

Bourdieu and Passeron's *Reproduction* changes the educational worldview*

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Abstract

After half a century, Pierre Bourdieu, and Jean-Claude Passeron's *The Reproduction: Elements for a Theory of the Educational System*, published in France in 1970 and in Brazil in 1975, continues to be an essential reference for research in the sociology of education because of the issues it discusses and the theoretical and methodological categories it mobilizes for a critical reflection on educational policies. Produced in another historical moment and in another political and educational context, this work has become a fundamental reference for studies about educational systems, by putting into question the promise of democratization of education and school meritocracy. The aim of this article is to situate the place that *Reproduction* occupies in the circulation of educational ideas, especially between France and Brazil. It is assumed that the conceptions of domination and reproduction sustain the work. Thus, to understand this complex and controversial theory, which renewed the sociological modus operandi, it is necessary to establish a close relationship between the two conceptions, whether in relation to the election of interpretative lenses, or in relation to the mobilization of methodological resources and empirical sources. In the light of this perspective, some dimensions that lead to consider it as a classic work will be appreciated. First, the general reflections of the work will be presented; then, the political and educational indicators that marked its conception and introduction in Brazil will be highlighted; and, finally, the aspects of its reception in Brazilian lands will be discussed, with emphasis on its contribution to educational research.

Keywords

Reproduction – Bourdieu and Passeron – Symbolic violence – Research in education.

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The classics are books that are a treasure to those who have read and loved them; but they are no less a treasure to those who are lucky enough to read them for the first time in the best conditions to appreciate them.

Italo Calvino

Two concepts underlie French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social (and educational) practices: domination and reproduction. To understand his complex and controversial theory, which has renewed sociological *modus operandi* since the early 1960s and put this field of knowledge back in the ranks of the sciences, it is necessary to establish a close relationship between the two conceptions, both in relation to the election of interpretative lenses and the mobilization of methodological resources and empirical sources. In other words, it is the conceptions of domination and reproduction that support Bourdieu's theoretical architecture. Hence the importance of starting from the author's understanding of these conceptions, which underlie, in a broad and deep way, all his works (books, articles and conferences).

Bourdieu did not spare his pen - nor his verb - to inscribe his analyses of different objects and themes in this unavoidable relation, re-signified in modern societies, thus contributing to the consolidation of a critical sociology². Since his first studies, developed in Algeria, it has become evident that the more differentiated the structures of a society, the more concealed are the mechanisms of domination (of individuals, groups, and classes). These mechanisms favor the mobilization of reproduction strategies (from personal and family ones, such as matrimonial or fertility strategies, to institutional ones, such as school, religious, or political ones).

If in pre-capitalist societies, as Bourdieu defines Algerian social structures, it is above all matrimonial strategies that ensure the transmission of a heritage and the preservation of social positions, in contemporary societies the reproduction of the social order and the persistence of inequalities and injustices are promoted essentially by scholastic strategies³, which vary according to the volume and type of capital possessed. Thus, we witness the "passage from the dynastic logic of the 'king's house', founded in the family reproduction mode, to the bureaucratic logic of the reason of the State, founded in the school reproduction mode" (BOURDIEU, 1994, p. 10).

Realizing that the postulate of a formal equality among students makes the institution inattentive to the impacts of inequalities reproduced by the school, thanks to processes of legitimization and naturalization of the social order, Bourdieu and Passeron dedicated themselves to the elaboration of two studies of great impact on the policies of democratization of education: the first was published in France in 1964 and in Brazil

2- In the preface to Pierre Bourdieu: an ambitious sociology of education, Valle and Soulié (2019, p. 9) refer to the author as the "refounder of contemporary sociology," who aimed to develop "a 'general sociology' of Durkheimian and Weberian inspiration, notably articulating processes of socialization and legitimation."

3- In this new mode of reproduction, which characterizes European societies, it is the "school component" that mediates between the generations: "With the school system, an impersonal mediation is introduced controlled by the State, regulated by the State, so that families must rely on this verdict that no longer depends on them" (BOURDIEU, 2016, p. 737).

in 2014, with the title *The heirs: students and culture* [*Les héritiers: les étudiants et la culture*]; and the second was published in France in 1970 and in Brazil in 1975, entitled *Reproduction: elements for a theory of the education system* [*La reproduction: éléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement*].

