



SOCIO-HISTORICAL STUDIES OF THE SOCIAL  
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

# Ideas on the Move in the Social Sciences and Humanities

The International Circulation of  
Paradigms and Theorists

*Edited by*  
Gisèle Sapiro  
Marco Santoro  
Patrick Baert

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# Socio-Historical Studies of the Social and Human Sciences

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Gisèle Sapiro • Marco Santoro  
Patrick Baert  
Editors

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## Praise for *Ideas on the Move in the Social Sciences and Humanities*

“The international travel of ideas gives them their distinctive shape as well as impact—and this very international examination of how ideas circulate both traces particular paths and cases and advances the project of understanding the international character of humanities and social science.”

—Craig Calhoun, *Professor of Social Sciences at Arizona State University, USA*

“Theories travel, but who sends them on their way, in which vehicles, under what flags? *Ideas on the Move* provides richly inspiring answers to these compelling questions. Its detailed maps of the mobility of cultural studies and critical theory, structuralism and public economics, and its dense accounts of authorial itineraries, from Arendt and Bourdieu to Said and Spivak, exemplify some of the most creative recent work in intellectual sociology and the social history of ideas.”

—David Armitage, *Professor of History at Harvard University, USA*

“*Ideas on the Move* demonstrates how some of the most influential contemporary theories and authors have been exported, transformed and used. In particular, it shows how these processes can be explained by integrating in a coherent, heuristic and transdisciplinary way hypotheses and tools elaborated by different traditions such as field theory, center-periphery framework, network analysis, comparative approach and transnational perspective.”

—Anna Boschetti, *Professor of French Literature, University of Venice, Italy*



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# 1

## Introduction

Gisèle Sapiro, Marco Santoro, and Patrick Baert

How does knowledge circulate across countries and between disciplines?<sup>1</sup> Paradigms and theories, as well as the scholarly controversies around them, have been powerful vehicles for the circulation of ideas and intellectual exchange (Merton 1968; Connell 2007; Bourdieu 1999/1989; Kuhn 2012; Keim et al. 2014). Beyond cultural and disciplinary

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The present volume is the outcome of the European project “International Cooperation in the Social Sciences and the Humanities: Socio-Historical Perspectives and Future Possibilities” (Interco-SSH), which gathered seven teams from seven countries (Argentina, Austria, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom). This volume follows two other collections stemming from the project and published in this same series (Heilbron et al. 2018; Fleck et al. 2018), and a special issue of the journal *Sociologica* (Santoro and Sapiro 2017). Other publications can be found on the project’s website: <http://interco-ssh.eu/en/>; <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/INTERCOSSH>.

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boundaries, they provide a common language and a set of shared references. The objective of this volume is to elaborate on plausible explanations for the international circulation of ideas in the social and human sciences, based on case studies of these competing theories and paradigms and of the controversies they provoked. Simply put: against diffusionist theories that describe the circulation of ideas primarily in terms of contagion, the socio-historical approach developed here argues that ideas and knowledge are conveyed and circulated by agents (with their own strategies and positioning) and shaped by material conditions (books, journals, gatherings such as conferences, grants, etc.). These mediators and the conditions provide explanatory factors for understanding which theories and paradigms circulate and which do not, as well as for their appropriations and usages in the receiving country or discipline. This sociological approach has a strong commitment to historical research; the appropriations and uses of such paradigms and theories evolve differently in different contexts—in different disciplines and countries. A cursory glance shows that the social and human sciences do not form a unified global field, as attested by the variety of reception. This is in part because of the impact of both global and local social and political conditions: a paradigm can be politicized very differently in different countries, as we shall see in the case of structuralism or the Frankfurt school. Since some of these theoretical frameworks were more or less associated with major thinkers (e.g. Lévi-Strauss for structuralism), the present volume also aims to analyze how they acquired an international reputation.

The socio-historical approach developed here differs from the traditional history of ideas, which has tended to focus on the “influences” of ideas on canonical thinkers. This practice has been challenged both by *Begriffsgeschichte* (the history of concepts, from Cassirer to Koselleck and

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his students) and by the Cambridge school of intellectual history (from Skinner and Pocock to their followers; Jones 1981); both advocated a radical contextualization of canonical texts. While following this task of contextualization, our approach adds a sociological understanding of the agents that take part in this process. (By agents, we refer both to individuals and institutions.) Drawing on field theory and other sociological frameworks, we focus on their positioning, strategies, and specific interests. In this sense, this volume has affinities with both the French “new history of political ideas,” which marries a sociological framework with a contextualist approach (Matonti 2012; Hauchecorne 2019), and the Cambridge-based sociology of intellectuals, combining positioning theory with the same contextualized perspective (Baert 2015; Morgan and Baert 2015; Baert and Morgan 2018; Booth and Baert 2018). In a similar vein, in the United States (USA), the sociology of knowledge has been renewed in particular by Andrew Abbott (2001) and Randall Collins (1998), inspiring, together with Pierre Bourdieu’s work (1988/1984, 1991/1988), what Camic and Gross (2001) coined as the “new sociology of ideas.”

There are at least three main perspectives for the study of the circulation of ideas in the social and human sciences. The first focuses on systems of ideas, that is, paradigms, theories, and the like; the second analyses those institutions and organizations (such as departments or research centers) that host and shape intellectual production and consumption (e.g. Bourdieu 1988/1984; Lamont 1987; Camic 1995; Abbott 1999; Isaac 2012; Heilbron 2015; Santoro 2017); and the third studies “authors,” especially what are called—and this is in many respects a process of reputation building—*key* authors. In this volume, we address particularly the first (Part I) and the last (Part II).

## A Matter of (National, Transnational, Global) Fields

While this volume is a pluralistic endeavor, Bourdieu’s field theory is one of the main theoretical frameworks used by the contributing authors (Bourdieu 1988/1984, 2004). Field theory aims at grasping the specific logics of relatively autonomous spheres of human activity, such as art,

literature, and science. According to this view, the strategies of agents in these fields cannot be captured by rational choice theory, as they are motivated by interest (in the psychological sense), beliefs, passions, rivalries, attractions, and repulsions (as in magnetic fields) that stem from their inherited and acquired dispositions (*habitus*). Fields are characterized by reference to their own history, which even when stabilized is an issue of perpetual struggle; for instance, about who the founding fathers and mothers of disciplines and the canonical texts are, or between cumulative versus revolutionary historical narrative. Fields are structured by unequal power relations between the established individuals on the one hand, who are endowed with a great amount of specific capital, and the newcomers or more marginal figures on the other hand. There is also a constant tension between (relative) autonomy and heteronomy with regard to ideological and/or commercial demands from outside forces (e.g. the State, political parties, corporations, and media).

Interactionist approaches to intellectual life have been renewed by network theory. For example, by drawing on a neo-Weberian stance and a Goffmanesque emphasis on rituals and performances, Randall Collins has developed a sociological theory of intellectual change centered on networks that connect masters and pupils, as well as colleagues and rivals. His approach is based on a global and *longue durée* perspective (Collins 1975, 1998). While more sensitive to interactions than structural approaches such as Bourdieu's, Collins' theory analyzes intellectual life from a truly sociological gaze, making a case for an intellectual history firmly grounded in social theory from both a micro- and macro-perspective. Some of Collins' notions such as "space of attention" and "emotional energy" resonate with field theory and its conceptual ingredients (e.g. social space, field of power, *illusio*, and *conatus*).

Like intellectual history (Armitage 2014), the historical sociology of knowledge has evolved from a national to a transnational perspective, with a focus on new objects of study such as migration and international organization (Heilbron et al. 2008). Transnational history also requires specific methodologies, such as individual or collective biographies of migrants, network analysis, or a particular attention to institutional history through the often overlooked prism of the circulation of academic models (see Medina 2014; Keim 2014; Beigel 2016). At a deeper level, it invites us to move from methodological nationalism (Wimmer and

Glick-Schiller 2003) to a transnational construction of the object, often revealing movements from the transnational to the national rather than the other way around. Examples of such transnational movements include the crystallization of the neoliberal doctrine at Mont Pelerin (Denord 2002) or the institutionalization of public economics, starting at the Biarritz conference (see Chap. 7 by Mathieu Hauchecorne). Further, structuralism, semiotics and British cultural studies emerged and established themselves through transnational networks (see Chap. 2 by Gisèle Sapiro and Lucile Dumont; Chap. 6 by Marco Santoro, Barbara Grüning, and Gerardo Ienna; Dumont 2018). In some cases, one can even speak of a transnational intellectual field (Sapiro et al. 2018b); for instance, the African intellectual field formed before the emergence of the African nation states. In some cases, such as that of Gramsci, there is even evidence of a truly global field, albeit skewed in favor of a limited set of languages, countries, and institutions (see Chap. 8 by Marco Santoro, Andrea Gallelli, and Matteo Gerli).

