctions in symbolic order in the post-colonial world suggest a rethinking of Bourdieu's master categories and their workings in the West as well (as they should for sociology more generally; Bhambra 2014). Neither field nor habitus may be as coherent and univocal as they appear in Bourdieu's work. Contradiction and multiple meanings may reside at every point in the system, as implied in the passage from *Pascalian Meditations* discussed earlier. And even where a field and habitus do conspire to produce an uncontested reality, there are many possible sources of dissonance, including contradiction between the several different fields (and non-fields) in which every agent participates, the availability of counter-discourses and symbolic orders in every imaginable field, and more broadly the great range of symbolic sources available in principle to every human agent—in schools and universities, in libraries, in religious institutions, in clubs, associations and movements, in cultural productions more narrowly defined, and in networks of family and friends. The field is too constricted a space from which to conclude that symbolic critique and contention are impossible.

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Notes:

(1.) I would like to thank Michael Burawoy for introducing me to Pierre Bourdieu with his brilliant series of lectures at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2010, and for the illuminating and entertaining conversations which produced our book, *Conversations with Bourdieu: the Johannesburg moment*, and have continued ever since.

(2.) Despite his commitment to critical reflexivity and his Algerian experience, Bourdieu's sociology still operates very much within the Western tradition, which regards Western modernity as the touchstone for thinking about all societies. Hilgers and Mangez (2015b: 259, 270) demonstrate how, in in the elaborations of his theoretical approach, Bourdieu fails to incorporate his Algerian insight into the "complex interpenetration" of different worlds, setting up instead a dualism between the "differentiated societies" of the modern world and the "non-differentiated" society of the pre-modern—reproducing a trope that is common to virtually every one of the classical sociologists regarding the contrast between simple and complex societies, and the idea of "progress" from one to the other. Michael Burawoy comments on Bourdieu's reproduction of modernization theory in his Algerian work (Burawoy and von Holdt 2012:83–84)

(3.) Many scholars contest this interpretation of Bourdieu as a theorist of the reproduction of order rather than social change. See, for example, the volume *Bourdieu and Historical Analysis* edited by Philip Gorski (2013), which is devoted to this idea. However, change in Bourdieu is pretty much confined to the emergence of fields as differentiated and highly autonomous social zones, and processes of contestation over the "rules of the game" within fields, rather than to bigger questions about the social order and its hierarchies more generally (Gorski 2013b; Steinmetz 2011).

(4.) This term was used in the resistance movement to refer to these under-resourced universities established, mostly in the rural areas, for black students who were prohibited from attending "white" universities.

(5.) This meeting was preceded by fierce struggles within the organizing committee between activists who supported "Congress" and those who favored more "workerist" political ideologies, and precipitated a split in the community movement and tensions with the trade unions; nonetheless, "Congress" rapidly became the hegemonic force in the popular movement, partly because of the potency of its symbolic resources.

(6.) There are significant loose ends in Bourdieu's working out of the theory of fields. In the first place, the scope and limits of the application of this concept are not entirely clear, since sometimes fields are treated as including sub-fields; at other times it is made clear that a field does not have components, and while it mostly is applied to a differentiated and relatively autonomous space, Bourdieu sometime suggests that the entire social space can be analyzed as a field (Hilgers and Mangez 2015a: 24). Eyal (2013) points out that Bourdieu adopts a conventional sociological approach regarding the entities that constitute fields—politics, the economy, the state, academia, science, art —without inquiring into the *relations* or the *spaces* between them; the latter, he argues, consist of networks rather than fields, while fields themselves have "thick boundaries" characterized by boundary-making practices that are different from the practices generated within the field. In this chapter I consider a different problem—that of contradictory value systems and hierarchies superimposed on, or entwined with, each other.

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