In these works, the authors give centrality to the notions of inheritance⁴, strategy, and social *reproduction*. The first is used in a broad sense, not as economic heritage, but as cultural heritage, since, besides economic goods, one inherits a surname, a cultural level, a network of relationships, as well as symbolic goods, sparing no effort to preserve and even expand the inherited heritage. By using the notion of strategy⁵, the authors break with the recurrent use at the time, when all strategy was considered as a conscious initiative of an agent, and therefore taken at the individual level⁶. For Bourdieu and Passeron, strategy designates the set of ordered actions having as horizon objectives to be achieved in the long term, being generally produced by members of a given collective. In other words, strategies aim at transmitting the inheritance to reproduce the social position occupied. However, this mode of reproduction is based not on a conscious and rational intention, but on dispositions (the habitus) that spontaneously tend to reproduce the conditions of their own production. For Forquin (1971), these two works construct relational concepts, opposing the illusions of “spontaneous sociology”, the cult of the raw fact or immediate experience, certain factorial analyses that establish correlations in synchronicity concealing the processes of elimination and career effects, the purely verbal explanations, and the “reifying” abstraction of pseudo-concepts.

Finally, because they are inscribed in the same reflexive framework, fruit of a fruitful collaboration between Bourdieu and Passeron⁷, the reading of one always supposes the reading of the other, given the construction of the epistemological, methodological, and political plan that grounds them. Besides, the key concepts that define the critical character of *The Reproduction* had already been outlined in *The Heirs*. In this text, however, I will devote myself only to the appreciation of some of the dimensions that mark the 50th anniversary of *The reproduction*. I will first present the general aspects of the work; then, I will situate the factors of the political and educational contexts in which it was conceived and introduced in Brazil; and, finally, I will mention the elements that characterize its reception in Brazil, as well as its contribution to Brazilian educational research.

4- On the relationship between inheritance and its transmission in Bourdieu's sociology, see: Jourdain and Naulin (2011).

5- Strategy is a central notion in the theory of social practices, being associated with modes of domination. After its use in *The reproduction*, Bourdieu uses it again in *La distinction: critique sociale du jugement* (1979) and *La noblesse d'État: grandes écoles et esprit de corps* (1989). In the latter, he analyzes the field of power and its transformations, referring to the strategies of fecundity, succession, education, prophylactics, proper economics, social investment, marriage, and sociodicy.

6- Bourdieu always felt challenged to find answers for the perpetuation of the social order. To do so, he understood it was necessary to refuse the “structuralist” vision, according to which the structures, which carry in themselves the principle of their own perpetuation, reproduce themselves with the obligatory collaboration of the agents that are subjected to them, but also the interactionist or ethnomethodological vision, which sees a kind of “continuous creation” in the acts of construction operated by the agents at each moment.

7- On the approximations and distancements between the two sociologists in terms of academic insertion, see: Passeron (2005).

Unveiling the “secret logic” of education systems

The *reproduction* is presented as a more theoretical and conceptual work than *The Inheritors*, and this from the subtitle: *elements for a theory of the education system*, although its greatest impact comes from the title⁸, because it appeals to the “paradigm” according to which the education system contributes to reproduce the social structure. Interested in or, more properly, dissatisfied with the denial or concealment of the sociological question of the social conditions of transmission of knowledge, Bourdieu and Passeron construct a model that allows us to understand the functioning and the real social function of the education system. In their view, the unveiling of the pedagogical mechanisms by which the school contributes to reproduce the structure of class relations allows them to state that the structure of the social space, which is characteristic of differentiated societies, is the product of two fundamental principles of differentiation: economic capital and cultural capital.

But how can we understand the logic of domination and the strategies of social reproduction put into practice by the school? To answer this question, Bourdieu and Passeron build a “general theory of the actions of symbolic violence⁹”, starting from the assumption that the school institution is used as a strategy that aims at the monopoly of dominant positions, since it plays a decisive role in the distribution of cultural capital.