Whereas transnational perspectives have challenged the traditional comparatist approach, which, especially in history, reifies nation-states as units of comparison (Werner and Zimmermann 2006), we should emphasize that the sociological perspective that we are promoting here does not reject comparison. We agree with Durkheim that sociological research and the comparative method are very much intertwined (Durkheim 1982). The sociological perspective treats nation-states as relevant units: the nation-state is a *fiction bien fondée* that has real effects, even though it should not mask phenomena that are the result of importation and transnational circulation. Of course, comparisons do not have to be limited to these national units; they can be used for different periods of the same discipline or educational landscape (see, for instance, on sociology in the USA Calhoun 2007), or for different institutions or disciplines within the same country. From our perspective, the nationalization of science and education is an important historical phenomenon with specific consequences for the social and human sciences. For instance, history and literary studies were instrumental in the cultural construction of national identities (Sapiro 2018a), while science and education have been at the core of the international competition among countries (e.g. Krige 2006).

This competition between countries occurs in an uneven configuration of power relations. The center–periphery framework of analysis still

proves relevant for understanding transnational circulations and exchanges. For instance, a quantitative analysis of flows of translation shows that central languages and countries export more than they import from the peripheral ones (Heilbron 1999); this pattern is also confirmed in the translation of scholarly texts (Sapiro 2018b). Here language acts as a unit in interaction with the State, although these two units do not necessarily overlap (Sapiro 2009a). However, as already suggested, fields might be transnational, so the definition of the relevant unit of analysis depends on the question and on the specific object, and cannot be posited *a priori*. Studying the circulation of knowledge thus needs to combine a transnational approach with a comparatist one, all the while taking into account the geopolitical structure of the global field of the social and human sciences. This is not to deny that innovation may occur in the peripheries, but those innovations have more difficulty in getting recognized in the centers, and if and when they are, it is often through a process of reappropriation. This process is particularly well illustrated by this center–periphery framework, which was initially developed within the Latin American theory of dependence (Beigel 2006).

However, importation is not quite the mechanical process of imitation that, classically, Gabriel Tarde's contagion theory implies (Tarde 1903). Anthropological approaches have stressed instead the phenomena of appropriation and hybridization (Canclini 1990; Modood and Werbner 1997). In his programmatic article on the social conditions of the international circulation of ideas, Bourdieu (1999/1989) reminds us, following Marx, that texts can circulate without people's full understanding of their initial context and that this can be a source of misunderstandings. Abandoning the perspective of the conditions of production, he invites us to focus on the receiving field, which gives the importers' strategies their full meaning, and more specifically on three crucial operations: selection, branding, and interpretation.

Understanding these operations requires that we focus on the importers: editors, translators, and academics, and on their strategies within the field. Foreign references can serve as legitimation strategies for the dominated groups in the field to subvert dominant paradigms or theories. For instance, the first wave of importation of Karl Polanyi's work in France in the 1980s was part of a strategy by young scholars to renew the link

between economic history and the then theoretically dominant structural anthropology. Its second wave of reception in the 1990s served heterodox economists as a substitute for Marx in the context of the economic crisis (see Chap. 9 by Jean-Michel Chahsiche).

Needless to say, legitimizing strategies and forms of positioning are not always successful. They can be sanctioned but also rejected by local institutions; or they can be both, as illustrated by the case of Colin MacCabe in Cambridge, whose attempts to import structuralist ideas divided opinion in the English Faculty. They were welcomed by some members and met with hostility and derision by others (see Chap. 4 by Marcus Morgan and Patrick Baert). That particular episode is indicative of how “French theory” initially came to be rejected by some Anglo-American institutions and how that rejection tied in with broader anxieties about the democratization of higher education and the institutionalization of English as an established discipline within the academy (Morgan and Baert 2015).

Interpretation issues range from translation problems (Cassin 2014) (illustrated here by the translation of Foucault’s work in Hungary) to political appropriation (e.g. Polanyi, Gramsci), through scientific and intellectual uses (structuralism, Frankfurt school). For instance, the major authors of the Frankfurt school, Adorno and Horkheimer, were imported into France as a strategy to indicate differences both from orthodox Marxism and from deconstruction by an academic avant-garde that was eager to promote a “disenchanted and painful, but not disavowed progressivism” (see Chap. 5 by Louis Pinto).

Similar to the hierarchy of countries and languages, the hierarchy of academic disciplines affects the circulation of knowledge (Ben-David and Collins 1966). Scientific revolutions often occur by the importation and hybridization of models or methods from other disciplines, but again the circulation is not random: the entrepreneurs behind these revolutions or innovations legitimize themselves by using models from disciplines that have greater credibility and status than their own.

However, when studying transnational circulation of theories and paradigms, it is important to bear in mind that hierarchies of disciplines and knowledge formations vary from country to country, and that works identified as belonging to a specific discipline in their original country

can be recategorized in the process of their transfer. Moreover, sometimes there is no disciplinary equivalent, as in the case of cultural studies. In Italy, for instance, the translation of works by the British founders of cultural studies enabled the development of this new intellectual practice although it did not lead to the establishment of an academic discipline (see Chap. 6). The situation in France was different: the reception served to establish the sociology of culture as a sub-discipline. Conversely, while Gayatri Spivak's reflection on subalterns was quickly appropriated by French studies in the USA, her reception in France was very slow and initially limited, and was closely associated with the interest in subaltern studies (see Chap. 14 by Thomas Brisson).

Paradigms and theories that circulate across geographic and linguistic borders also often transcend disciplinary boundaries; this is the case, for instance, for Marxism, structuralism, or semiotics. In some cases, however, strict disciplinary borders can be an obstacle to the reception of authors who straddle the boundaries: this was the case for Edward Said's reception in France (see Chap. 13 by Clarisse Fordant and Mohamed Amine Brahimi). Arendt's reception in Germany and Italy was problematic for similar reasons, making her canonization difficult (see Chap. 10 by Barbara Grüning).

Field theory is useful for distinguishing between different circuits of exportation and importation, especially those that are academic, scientific, editorial, and political. It is important to note that academic disciplines do not always overlap with scientific fields: in France, for instance, sociology and psychology had become scientific fields long before they achieved academic institutionalization in the 1950s (Sapiro et al. 2018a). Scientific appropriations of theories or approaches often precede their introduction to curricula, as the cases of Marxism, structuralism, and cultural studies illustrate in this volume. Theories or broader theoretical perspectives can also encounter resistance: we have already mentioned how structuralism found it difficult to gain a foothold within the University of Cambridge (see Chap. 4), and analytic philosophy suffered a similar fate in French academia more generally (Pudal 2004, 2012). Some authors can have a significant impact abroad despite their limited reception within academic settings. This is the case for Gramsci, who abandoned his academic studies to devote himself to political militancy

and journalism, but would become a major intellectual figure in post-war Italy and subsequently, after various translations, in academic circles across the world (see Chap. 8). In Hungary, in the 1990s, some researchers used Foucault to compare the disciplinary mechanisms of police of the absolutist period and the communist single party state, or to renew the sociology of education around the question of the construction of abnormality (see Chap. 12 by Balázs Berkovits).

Structuralism was imported and discussed in the American field of human sciences relatively early on, as the 1966 conference at Johns Hopkins University attests (see Chap. 2). The translations of works by the key figures of the movement were published not only by university presses (e.g. Genette and Greimas) but also by trade publishers (e.g. Lévi-Strauss and Barthes). The worldwide reception of structuralism is in large part thanks to the visibility these translations had acquired in the USA, during a period when that country was becoming dominant in the global field of social and human sciences. There were early translations in Italy and in Germany, but it was in large part the American reception that contributed to the global (yet uneven) circulation of structuralist authors. It was by virtue of this process that the now widely used label “French theory” was coined (Cusset 2003). In Argentina, structuralist authors were translated as early as the 1960s: some translations were published by specialized scholarly publishing houses and others with the help of politically engaged networks (see Chap. 3 by Ezequiel Grisendi and Andrea Novello). During the dictatorship (1976–1983), the importation of French theories became a highly politicized underground practice that took place in clandestine seminars in private homes, sparking what Analia Gerbaudo calls, after Derrida’s concept, “nano-interventions” (Gerbaudo 2017). Indeed, authoritarian regimes often ban the importation of ideas that are not in line with the dominant ideology, leading to the non-reception of those ideas or alternatively to an underground reception. Sometimes, those regimes can even exhibit hostilities to theories that are not an explicit threat. In Hungary, for instance, the non-reception of Foucault ties in with the fact that he was regarded with suspicion; he was (rightly or wrongly) associated with structuralism, which in turn was seen to be undermining Marxist orthodoxy (see Chap. 12).