The originality of *The Reproduction* is evident from its structure, being composed of two books that, at first sight, do not seem to articulate¹⁰. The first book, *Fundamentals of a theory of symbolic violence*, begins by explaining the two schemes laid out there and has the function of “helping the reader to grasp the organization of the body of propositions [...], showing the most important logical relations and correspondences between propositions of the same degree” (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 18). The constitution of these propositions seeks inspiration and support in the classical theories of the foundation of power (Marx, Durkheim, Weber), besides being oriented according to models considered scientific.

Expressions such as double arbitrariness, pedagogical authority, pedagogical work, and the teaching system are arranged based on a kind of “shorthand of systems of logical relations,” that is, from a central premise a precise analysis is derived about the way teaching is exercised and perceived. Several concepts are introduced in *The Reproduction*, such as

8- Such a radical critical approach would not go without reactions. It is worth mentioning the manifestation of the historian Antoine Prost (1970), for whom *Reproduction* is nothing but “a sterile sociology”, which makes it deeply conservative, since it does not point to any path that makes it possible to replace or introduce actions or reforms.

9- “It is understood that the term symbolic violence, which expressly states the break with all spontaneous representations and spontaneistic conceptions of pedagogical action as nonviolent action, is imposed to signify the theoretical unity of all actions characterized by the arbitrary double of symbolic imposition. One understands at the same time the dependence of this general theory of the actions of symbolic violence (whether they are exercised by the healer, the sorcerer, the priest, the prophet, the propagandist, the teacher, the psychiatrist, or the psychoanalyst) on a general theory of violence and legitimate violence. Dependence which is witnessed directly by the substitutability of different forms of social violence, and, indirectly, by the homology between the school monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence and the state monopoly of the legitimate exercise of physical violence” (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 13).

10- The authors themselves recognize that it is a “very uneven” composition and try to justify this option: this “mode of exposition should not evoke the common representation of the division of intellectual labor between the tasks by stages of empiricism and a theoretical work that had in itself its beginning and end” (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 11).

the concept of *habitus*¹¹ which, although it had been used by Bourdieu in the postface to the work *Architecture gothique et pensée scolastique*, by the art historian Erwin Panofsky, in 1967, is elaborated, becoming part, along with the concepts of field and capital, of the Bourdieusian lexicon¹². According to Bourdieu and Passeron (2013, p. 2),

[...] only an adequate theory of habitus as a place of interiorization of exteriority and exteriorization of interiority makes it possible to fully bring up to date the social conditions of the exercise of the function of legitimizing the social order which, of all the ideological functions of the school, is undoubtedly the best concealed¹³.

The second book, *The Maintenance of Order*, unlike the first, which has no further developments, is composed of four chapters: 1. "Cultural Capital and Pedagogical Communication"; 2. "Erudite Tradition and Social Conservation"; 3. "Elimination and Selection"; and 4. "Dependence on Independence".

The first chapter sets out to apprehend the pedagogical relationship as a communication relationship, seeking "to measure its yield, [to] determine the social and school factors of the success of pedagogical communication by analyzing the variations in the yield of communication as a function of the social and school characteristics of the receivers" (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 81). To carry this out, the authors explain the theoretical model adopted and the empirical measurement of the paths through the school system, from elementary school to higher education, seeking to understand how students move from the social class of origin to another social class after various selections. According to Forquin (1971, p. 41), Bourdieu and Passeron, with reference to large empirical results, confirm "a hypothesis at once global and complex related to the combined effects of linguistic capital and the degree of selection of each category of student on their chances of success and their probability of school survival at each course level."

A dual intention guides the second chapter, "Scholarly tradition and social conservation." The first aims to "interrogate the institutional means and social conditions that allow the pedagogical relationship to perpetuate itself," while the second aims to "determine what sociologically defines a communication relationship, as opposed to a formally defined communication relationship" (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 121). The aim is to question the modalities of cultural transmission, given the constant failures of the pedagogical measures put in place by the educational system. The authors' work consists, therefore, in demonstrating that pedagogical communication functions less as the transmission of any culture and more as the legitimizer of a particular culture, that

11- There are numerous publications, including in Portuguese, about the Bourdieusian concept of habitus. Besides these, I highlight the works of Corcuff (1999), Lahire (1999), and Bronckart and Schurmans (1999), for addressing the relationship between sociology and psychology.