The case study of cultural studies, which originated in the United Kingdom (UK) in the 1960s, constitutes an early example of the transgression of disciplinary borders. In the 1970s, cultural studies spread across the European continent, although with various degrees of success and with very different consequences for individual national academic systems and cultural settings. There is a compelling argument that cultural studies did not really constitute a “school” but more a network of scholars with similar intellectual interests. Be that as it may, British cultural studies established itself as a major intellectual force in the Anglo-American world, especially in the humanities, but also to some extent in the social sciences, where they have contributed to the ongoing “cultural turn” (e.g. Bachmann-Medick 2016). In its first phase, cultural studies drew on a wide range of theoretical inputs, mainly from France, Germany, and Italy; and it is this initial intellectual constellation that continued to shape the subsequent circulation of the ideas (see Chap. 6).

As the timing and modes of paradigmatic shift are different according to disciplines and countries, special attention is here devoted to local causes and the local impact of major events such as wars, coups, social movements, and the fall of communism after 1989. These events may hinder or favor the circulation of paradigms and theories, and they may contribute to their politicization. The process of politicization can also take a different turn, as the case of structuralism exemplifies: before May 1968, it was considered a truly radical perspective, but later it became criticized for being a conservative force. Political events can make a substantial difference in the reception of new ideas (Holtey 2014). We have already mentioned how Foucault was ignored in Hungary, but this changed dramatically after 1989. Likewise, the riots in the French *banlieues* around 2005 favored the belated reception of post-colonial and subaltern studies. Furthermore, the worldwide success of Thomas Piketty’s *Capital in the XXIst Century* (2013), which turned the author into a global public intellectual, was related to the economic crisis and the debate about the “top 1%.” The media played a significant role (notably Paul Krugman’s review of the book in the *New York Times*), as did the interest from the White House under Obama’s presidency (Brissaud and Chahsiche 2017).



## The “Author” as a Sociological Force<sup>2</sup>

All too often, theories in the social sciences and humanities have been studied as if they had a life of their own—or, paradoxically, no life at all. The common perspective when discussing social and cultural theories assumes that they exist independently of human bearers and social institutions. Only authors seem worthy of attention—according to a model well established in the humanities grounded on the notion of the “author” as the only creative agent authorized to speak. As a matter of fact, as pointed out by Foucault in his seminal essay “What is an author?” (1979/1969), the author’s name is a disembodied label, which serves to designate a body of works; this is what Foucault calls the “author-function.” This use of the author-function characterizes handbooks tracing the history of disciplines; this function is instrumental in the building of the canon, following the model of the history of philosophical ideas.

However, the idea of the single “author” is far from being widely accepted in the social sciences and even in the humanities. In intellectual history, the erstwhile focus on authors has been replaced by the study of ideas within a broader intellectual or socio-political context. Literary theory tends to study texts independently of the author’s intention (a tendency theorized by Barthes’ 1967 article on the “death of the author”; see also Burke 1998). Similarly, the social sciences have encouraged scholars in the humanities (e.g. historians of art and film scholars) to take on board the argument that no art work exists without the active cooperation of a plurality of agents (Becker 1982; Kapsis 1992; Carringer 1996) nor without some social and institutional arrangement (be it in the form of a “world,” a “system,” or a “field”) (see Bourdieu 1996/1992; van Maanen 2009; Sapiro 2015; Santoro 2016).

Oddly enough, the idea of the “author” survived in the social sciences exactly in those research areas where reflexivity should be stronger; namely, in their disciplinary histories. Only recently has the history of the social sciences moved beyond its traditional focus on canonized authors and schools to embrace a much wider, and surely more history-sensitive, institutional approach. Bourdieu’s study of the academic field and his book on Heidegger are landmarks in the rise of what we call social sciences

and humanities (SSH) studies (Bourdieu 1988/1984, 1991/1988). By emphasizing the institutional and micro-social conditions under which knowledge is produced, interpreted, applied, diffused, and used, the aforementioned “sociology of ideas” has had an impact on the history of the social and human sciences (see e.g. Boschetti 1988/1985, 2014; Camic 1987, 1995; Lamont 1987; Pinto 1995; Heilbron et al. 2004; Gross 2008; Fourcade 2009; Sapiro 2009b; Fabiani 1988, 2010; Camic et al. 2011; Cassata 2011; Borch 2012; Isaac 2012; Joly 2012; Matonti 2012; Heilbron 2013; Steinmetz 2013; Baert 2015; Hauchecorne 2019).

Maybe surprisingly, these innovative studies often had authors as their foci (Bergson, Nietzsche, Bourdieu, Elias, Rawls, Rorty, Sartre, etc.), though they were no longer considered as solitary, disembodied creators of ideas but as fully fledged social agents working within social networks and contexts. Despite repeated claims of the “death of the author” and the sociological insight that intellectual life is clearly social, “authors” are alive and kicking in epistemic discourses as well as in disciplinary practices and cultural fields (e.g. Kapsis 1992; Santoro 2002, 2010; Sapiro 2006; Quemin 2013; Raymond 2013). Indeed, the “author” as both a cultural construct and an embodied agent or personified node in wider intellectual networks (even simply as a representative name for a larger system of actors engaged around a certain set of ideas) persists as a driving force in the social life of ideas.

What constitutes a “key author” is of course contentious; every discipline and research area develops its (changing) canon (pioneers, founding fathers, classics or institutional founders). Canon formation and change is indeed a crucial issue in the sociology of ideas (see Guillory 1993; Baher 2016) and recently attempts have been made to develop a theoretical framework around positioning and performativity to make sense of this process (Baert 2015; Baert and Morgan 2018). In a similar vein, this volume posits a variety of research questions related to this issue. *Who* is a key author, and *why*? *How* did someone become a central or influential author in a certain discipline, knowledge area, or research tradition? How did these “authors” achieve international or national recognition? How did their theories and concepts spread across languages, countries, and disciplines? What was the role of intermediaries, such as translators, publishers, editors, critics, and disciples? How did those intermediaries use

these authors to position themselves and how did they help to reposition the authors?

In that sense, we can say that the “author” emerges less as a living, concrete person responsible for the writing of some text than as a social (sub-)field in itself: a mobile space of investments, claims, assumptions, interpretations and surely appropriations from other “authors,” themselves potentially traceable as (sub-)fields. In that context, a collaboration between sociologists and historians of ideas will prove particularly useful.<sup>3</sup> Paraphrasing Bachelard, we could say that “there is no simple author; every author is a tissue of relations.” In some cases, like Gramsci, the canonization is a construction made post-mortem by an ongoing collective, cross-generational, transnational, enterprise. But other authors such as Said, Spivak and Bourdieu were already canonized during their life, so it is interesting to explore their own strategies in making this happen, and to ask how their reception abroad affects their thinking (see Chap. 11 on Bourdieu by Gisèle Sapiro).

## **An Interdisciplinary Approach Based on Mixed Methods**

The chapters in this volume gather studies on the dissemination of paradigms, theories, ideas, and controversies within and beyond specific disciplinary and national contexts, as well as the reception and circulation of a selection of key thinkers in various SSH disciplines. We focus on the period from 1945 until the present day, although there are a few exceptions where developments prior to 1945 are included. For the selection of the case studies, we aimed to cover a variety of disciplines (philosophy, literary theory, sociology, economics, and a few emerging “disciplines” such as cultural studies) and countries (the USA, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Argentina). Regarding key authors (and their theoretical legacies), we selected those who had a lasting influence in their disciplines but also crossed disciplinary boundaries; hence the inclusion of Gramsci, Polanyi, Foucault, Bourdieu, and Arendt. This is also true of Spivak and Said, whose cases allowed us at the same time to

take into account gender and ethnicity, given that we realize that it has been more difficult for female and “non-Western” scholars to achieve an international profile.

The case studies are not meant to provide an exhaustive history of the global circulation of knowledge within the social and human sciences since 1945. Rather, each case deals with a specific issue and introduces a methodological strategy to tackle it. For instance, for structuralism, we explore the logic and dynamics of the transnational circulation of a paradigm, the controversies and resistances that may arise from that circulation (e.g. the UK), and the strategies of importers in countries at the periphery (Argentina). We compare the reception of a new area of study (cultural studies) in different countries, the role of transnational networks in the emergence of new theories (public economy), the reception of foreign thinkers in authoritarian regimes (Foucault in Hungary during the Communist regime and Gramsci in Franco’s Spain), strategies behind the importation of foreign authors in order to challenge an orthodoxy in an academic or intellectual field (Spivak and the Frankfurt School in France), the geography and phases of translation of a thinker’s work (Bourdieu, Arendt, and Gramsci), and the structure of a linguistic space of reception through an author’s citations in Francophone journals (Said). Despite this variety, this volume provides an incomplete picture of the puzzle of circulation and exchanges from 1945 to the present. This period was indeed marked by a major shift in the power relations structuring the global intellectual field: its center gradually moved from Europe (especially France and Germany, but also Italy) to the USA (Adelman 2019). Most of our case studies are more or less marked by this change, and one has to bear this in mind in order to understand both the global and local transformations in the social and human sciences.

This volume proposes a range of mixed methods, both quantitative and qualitative, for studying the circulation of knowledge. The case studies of the international reception of individual thinkers combine qualitative materials with quantitative data; for instance, the number of books in translation or the number of citations. Data were collected from editorial catalogues, books, textbooks, curricula, interviews, archives, and references in scientific journals and in the broader media, comparing different countries. In one case (Gramsci) the main source of data has

been the traditional scholarly tool of the bibliography (e.g. McKenzie 1999), used, however, for generating evidence about patterns of texts' circulation across time, countries, and languages in what may be called a "distant reading" (Moretti 2013) of Gramsci's ideas. For the various sites of reception of these theories and paradigms, we study the social characteristics of their importers and the scholarly, political, and institutional issues at stake in the national fields (for instance, the confrontation between Marxism and structuralism in France in the 1960s, the contrast between New Left and orthodox Marxism in Italy and Germany in the 1970s, and the crisis of the humanities and their renovation through post-structuralism and cultural studies in various countries in the 1990s.)

From book history, we draw on the material history of the circulation of texts. We study the various media in which the importation, reception and interpretation of the texts take place, including journals, monographs, anthologies, translations, reprints, online publishing and social media (Darnton 1990; McKenzie 1999; Chartier 1997). In addition, it is possible to shed light on the circulation and reception of ideas and authors by studying series, editorial strategies (for instance Tesnière 2001, a study of the "Quadrige"), promotional material, and archival sources on the conditions of publication (reasons for acceptance or rejection of manuscripts, contracts, auctions, print runs, and problems with translations). For instance, edited collections of Barthes' articles in English contributed to the reception of his work as "French theory" in the USA (Dumont 2017). The production of scholarly books can also be considered from the standpoint of the book market (Thompson 2005), or more specifically the market for philosophical books (see Fabiani 1988; Godechot 1999).

Both the sociology of science and intellectual history have emphasized the importance of controversies (or quarrels) as sites of observation of the issues at stake and the arguments put forward by participants. Located at the intersection between these two areas, the social and human sciences are interested in controversies within disciplines as well as in polemics and scandals that take place in the broader intellectual and social fields (Gingras 2014). Authors are often mobilized as weapons in these controversies by both contenders and opponents, as the international reception of Gramsci or that of the authors of the Frankfurt school in France attests, and they are sometimes promoted or rejected as proxies for certain para-

digms or ideologies, as the examples of Foucault in Hungary or structuralist authors in Cambridge show. Controversies sometimes cross disciplinary and national boundaries, especially when they become politicized, yet the issues at stake might be modified in this process.

At a transnational level, the quantitative study of flows of translation across languages and countries (Heilbron 1999; Sapiro 2008) enables us to obtain an overall view of the type of books that eventually get translated and which publishing houses play an important role in this process (see for instance Chenu 2001; Sapiro and Popa 2008; Sapiro 2012, 2014b, 2015; Santoro and Gallelli 2016b; Gerli and Santoro 2018). Other factors are important: who were the translators (they may or may not be academics) and how long did it take for the translations to occur? In a previous work within the Interco-SSH project, Gisèle Sapiro (2018b) has identified, based on empirical data, a list of factors that determine the circulation of texts in translation: centrality of the initial language (works written in languages such as English, French, or German are more likely to be translated than others); the symbolic capital of the discipline within a particular national tradition (such as German philosophy); the symbolic capital of the publishers; the symbolic capital of the authors (“brand names” such as Foucault, Habermas, Gramsci, Arendt, and Butler are obviously more likely to be translated); other properties of the author (such as gender); properties of the book (theoretical works are more likely to be translated than empirical works, and shorter books are also more likely to be translated); academic and editorial networks; and finally funding. A similar quantitative approach has been used here to study the worldwide circulation of structuralism by tracing the translations of works by main figures associated with the movement. Likewise, the study of the reception of British cultural studies in Italy, Germany, and France focuses on the translation of reference books.

We have already indicated in what sense the study of collective (prosopography) or individual trajectories of importers is crucial for understanding their investments in this task and their strategies, which in turn underlie the selection, labeling and interpretation process. In this circulation of ideas, a variety of factors comes into play, including gender, “race,” linguistic skills, disciplinary and thematic specialization, and migration. Despite (or because) its being a factor of destabilization, and often of

*déclassement* (downgrading), migration can also be a factor of innovation. For instance, it was during his forced exile in the USA during the Second World War that Lévi-Strauss met Roman Jakobson, an encounter that would become key to the formation of structural anthropology (Jeanpierre 2004; Loyer 2015). The social characteristics of the “importers” also prove to be significant. The importers of the Frankfurt school in France were well versed in philosophy and German, but they were less endowed with academic capital than specialists in the German philosophical tradition (See Chap. 5). Likewise, Arendt’s reception in Germany and Italy generated very different outcomes in terms of consecration and academic canonization, partly because of the different social characteristics of local importers in the two countries (see Chap. 10). From a methodological point of view, it is worth pointing out that quantitative prosopographies of importers may also be exploited through Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), as in Hauchecorne’s study of the importation of theories of justice in France (Hauchecorne 2019).

The study of the critical reception of an author is an already established approach in literary studies, and is increasingly applied to the history of the social and human sciences (Pollak 1988; Azouvi 2007; Pinto 1995; Adam et al. 2005; Le Strat and Pelletier 2006; Helgeson 2011; Sapiro 2014a; Baert 2015; Santoro and Gallelli 2016a). Methodologically speaking, some of these reception studies increasingly employ quantitative methods (sometimes using “big data”), thus combining “close” and “distant” reading (Moretti 2013). Quantification can be applied to the translations of an author’s works (see Sapiro and Bustamante 2009 on Bourdieu, and Chap. 11) and their citations in journals. For instance, a study of the citations of Bourdieu’s works in four major American sociology journals displayed different phases of the reception of his concepts (Sallaz and Zavisca 2007). In this volume, the studies on Gramsci, Polanyi, Arendt, and Said use such a method to map their reception, appropriations, and uses.

With regard to Gramsci, Marco Santoro, Andrea Gallelli, and Matteo Gerli use the large Gramscian Bibliography, which was created in the 1980s and is managed by a team of researchers at the Gramsci Institute in Rome (see Chap. 8). This enables the authors to trace in a precise way the multiple trajectories of Gramscian texts across times and spaces, as well as languages and (to a lesser degree) disciplines. This case also

makes it clear how the creation of a scholarly tool such as a specialized bibliography performs a double role: it assists scholars in their work and at the same time makes the object of research, in this case Gramsci as author, retrievable and ready to travel in time and space—while adding weight to its symbolic capital.

Following previous research on authors who cite Edward Said in Francophone journals, Clarisse Fordant and Mohamed Amine Brahimi demonstrate the gradual legitimization of Said especially in literary studies, but also the obstacles his reception has encountered, especially in the social sciences (see also Brahimi and Fordant 2017). These studies use Network Analysis (which connects individuals sharing one tie, for instance publishers that have translated the same author) and/or MCA (which is a geometric representation of individuals according to the properties they share, and of the modalities, for instance the space of the journals citing Said).

Through a systematic scan of journals and magazines across five decades in both Italy and Germany, Grüning has been able to track the reception of Hannah Arendt's works and her ideas in these two countries. Integrating this quantitative database with qualitative data collected by interviewing major importers, Grüning has demonstrated how the same author may acquire a different intellectual status and identity depending on how she has been used in the local field: whereas in Germany Arendt has been read more as a political symbol, in Italy she has gained a truly academic recognition, a disembodied one, thanks to a younger generation of scholars who have approached her as an opportunity for positioning and making a career in the newly founded (in the Italian academic system) field of political philosophy (see also Grüning 2017, 2019).