12- In a dialogue with Wacquant, Bourdieu (1992, p. 71) notes that "concepts have only a systemic definition and are designed to be put into empirical practice in a systematic way. Notions such as habitus, field, and capital can be defined, but only within the theoretical system they constitute, never in an isolated state."

13- It is "because the traditional education system manages to give the illusion that its action of inculcation is entirely responsible for the production of the learned habitus or, by an apparent contradiction, that [...] it contributes in an irreplaceable way to perpetuate the structure of class relations and at the same time to legitimize it by concealing the fact that the school hierarchies it produces, reproduce social hierarchies" (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2013, p. 2).

is, the different institutional means promote a certain “cultural connivance between the school and the ways (of living, speaking and thinking) characteristic of the ruling class” (FORQUIN, 1971, p. 42).

“Elimination and selection,” the theme of the third chapter, is intended to show that the internal characteristics and functions of the examination¹⁴ in each educational system allow a social hierarchy and a school hierarchy to be established. As a neutral instrument, the exam reinforces the feeling of a school for all and legitimizes its existence. To elaborate this, the authors practice a historical sociology, using the comparative method. They clarify that it is thanks to

[...] illusion of the neutrality and independence of the school system in relation to the structure of class relations that one can come to question the interrogation about the examination to discover what the examination conceals and what the interrogation about the examination further contributes to conceal by deviating from the interrogation about elimination without examination. (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 153).

In the fourth and concluding chapter, “Dependence for Independence,” the sociologists analyze how the functions of the “general interest” or the ends of education, which, thanks to their generic character, mask the objective truth of their relationship to the structure of class relations, come about. More specifically, “in a society where the attainment of social privileges depends more and more [...] on the possession of school titles, the School has only the function of ensuring the discrete succession to bourgeoisie rights that could no longer be transmitted in a direct and declared manner” (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 218).

The authors wonder about the illusions that the school produces in relation to the autonomy of the educational system and its universal principle: the equality of opportunities. In other words, it is the reproduction of the social order that the educational system has as its horizon, so that the pressure exerted by the democratization of education puts it in a constant state of crisis. For this reason,

To grant the educational system the absolute independence it claims, or, on the contrary, to see in it only a reflection of a state of the economic system or the direct expression of values of “global society”, is to fail to realize that its relative autonomy allows it to serve external demands under the guise of independence and neutrality, that is, to conceal the social functions it performs and, therefore, to perform them more effectively. (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1982, p. 189).

As we can see, for theoretical-methodological, but also political reasons, *Reproduction* becomes an inescapable reference to different sociologies, in particular the

14- In 1968, the two sociologists published an article, entitled: “The examination of an illusion”, emphasizing the relationship between “the education system and the examination system”. It is the undue intention to “measure the reality of the education system from a trans-historical and transcultural ideal of equality of opportunities”, operated by the examination, that allows to explain this type of social selection, promoting the “passage from a selection founded on the privileges of birth to a selection founded on the anonymous and formally equitable examination” (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2019, p. 71-72).

sociology of education. It is a powerful and very complex composition, a critical and coherent construction, thanks to the relational character of the concepts mobilized, which at no moment lose sight of the empirical horizon. The political bias also runs through the whole work as a key to theoretical interpretation, showing that a true democratization puts into question the school contents, its methods, its exams, the function of the school in a democratic society, as well as the teachers' attitude towards the students, the culture, the success, and failure of the school.

Finally, after half a century, what are the possible contributions of the theses formulated in *The Reproduction*, in view of research in the sociology of education? What factors motivate its (re)reading? One can answer by acknowledging that this is a classic work: "A classic is a book that never finished saying what it had to say" (CALVINO, 1991, p. 11). It is, therefore, a work that transcends the historical value of great works, because it instigates the production of new readings and new critical arguments. A second motivation concerns the interpretation, at the same time structural and genetic, proposed by the authors of *The Reproduction*: the educational systems do not escape social determinisms, because they prioritize the production of their reproducers, as in a circle of eternal return; ignoring the demands for democratization, the educational systems contribute very effectively to the reproduction of the social order. To better discuss this process, it is necessary to go back to the French political and educational contexts of the 1960s and the Brazilian context of the 1970s.