Field analysis consists of analyzing the positions taken by thinkers or commentators in light of the space of intellectual possibilities in the field and the social properties and trajectories of the individuals involved. Field analysis can use quantitative methods such as MCA (Bourdieu 1988/1984; see also the structure of the French economic field by Lebaron 2000) or qualitative materials (Boschetti 1988; Bourdieu 1991/1988). However, circulation, importation, and reception often transcend boundaries of national or disciplinary fields. Thinkers are sometimes first introduced at the periphery of a transnational linguistic area. Rawls, for



instance, was first introduced in the Francophone area via Canada thanks to North American connections (Hauchecorne 2019). Similarly, it was in North American journals that Said was first positively appraised within the Francophone academic field.

To conclude this introduction, although this collection of case studies does not yet enable us to construct general patterns of circulation, it offers a broad spectrum of questions and methodologies for studying the circulation of theories and paradigms in the social and human sciences, bringing together various approaches and angles that should hopefully serve for future research in this domain. Moreover, it offers detailed case studies from a variety of countries, languages, and disciplines. Taken together, these might promote the development of theoretical models and heuristic concepts in a research field—reception and circulation of ideas—which is worthwhile in itself but also strategic for building a more sociologically informed, epistemologically reflexive, and empirically grounded social theory.

## Notes

1. This question is practical as much as theoretical: understanding obstacles to the circulation of knowledge should help us to improve exchanges between different intellectual traditions, both disciplinary and national. With this goal in mind, our aim in the Interco-SSH project was to make recommendations for improving international communication and exchange in the social and human sciences. See Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro, “How to improve international and interdisciplinary cooperation in the Social Sciences and the Humanities,” Policy Brief of the European Commission, April 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy\\_briefs/interco-ssh\\_pb\\_042017.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_briefs/interco-ssh_pb_042017.pdf).
2. This section reproduces, with some modifications, a few paragraphs already published in Santoro and Sapiro (2017).
3. The notion of “the author as a (sub)field” resonates in some way with so called Actor-network-theory (ANT), one of whose central tenets is the idea that any “actor” (an actant in the ANT lexicon) is accountable as a web a relations among human and non-humans agents. See Latour (1987). An “author-field”—as we could name our construction—has a

more structural tone, however, asking for the positioning of the array of involved agents contributing to the “authorship” according to the weight of their contribution as well as the volume, forms, and composition of their capitals. Books and other publishing formats also play a role, making a case for a non-human agency.

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# Part I

## The Circulation of Paradigms and Theories

# 2

## The International Circulation of Structuralism: Between Appropriations and Rejections

Gisèle Sapiro and Lucile Dumont

### Introduction

Structuralism is a paradigmatic illustration of some general mechanisms involved in the international circulation of texts and ideas (Bourdieu 2002). The first of these mechanisms is that theoretical texts tend to circulate more easily than empirical works (Sapiro 2014). However, this

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circulation is by no means automatic, and there is a strong asymmetry in the exchanges that it relies on. For instance, a comparison between Russian formalism and structuralism sheds light on the impact of the producers' position in the transnational intellectual field; whether it is central or peripheral. Indeed, two distinct phenomena ensured their international visibility beyond specialized circles: first, the migratory trajectories of several formalists such as Roman Jakobson, a refugee in Prague before emigrating to New York; and secondly, the appropriation of their works by French theorists in the 1960s (Depretto 2009; Matonti 2009). Another mechanism illustrated by the circulation of structuralism is the crucial role played by specific countries that occupy a central position both in the translation market and also in the transnational academic field. New theories tend to circulate from these centers to the peripheries. While circulation from one periphery to another does occur, it mostly takes place through the mediation of these centers (Heilbron 1999). The international circulation of structuralism occurred in the 1960s–1970s, a pivotal period during which the center of the transnational academic field shifted from France—especially Paris—to the United States (USA). Developed mostly in the USA, which had recently become central in the transnational academic field, the “French Theory” label largely contributed to the worldwide diffusion of French theoretical texts (Cusset 2003).

Like “French Theory,” structuralism draws attention to the process of creating labels and their various uses. Vague and often unstable, these labels—other examples being naturalism, surrealism, the Nouveau Roman, structuralism, poststructuralism, deconstruction—obscure specific practices and boundaries of social groups. Lévi-Strauss, for example, criticized the assemblage of very different authors under the label “structuralism.” As early as 1971, he denounced the “fake-structuralism” of some of these writers (Lévi-Strauss 1971). Later on, he described the association of his name with those of Barthes, Foucault, and Lacan as structuralists as an amalgam relying on “faux-semblants” [false-pretenses], while at the same time claiming his affiliation with the “intellectual family” of Émile Benveniste, Georges Dumézil, and Jean-Pierre Vernant (Lévi-Strauss and Eribon 1988, 106). One therefore needs to study the appropriations and uses of these labels, as well as the corresponding strategies of the agents

(Boschetti 2014). For instance, Althusser's complex position straddling both Marxism and structuralism translated into a particular use of the label in order to subvert the Marxist orthodoxy of the Communist Party, which promoted humanism (Matonti 2005). These appropriations and uses of the label become meaningful in light of the specific issues at stake within the field of reception (Bourdieu 2002). The controversies caused by the appropriation of labels often reveal these specific stakes. An example that attests to this is the case of Colin MacCabe, a literature scholar denied tenure at the University of Cambridge in 1981 out of fear he would promote authors and theoretical references engaged with structuralism (Morgan and Baert 2015).<sup>1</sup>

In addition, whether formed and claimed by specific groups, as in the case of surrealism, or imposed from outside, as for structuralism, these labels constitute a primitive mode of accumulation of collective symbolic capital. However, they often prevent scholars from asserting authorship, since, as in the literary field, originality is a condition for gaining recognition in the academic field. It is for this reason that Foucault publicly started denying any affiliation with the structuralist current as early as 1968 (Foucault 1968). By the same token, in the process of its transfer towards the United Kingdom (UK) and the USA, the label structuralism sometimes played negatively. It was particularly the case in disciplines such as philosophy, where the analytical approach prevailed in these countries; but also in American institutions that were marked by the formalist tradition of New Criticism and were reluctant to welcome a politicized reception of methods built on structuralism. A similar rejection can be observed in the 1980s, during the "canon wars" that opposed partisans of the theoretical approaches issued from structuralism to neoconservative groups around the reform of the American literary canon. Finally, the international circulation of texts in the humanities and social sciences is entangled in the specific logics of the academic field, publishing field, and the intellectual field, which overlap only partially (Sapiro and Popa 2008). In some ways, labels make circulation between these fields possible, as the case of structuralism illustrates.

This outline of the international circulation of structuralism falls into two parts. First, we analyze the translations of major structuralist authors (Althusser, Genette, Greimas, Lacan, Lévi-Strauss) in relation to the

transfer and appropriation of the label abroad (1960–1970) and to the reconsideration of the structuralist paradigm that followed a decade of intense circulation (1980–2009). Secondly, we examine the reports, comments, and accounts of the first international conferences on structuralism. Lastly, we focus on the English-language volumes dedicated to structuralism between 1960 and 1982, that shaped its international circulation.

## **The Circulation of Structuralist Texts: Spatial, Chronological, and Disciplinary Logics**

Leading authors identified with structuralism, namely Louis Althusser, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Gérard Genette, Algirdas Julien Greimas, Jacques Lacan, and Claude Lévi-Strauss, were first exported via different routes, which depended on varying disciplines, countries, translation channels (trade publishers vs university presses), or intellectual networks. Structuralism was introduced as a “research program” (Lakatos 1986) in anthropology in the UK and in literary studies in Italy. But it also had an early reception in Germany and in Brazil, which will not be further analyzed here. In the USA, where “French Theory” encountered great success, the discussions that arose from this positive reception gave birth to post-structuralism. As these leading structuralist authors were translated, their reception spread from the centers of Western intellectual life towards its peripheries.