Distant and distinct political and educational contexts

Returning to the work *Reproduction* means looking at the historical moment that saw its birth - France in the 1960s - for factors that instigated its authors and made it important for studies in education. Examining its dissemination in Brazil in the 1970s implies, in turn, placing contextual aspects that point to its contribution to a still incipient field of research.

In the opposite direction of the proclaimed and envisioned policies

Events rocked by political forces coming from different directions cannot fail to produce impacts on the most diverse *enjeux* of a given historical moment. This is the case of May '68. In France, this "specific revolution" had immediate repercussions and medium and long-term consequences. Bourdieu and Passeron were two young normalists (graduates of the prestigious *École Normale Supérieure*) when the protests broke out. They lived them, witnessed them, felt them, were excited and disappointed. Two of their works achieved visibility in that «critical moment» and contributed to inflame the «spirits» of those clamoring for change. The first, *The Inheritors* (1964), which for some commentators would be one of the causes of May 68, reveals the perverse face of the democratization policies of the education system. Its apparent neutrality allows transforming social differences into school differences, leading to the belief that properties acquired outside school are "natural gifts."

The second, *The profession of sociologist: epistemological preliminaries* (1999), also in collaboration with Jean-Claude Chamboredon, denounces the unsustainability of sociological research due to theoretical affiliations, the absence of methodological rigor, the little interest in empirics, in short, the lack of “scientific spirit,” in the terms of Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962). According to Valle (2019, p. 28), “the overcoming of a considerable number of obstacles and the adoption of a series of principles was [considered by the authors as] a sine qua non condition to fully claim the status of experimental science” for sociology.

As far as national education was concerned, France was experiencing a moment of profound transformations in its educational systems, both in the public and private spheres, resulting from the policy adopted in the Thirty Glorious Years (1945-1975). One of the main types of evidence of these transformations can be observed in the vertical growth of enrollments. Between the 1960s and 1970s there was a real explosion in the number of students at all levels, a phenomenon that required the creation of new schools, the hiring and training of a considerable number of teachers and an increase in the education budget.

The enthusiasm for the chances announced to adolescents and young people and the opportunities promised by the massive schooling underway was, however, broken by the studies of sociologists and historians of education. The *Inheritors*, as pointed out earlier, inaugurates this wave of criticism: “Blindness to social inequalities condemns and authorizes to explain all inequalities, particularly in school success, as natural inequalities, inequalities of gifts” (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2014, p. 92).

Langouët (1994, 2002), among other sociologists, makes an exhaustive assessment of the increase in enrollment, mobilizing, in addition to the available statistics, the diversity of analyses that populated the education research scene in the 1980s. His conclusions confirm that there was an important school demographic movement, which was not always accompanied by true democratization. Although it has registered progress, it has advanced very slowly. In other words, the democratization of education remained very fragile throughout the Thirty Glorious Years, and varied according to the expectations of the socio-professional categories, which were revealed through the choice of the qualifications: some, aimed at more prestigious paths, responded to the demands of the privileged classes; others, centered on shorter careers, were aimed at the disadvantaged classes, responding to their needs of insertion in the world of work.

It is from this context, in which utopias and disenchantments, possibilities and disappointments, successes and failures, intersect, that Bourdieu and Passeron drew the necessary intuition to link education, politics and sociological research. The result of this immense investment became known in 1970, when *The Reproduction* was released, quickly elevated to the position of a “classic” reading in sociology, thanks to the critical dimension of the evidence it denounced. However, despite the ideological restriction in force in Brazil since 1964, *A reprodução* was published in 1975, at a time when the Brazilian intelligentsia, and particularly the educational systems, were suffering the consequences of the restrictive policies of the authoritarian regime.

Critical thinking against the dictatorial regime

Differently from the political and cultural mobilizations that marked France, the Brazilian population was, in 1964, surprised by a military coup that instituted a model of authoritarian State¹⁵, whose base of support was based on the concentration of economic, political, and ideological power. Different political programs were introduced that prioritized the internationalization of the economy, breaking with the so-called developmental nationalism¹⁶. These programs, with similar characteristics to others applied in several Latin American countries, also aimed to contain social movements that had been gaining visibility in the last decades. The consequences of the authoritarian measures entailed by these programs were suddenly felt and perceived due to the intensification of political-ideological control over the working classes and the various social and state institutions, particularly the educational systems.