### **Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Althusser, Foucault: First Importations**

The timeline of Claude Lévi-Strauss’ translations into English reveals the double logic, both editorial and academic, that regulated the circulation of his works. The first translations closely followed the timeline of the original publications in French. *Tristes Tropiques* (1955) was published by Criterion Books, in New York, under the same title in a translation by John Russell. In 1962, the year of its original publication, *Le Totémisme aujourd’hui* appeared in the USA with the progressive Beacon Press, in a

translation by the anthropologist Rodney Needham entitled *Totemism*. Needham went on to become one of the major importers of structural anthropology in the Anglo-American world, along with Edmund Leach and Mary Douglas. Needham authored *Structure and Sentiment* (1962), in which he opposed the attempt by George Caspar Homans and David Schneider to explain marriage with emotions, and he explicitly referred to Levi-Strauss' *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (*Structures élémentaires de la parenté*, 1949), a book he translated with Harle Bell and John Richard von Sturmer; Beacon Press published this translation in 1969. Having dedicated a study of his own to kinship and marriage (*Rethinking Kinship and Marriage*, 1971), he was recruited in 1976 by the University of Oxford, where he held the chair of Social Anthropology and, like his predecessor Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard, continued to spread the Durkheimian tradition.

In the same period, all of Lévi-Strauss' books were translated into English. Basic Books, a New York-based publishing house founded in 1952 and specializing in essays aimed at a mass audience, published *Structural Anthropology*, Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf's translation of *Anthropologie structurale* (1958). During the same period, John and Doreen Weightman, both French language and literature specialists, took up the task of translating the four-volume *Mythologiques*, which another New York publisher, Harper and Row, released between 1964 and 1981. They also translated Lévi-Strauss' interviews with Georges Charbonnier, which appeared with Cape (London) in 1969. Apart from Chicago University Press, which published *La Pensée sauvage* as *The Savage Mind* in 1966, all the publishing houses that introduced Lévi-Strauss' works into the American intellectual field were non-academic. Even though an in-depth debate with American anthropologists focused on empirical questions, Lévi-Strauss was mainly seen as an intellectual figure or even as a French philosopher. Marshall Sahlins underlined, for instance, his erudition, his style, and his taste for reason (Loyer 2018, 480).

Lacan's works were introduced to the English-speaking world by Anthony Wilden, who had worked with him at Johns Hopkins University at the end of the 1960s, before being recruited to the Department of Communications at the University of California San Diego. After an

essay on the repression of the significant in Freud, published in 1966 in the journal *American Imago* (issue 23), Wilden translated a 1953 article by Lacan on Freud, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language of Psycho-Analysis*, which was later released separately by Johns Hopkins University Press (1968). Lacan's *Écrits*, published in France in 1966, were partially translated in 1977 by Alan Sheridan (who at the time also translated Philippe Sollers, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Georges Balandier, Michel Foucault, and Lucien Goldmann). This partial translation was published in London by Tavistock and in New York by Norton. The first complete edition of *Écrits* in English was published by Norton in 2006. Some of Lacan's works had previously been translated in Latin America, where psychoanalysis sparked widespread interest: the publication of the Spanish translation of *Écrits* by the exiled Spanish poet Tomás Segovia began in 1971, thanks to the Mexican publisher Siglo XXI. Lacan's seminars started to be published in Spanish in 1981 by the Argentinian publisher Paidós, whereas Norton published the English translations of the seminars from 1988 only.

Althusser and Foucault had their first English translations published in the USA by a non-academic publisher, Pantheon Books. André Schiffrin, the son of one of the founders of Pantheon and very knowledgeable about his native French culture, released the English translation of some of their books soon after their original publication in France; examples are Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* (1965) and Althusser's *For Marx* (1969). The latter was published at the same time in the UK by Allen Lane, in his eponymous imprint that had been established in 1967 as part of Penguin Books, which he had founded 30 years earlier. Lane then published the three volumes of Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, starting in 1979, three years after the French publication of the first volume. Until Schiffrin left Pantheon in 1990 after the takeover of Random House by a larger conglomerate, the company provided its American readership with most of Foucault's books. Foucault's works had a pluridisciplinary reception that soon exceeded that of structuralism. He has therefore not been included in the following analysis.

Regularly published by the *New Left Review* from 1987, Althusser was mostly imported into the Anglo-American world through Marxist circuits and networks. In 1974, the journal *Science and Society: A Journal of*



*Marxist Thought and Analysis* (vol. 38, no. 4) published an article by Henry Veltmeyer in which he discussed structuralist approaches to Marx through Lévi-Strauss and Althusser. In 1976, the theorist and Trotskyist activist Alex Callinicos dedicated a book to Althusser, published by a small and committed publisher, Pluto Press. This circulation route also differentiates him from the reception given to the other main authors of structuralism, among whom he is not included as a rule.

## National Logics and Disciplinary Dynamics: The Case of Literary Studies

The importation of structuralist texts varied across countries both in rhythm and in form. Barthes', Greimas', and Genette's major works were translated into Italian before being translated into English. Barthes' *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* (1953), *Mythologies* (1957), *Essais critiques* (1964), *Éléments de sémiologie* (1965), *Critique et vérité* (1966), and *Le Système de la mode* (1967) were all published in Italian between 1960 and 1970. The translations of his books into English only began in 1968, with the exception of *Sur Racine* that appeared just a year after its publication in French in 1963. The collection entitled *Mythologies* was available in Italian as early as 1962, whereas its full translation into English only became available ten years later. By the same token, the Italian translation of *Critique et vérité* was released by Einaudi in 1969, while it was published in English in 1987. The same goes for Greimas: the translations of *Sémantique structurale* (1966) and of *Du sens. Essais sémiotiques* (1970) in German, in Spanish, in Italian, and in Portuguese long preceded the translations into English that were respectively released in 1983 and 1987 (the texts had been available in Italian since 1968 and 1974 respectively). Likewise, Gérard Genette's books slowly started to be translated into English in 1980, and most of them appeared in this language between the end of the 1980s and the end of the 1990s.

At this time, Italy closely followed the trends of French intellectual life. The Italian rhythm of importations and translations echoed the French timeline with regard to structuralism publications, and in some cases anticipated it. Texts that were either newly translated, recently published, or

promoted by French structuralism in the 1960s, notably the Russian Formalists, structural anthropology, and structural linguistics, were rapidly published in Italian. Most of Lévi-Strauss' works were translated into Italian before 1970, and Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* [Course in General Linguistics] in 1967. The Italian reception of structuralism was intertwined with that of Russian formalism: after a collection by Roman Jakobson that appeared in Italian before being published in French, Victor Erlich's *Russian Formalism* (1955) was translated from English at the very moment when Tzvetan Todorov was presenting Erlich's work as a fundamental reference on Russian formalism in the collection in French he dedicated to this school of thought, entitled *Théorie de la littérature* (1965) and prefaced by Jakobson (Todorov 1965). In 1969, two major references for French structuralism and literary theory, both originally published in 1966, were translated into Italian: these were the first volume of Genette's *Figures* and the eighth issue of the journal *Communications*, entitled "Recherches sémiologiques: l'analyse structurale du récit" [Semiological Research: The Structural Analysis of Narratives]. The latter was published by Bompiani, based in Milan. Crucial for the dissemination of structural methods in literary studies, the eighth issue of *Communications* was also translated into Spanish in 1970 (without Umberto Eco's contribution, which had probably been published elsewhere) and released by Tiempo Contemporáneo (Buenos Aires), roughly a decade before being republished in French as a separate volume by Éditions du Seuil in 1981.

Structuralism was established in the Italian literary criticism landscape as early as 1965, when the *Catalogo generale* of Il Saggiatore, edited by Cesare Segre, was entitled "Strutturalismo e critica" [Structuralism and criticism]. It included the answers of 14 literary critics and academics to the question whether the structural method was able to provide useful critical instruments, and if so, whether it could be combined with a historicist tradition such as the one that was then prevailing in Italian literary studies alongside the more usual Crocean aesthetics, based on an expressive and spiritual conception of artistic value and practice. While in France poetics and literary theory were dominant, the Italian critics applied the structuralist method in numerous textual analyses (Avalle 1970; De Lauretis 1971, 1975). In fact, Italy had its own prominent theoretician, Umberto Eco: the author of *La Struttura assente* (1968),

translated into French in 1972 and contributing to the evolution of Italian literary criticism towards semiotics. Indeed, semiotics in Italy offered an answer to the objections of Marxist thinkers, synthesized by Romano Luperini in his book *Marxismo e letteratura* (1971). He blamed the structuralists for enclosing their analysis in the texts and for ignoring the socio-economical infrastructure. The early translations of texts dealing with these questions evidence the exceptional resonance of these debates in Italy: the book series Nuovo Politecnico (Einaudi) published a collection of texts by Maurice Godelier and Lucien Sève in Italian under the title *Marxismo e strutturalismo* in 1970, while *Marxisme et structuralisme* by Lucien Sebag, originally published in French in 1967, was translated and released by Feltrinelli in 1972 under the same title.

The translation of books by structuralist authors in the USA was delayed, even though a number of these authors spent time in American universities, and despite the publication of articles and incomplete translations in journals. One can also observe different modalities of importation of these authors into the USA. Barthes' works were mainly introduced by intermediaries who did not exclusively belong to the academic field. This was especially the case for his main translator, Richard Howard, who is a poet, an essayist, and a translator, and was close to both Barthes and another key mediator in his American reception, Susan Sontag. The same goes for the publishing house responsible for most of the English translations of Barthes' books, Hill and Wang: founded in 1956, it was initially dedicated to theatre, literature, and critical essays. During Barthes' lifetime, only one of his books was published by an academic press, the *Essais Critiques* [Critical Essays] by Northwestern University Press, in 1972. The University of Minnesota Press published two posthumous translations (*Criticism and Truth*, *Writer Sollers*) in 1987. In contrast, all Genette's and Greimas' translations have been published by academic presses. In these three different cases, the route by which these authors' works were imported replicates their initial circulation pattern and matches their strategies. Barthes' widespread American reception, involving academic literary studies and literary criticism, theoretical essays and literature, can be partly explained by the way in which his work progressively became distanced from structuralism and was aimed at a not exclusively academic readership. The way Genette's and Greimas' works were appropriated

follow an opposite pattern of circulation, since they were—and still are—restricted to the academic field.

## The Second Wave of Translations (1980s)

Structuralism began to decline in the 1980s. The authors identified with the movement were progressively translated in foreign countries, according to data from the *Index Translationum* issued by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).<sup>2</sup> German and English are the languages into which these authors were most translated, followed by Spanish, Portuguese, and Japanese. A focus on the number of translations per country shows that Germany published the largest number of them by far, followed by Japan, Spain, the UK, Brazil, the USA, Italy, and Portugal. These countries were the central importers of structuralism in translation (with more than 40 books translated).<sup>3</sup> But while the number of translations peaked in European countries as well as in Brazil in the 1980s, translations into Japanese constantly grew throughout the 1990s and even more in the 2000s. In Eastern European countries, with the exception of Yugoslavia, which was a non-aligned country, the wave of translations only started after 1989 with the liberalization of the publishing industry. These countries belong to the second circle of importers, having published between 10 and 31 books (16 in total) and occupying a semi-peripheral position in this circulation pattern. In this group can also be found the Scandinavian countries, Turkey (10), which, like Mexico (14), already started importing these authors in the 1980s, Argentina, where the translations happened later thanks to the growing number of small publishing houses interested in French human sciences (Sorá, Dujovne, and Ostroviesky 2014), and the Netherlands. In Korea, most of the translations were published in the 1990s and in China during the 2000s. Among these circulations, 25 countries were left with sporadic and often late translations (between one and eight): apart from Israel (where the academic community reads in English) and Egypt, these countries are often situated at the periphery of linguistic areas like Canada, Austria, Belgium (Flemish), Syria, and Tunisia; there are also former Soviet Union countries such as Estonia and Lithuania.

Among the structuralists, Barthes and Lévi-Strauss are by far the world's most translated authors (not counting Foucault). They are also the most prolific: their respective bibliographies count more than 20 books published during their lifetime, to which one must add numerous articles published and often translated separately. Moreover, Barthes' bibliography now also includes the successive editions of his classes and seminars at the Collège de France and various posthumous publications. Lévi-Strauss' complete works were published by Gallimard in 2008 in the prestigious collection La Pléiade, which counts as a supreme consecration in the intellectual field. The translations of his books are distributed evenly across the three decades. Then comes Lacan, followed by Genette and Greimas, the latter being at once the least translated and the least prolific author. Lacan's and Greimas' translations were concentrated in the 1980s (respectively 46 percent and 54 percent of them).<sup>4</sup> Genette's works were most translated in the 1990s (45 percent), like Althusser's (39 percent and 32 percent in the 1980s and 29 percent in the 2000s). The number of translations of Barthes' books reached its peak in the years following his premature death in 1980.

Between 1980 and 2009, Barthes was translated into at least 40 languages and in 44 countries. Again, Germany translated him the most during this period, but this is partly owing to the late translation of his works when compared with Italy and the UK, which started in the 1960–1970s. Then comes Japan, where Barthes is extremely famous, and Brazil. Barthes' widespread reception in Japan, a country to which he dedicated a book (*L'Empire des signes*, 1970), contrasts with the weak number of translations into Italian since the 1980s, after the intense reception of his works during the previous period (Gallerani 2015). As regards Lévi-Strauss, he was translated into at least 35 languages and 40 countries, Germany being first again, followed by Spain and Japan. Germany and Japan are also the countries that most translated Genette, with the UK. English (USA and UK) is the language into which the largest number of books by Genette is translated (16 out of the 66 in our inventory for this period). The circulation of Greimas' works is much more limited: 17 countries and 36 books in our record. Other than Lithuania, his country of origin, Greimas has more books trans-

lated in Spain, in the USA, in Italy, and in Denmark. Lacan's works are most translated into English (25 out of 124), closely followed by Spanish (22). Then come German (18), Portuguese (15), and Japanese (12). Japanese is the language into which most books by Althusser are being translated (13), followed by Spanish (12), English (10), Turkish (7), Korean (6), and Portuguese (5). Translations into other languages are scarcer (two books in German, Italian, and Russian, and one for six other languages, including Arabic and Hebrew). Only Barthes and Lévi-Strauss have a significant number of books translated into Chinese (respectively 12 and 14), most of them in the 2000s, while Genette has two, Greimas one, and Lacan no translations into the language according to available data. These data, although incomplete, clearly indicate that these authors have differentiated receptions according to the countries in question, but exploring this would require a much more detailed study.

## Epistemological and Political Stakes

While the main structuralist works were being translated, a series of conferences were held that contributed to defining the label at an international level. Contemporaneously, various books dedicated to structuralism were published in English, in German, and in Italian. These books fall into five categories: (1) anthologies; (2) monographs, or books dedicated to a single author, such as Badcock's *Lévi Strauss: Structuralism and Sociological Theory* (1976) and Annette Lavers' *Roland Barthes: Structuralism and After* (1982); (3) epistemological and methodological reflections on the influence of structuralism on various disciplines (literary studies, music, sociology, demography, economy), or in a specific domain or on a specific subject, such as Jonathan Culler's now authoritative book *Structuralist Poetics* (1975), based on his dissertation entitled *Structuralism: The Development of Linguistic Models and Their Application to Literary Studies*, or Biblical hermeneutics (Alfred Johnson ed., *Structuralism and Biblical Hermeneutics*, 1976), or the morphological study of a Romanian verbal system (Alphonse Juilliand, *Transformational and Structural Morphology: About two Rival Approaches to the Rumanian*

*Verb System*, 1978); (4) general epistemological reflections; (5) essays tracing the history of the movement and often focusing on several of its leading figures.

After a brief account of the first international conferences that contributed to the fixing of the label and often presented a first critical assessment of structuralism, the following section analyzes some of the publications and English translations falling under the last two categories; that is, general epistemological reflections and essays on the leading figures of structuralism and its history.<sup>5</sup>

## International Conferences on Structuralism

While being helped by the first translations, the international circulation of structuralism was also stimulated by the organization of international conferences in France and abroad. The participation of French and foreign authors in these conferences, and the publication of these contributions in journals and/or separate volumes, as well as their translations, all contributed to the identifying a group of authors as structuralists. In France, two conferences were held in 1959. With the support of UNESCO, Roger Bastide organized the first in Paris, entitled “Sens et usages du terme ‘structure’” [“Meanings and uses of the term ‘structure’”]. The proceedings were published in French in 1972 (Bastide 1972), then translated into Italian in 1974 by Lidia Basso Lonzi and published with Bompiani. (Basso Lonzi translated several structuralists, such as Roland Barthes, Roman Jakobson, and Claude Lévi-Strauss.) Maurice de Gandillac, Lucien Goldmann, and Jean Piaget organized the second conference in Cerisy-la-Salle. These conferences show that structuralism was at the crossroads of various interdisciplinary and international networks. Of the 15 participants, four were foreigners: a Polish philosopher, a Polish biologist, a German linguist, and a German philosopher (Gandillac et al. 1965).