One of the first targets of the new regime were the pillar principles of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (BRASIL, 1961), approved in 1961¹⁷. The principles of decentralization, autonomy and representative democracy were immediately redefined, aiming to adapt them to the issues of national security and unity and to the overall development process of the nation. Education was given a civic function, made operational initially through the inclusion of mandatory subjects¹⁸ in primary and secondary education (Moral and civic education and Social and political organization of Brazil), and in higher education (Studies of Brazilian problems). According to Valle (2003, p. 30-31),

By including these subjects, in the name of the National Security Doctrine and social integration, the State interfered directly in the daily life of the school. It determined the conceptual basis of the learning content and introduced meticulously elaborated ideological control strategies inside the school unit.

But the great educational reforms were still to come, instituted by means of decrees: Reform of Higher Education (BRASIL, 1968) and Reform of Teaching in Grades 1 and 2 (BRASIL, 1971)¹⁹. These reforms introduced deep transformations in the educational

15- The dictatorial state sought foundations in the National Security Doctrine, linked to geopolitical theories, anti-Marxism, and the conservative tendencies of Catholic social thought.

16- The developmentalist alliance had as its objective the "substitution of patterns and values, of a more nationalist character, for others, of a more capitalist character, putting into practice a new conception of economy, with the purpose of replacing the current dependent economy by an interdependent one" (VALLE, 1996, p. 20).

17- According to Saviani (1988), this law represented a "compromise solution" among the different social forces, configuring itself as a "conciliation strategy", whose objective was to accommodate, from above, the divergences according to the interests of the elite.

18- The objectives of these disciplines was "to inculcate in the students and in the people civic virtues, such as the feeling of veneration for the homeland, respect for institutions, reinforcement of traditional family values, obedience to laws, fidelity to work and integration in the community. [...] everyone should become sincere citizens, convinced and faithful to the execution of their duties, in a climate of freedom and responsibility, of cooperation and human solidarity" (VALLE, 2003, p. 31, our emphasis).

19- According to Souza (1981), the Institute of Research and Social Studies (Ipes) mobilized in favor of the binomial capitalism and democracy, and carried out studies aimed at adapting the educational model to the demands of the industrialization model in course. Its connection with the military regime is also evident in the measures adopted to disseminate the Doctrine of National Security and Development.

systems, reducing the administrative agencies of education to mere instances of execution of federal decisions.

As for the expansion of education during the 1960s and 1970s, demographic surveys confirm the persistence of excessively low rates of access at all levels of schooling, revealing different profiles according to the regions of the country. In addition, the school systems turned to the instrumentalization of the authoritarian regime's policies, such as compulsory professionalization in secondary education. These policies, at no time, put into perspective the real democratization of education, based on the principle of "equal opportunities". It is unnecessary to describe here the (low) rates of schooling, including in the compulsory levels; they are available in multiple sources, from the official ones to studies that analyze the evolution of these rates. I only highlight, because it seems to me the index that best reveals the absence of educational policies aimed at access to education, the persistence of illiteracy rates: in 1900, the illiterate population over 15 years of age was 65.3 percent; this rate drops to 39.7 percent in 1960, and 33.7 percent in 1970. The 2019 data reveals that there are still 6.8 percent illiterate in the country.

It is in this authoritarian context, of slow and regionally very distinct advances regarding the process of schooling of the population, that *A reprodução* starts to circulate in Brazil, starting in 1975. Translated into Portuguese by Reynaldo Bairão and revised by Pedro Benjamim Garcia and Ana Maria Baeta, the work was published by Livraria Francisco Alves, a publishing house in Rio de Janeiro.

In conclusion...

Texts inscribed in the Bourdieusian perspective began to fall into the hands of Brazilian researchers in the early 1970s. It is not the intention here to survey all these works. However, I would like to mention, as it preceded *The reproduction*, the work *The economy of symbolic exchanges* (1974), composed of articles translated by the sociologist Sérgio Miceli²⁰, since one of them deals with "Education systems and systems of thought" (1967). There is also the *collection Education and class hegemony: the ideological functions of school*, organized by José Carlos Garcia Durand, in 1979. It also contains two articles on education: "The comparability of educational systems", by Bourdieu and Passeron (1967), and "The strategies of reconversion", by Bourdieu, Boltanski and Saint-Martin (1973).

But surely, it is *The reproduction* that introduces the theory of social practices in the Brazilian research agenda. Since it is considered the most radical criticism of the educational systems, this work was undoubtedly the one that caused the most reactions. For this reason, I will highlight some works that refer to its reception. According to Durand (1982, p. 52), Brazilian researchers "twisted their noses at Bourdieu and Passeron". He cites the work *School, State and Society* (1977), by Bárbara Freitag, and the article "Notes for a reading of the theory of symbolic violence" (1979), by Luiz Antônio Cunha. Bento Prado would have been "the only one to emphasize the positive dimension of the book, locating

20- Miceli (1974) prefaces this work with a text of great academic quality: "Introduction: the force of meaning".

in it the starting point of a process of deconstruction of the vulgar representations about pedagogical institutions” (DURAND, 1979, p. 52, emphasis added). He also points out that this kind of appropriation caused French sociologists “to be seen as authors of a - not to use euphemisms - reactionary sociology, whose greatest danger would be to convince that the effectiveness of pedagogical action in the ideological imposition of class domination would be nothing less than total and definitive” (p. 52).

But it was the reading of Dermeval Saviani (1983) that had the greatest repercussion in educational research. The classification of the work as “reproductivist” or “critical-reproductivist”, in opposition to another group of non-critical theories, had strongly restrictive consequences on the circulation of Bourdieusian studies in Brazil. According to Catani, Catani and Pereira (2001, p. 68), this classification did not consider the conceptual contribution of the work, nor “the existence of mediations and relative autonomies among the fields”.

Based on the period between 1971 and 1999, these authors elaborated an interesting typology to characterize the different forms of appropriation of this theoretical contribution (incidental, topical conceptual, and work mode). When it comes to *Reproduction*, the main work referenced, the authors observed that there was an “incidental appropriation”, that is, “it is common for the sociologist to be listed in the bibliographical references and not to be mentioned in the body of the text; to be referred to only in passing, together with other authors [...], almost always in a classificatory way (‘reproductivist’); to appear in non-substantive notes” (CATANI; CATANI; PEREIRA, 2001, p. 65). The finding of this study allows us to remember that a highly cited book does not necessarily imply that it has been read, much less understood, because there is not always a relationship between the arguments developed and the references listed.

In view of these perspectives, it is clear that Bourdieu’s works have only begun to circulate strongly in the Brazilian educational field since the 1990s. Since then, there has been an explosion in the number of translations of articles and books, as well as analyses of the Bourdieusian lexicon. However, the same has not occurred with Passeron’s sociology, which has moved into other scientific fields.

Finally, regarding specifically the appropriation of *The reproduction*, many challenges need to be faced when it comes to our educational systems. How can we make this critical contribution that questions the action, the authority, and the pedagogical work carried out by the school reach the education professionals? Our school, which has not yet been extended to the entire population, continues to arbitrarily impose the knowledge deemed necessary, as well as the way to transmit and evaluate it. School methods and contents continue to privilege a relationship with knowledge and a form of culture that favors the economically and culturally dominant classes. The school persists in the transmission of contents considered as neutral and has not tried to compensate the differences that favor this acquisition. As schooling opportunities expand, school merit appears as an essential reference for the selection and classification of new generations. Educational policies have not been able, in a qualified way, to combine the contribution of different sciences (school contents) with constitutional rights, given the unequal conditions of existence of the population.

In this interpretative framework, The reproduction, as well as the works that followed it, provokes in the researcher the desire to refute its theses, particularly those that attribute to the school a principal place in the political and cultural continuity. Bourdieu himself, when referring to the message of *The reproduction* as not exactly prophetic, understands that, like any prophecy, it proposes a truth that shakes the mental structures and, therefore, changes the world view.

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