In the USA, the conference held in 1966 at Johns Hopkins University, entitled “The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man,” gathered together numerous French and foreign researchers from various disciplines, including Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Serge Doubrovsky,



René Girard, J. Hillis Miller, Jacques Lacan, Lucien Goldmann, Paul de Man, Nicolas Ruwet, Jean-Pierre Vernant, and Jean Hyppolite. In view of its wide reception and the rich debates it brought about, this conference is regarded as one of the first significant moments of post-structuralism (Macksey and Donato 1970). Whatever these analyses and re-labeling may reveal of the theoretical evolution of structuralism, this conference definitely marked a critical turning point in its history.

A later conference held at Boston University in 1979 aimed to assess the current state of criticism. The following year, some of the papers were published in a special issue of *Partisan Review*. These texts clearly showed reservations about the use of structuralism in literature and the arts.

Structural methods were also introduced in much more specific domains, such as religious studies. Two conferences held in 1971 at the Faculty of Theology at the Protestant University of Geneva, where Roland Barthes was a visiting professor, were dedicated to Biblical exegesis considered through the prism of structural analysis. The proceedings were published in French the same year by the Swiss publisher Delachaux and Niestlé. Alfred M. Johnson Jr. translated them into English in a collection published in 1974 by Pickwick (Eugene, Oregon), after having also translated into English and published, also with Pickwick, the special issue of the French journal *Langages* (no. 22), “Sémiotique narrative: récits bibliques,” as a separate volume in 1971. The title of this volume, *The New Testament and Structuralism*, illustrates at the same time the instability of intellectual labels when they circulate internationally (semiotics/structuralism) and the reception of structural methods in specific areas of knowledge such as religious studies.

## Overview of English Volumes on Structuralism

Most of the 51 listed volumes on structuralism are devoted to epistemological reflections. For example, this is the case for *Introduction to Structuralism*, by Michael Lane (1970), *The Concept of Structuralism: A Critical Analysis*, by Philip Pettit (1975), and *Structuralism: An Interdisciplinary Study*, edited by Susan Wittig (1975). Even though all these volumes develop a general reflection on structuralism, their



references are situated in specific disciplines, either by the intellectual genealogies they trace in the epistemological work and/or by the applications they propose for each model. For instance, Lane's work is a philosophical reflection on structuralism and its mathematical stakes; the volume edited by Wittig refers mostly to religious studies; and the references and examples developed by Pettit are for the most part taken from linguistics and semiotics. The volume *Structuralism*, edited by Jacques Ehrmann and published as a separate volume from a double issue of the journal *Yale French Studies* released in 1970, spans the social sciences and humanities. It combines a general approach with disciplinary reflections on the application of structural methods, and with a historical perspective (e.g. Geoffrey Hartman's chapter entitled "Structuralism: The Anglo-American adventure"), along with studies on single authors such as Lacan. The book at times resembles an anthology since the volume also contains texts by Lévi-Strauss, Todorov, and Lacan.

In a collection published in 1979 by Oxford University Press and entitled *Structuralism and Since: from Lévi-Strauss to Derrida*, John Sturrock, then assistant editor at the *Times Literary Supplement*, gathered contributions from specialists of different disciplines. Each dedicated a study to a leading figure of structuralism: the anthropologist Dan Sperber wrote about Lévi-Strauss, the intellectual historian Hayden White dedicated a chapter to Foucault, the literary theorist Jonathan Culler focused on Derrida, the French literature specialist Malcolm Bowie wrote about Lacan, and Sturrock himself about Barthes. In his introduction, Sturrock explains that these authors can be grouped together because they share a common reference to Saussure's structural linguistics. He also underscores the fact that the structuralist approach privileges synchrony over diachrony. Sturrock continued his epistemological exploration of structuralism in a book published by Blackwell in 1986.

The overlapping of categories enlightens the interdisciplinarity of structuralism, which groups together theoretically and/or disciplinarily heterogeneous authors under this label. Typical of theoretical initiatives, the need for an abstract and general line of thought, contributes to the construction of a corpus presented as theoretical. *Structuralism and Semiotics* (1977) by Terence Hawkes, who was an English professor at Cardiff University and a Shakespeare scholar, illustrates again the

precarious balance between general theoretical reflections and their disciplinary location. Indeed, after an introductory chapter that puts structuralism into perspective—from Vico to Piaget—he observes the link between linguistics and structural anthropology. He then dedicates half of the volume to the application of structuralism to literature, broadening the epistemological scope of his work through semiotics.

Finally, the search for reference books with the keyword “structuralism” reveals the power of the label, whose classificatory function transcends the object of study and the disciplines in which structural methods are applied. As a consequence, its uses reinforce its power to name and to construct this intellectual current, which quickly leads its leading figures and importers to write themselves a history of the movement, as the significant amount of space devoted to explaining the genealogy of structuralism in the epistemological books attests.

## Epistemological Approaches

Two translations from French into English launch the era of assessments, both written in an epistemological perspective. First is Jean Piaget’s 1968 introduction to structuralism in the series “Que sais-je?”: this was translated that same year into Italian by Il Saggiatore, and into English (US) in 1970 by Basic Books, who released at the same time another introduction to structuralism. Secondly, sociologist Raymond Boudon’s book (*À quoi sert la notion de structure?*), also published in 1968, was translated into Italian in 1970 (*Strutturalismo e scienze umane*) by Einaudi (Turin); into English the following year (*The Uses of Structuralism*) by Heinemann Educational (UK); and into German in 1972 by Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag in Düsseldorf (*Strukturalismus. Methode und Kritik: zur Theorie und Semantik eines aktuellen Themas*).

The word “structuralism” in the title of these translations indicates that the label was being received in the Anglo-American world at this time, although Boudon’s analysis is very critical. According to him, structuralism is a superficial intellectual trend that conceals some serious postulates, but these are so evident and old that they do not justify the claims of its self-proclaimed supporters that they provide foundations for a

scientific revolution. In order to demonstrate the polysemy of the notion of “structure,” he distinguishes the contexts of the intentional definitions from the contexts of the effective definitions. He proceeds by concluding that there is no structural method but instead only “specific structural theories,” some of which are of a “fundamental scientific importance,” others being “less successful,” and still others simply not verifiable (Boudon 1968, 215).

Similar arguments can be found in an article by W. G. Runciman (1969), who was then a part-time reader at University of Sussex. Examining the possible value of structuralist approaches in the social sciences and especially in sociology, he downplayed the “clash of doctrines” (ibid., 255) between functionalism and structuralism, and between structure and history. He argued in favor of abandoning the label, stating that structuralism was neither a specific sociological doctrine nor a specific method:

A general social theory will be “structuralist” in the sense that all sociological theories are structuralist; it will be neither more nor less so if it turns out to be, let us say, a cybernetic theory rather than an economic one. If a commitment to “structuralism” means only the optimistic belief that a general theory of some kind or other will one day be validated, it is hard to see why this particular term (or any other) is needed for it. (Ibid., 256)

The following year, Ernst Gellner also reviewed critically Lane’s edited collection on structuralism: according to him, binary oppositions do not explain anything; they are only “a kind of floral arrangement” (Gellner 1973/1970, 153).

In 1973, Tavistock Publications (UK) published Anthony Wilden’s book *System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange*. This aimed to associate the various French structuralist theories, especially those of Lacan and Lévi-Strauss, with cybernetics and systemic theory. According to Gregory Bateson, with whom Wilden works, Lacan and Lévi-Strauss were more adapted to complex systems than positivism and causal analysis, which prevailed in Western sciences at that time. This idea led both of them to develop a reflection on ecosystems.

Published in English in 1974 by D. Reidl Publishing Company (Dordrecht/Boston), Joen Boekman's book *Structuralism. Moscow—Prague—Paris* is a translation from German. Originally entitled *Strukturalismus*, the book was first published in 1971 by Verlag Karl Aller (Freiburg/München). In his preface to the English edition, the author compares structuralism to existentialism and phenomenology, which he defines both by their holistic approach and by the relativism implied by the plurality of orders. He blames the English and American critics of Lévi-Strauss for having neglected this holistic approach and concentrated only on details, as opposed to the continental critics, who discussed theory as a whole (one is either structuralist or one isn't). Yet, as Boekman noted, at the time when the translation of this book was published in English, the structuralist vogue had disappeared from Paris. For him, though, structuralism is neither a school, nor a movement, nor a literary or a philosophical trend. Instead, he qualifies structuralism as an "intellectual orientation," using the notion of "structuralist activity" coined by Barthes. Structuralism, he argues, is an operation of desubstantialization, which opposes function and hermeneutics, system and history, anti-humanism and mystification, transformation and evolution, syntax plus semantics, and the content of language. As a consequence, the concept of structure characterizes a functional approach—differential or isomorphic—and relies on a hypothetico-deductivist model (through logic constructions and verifiable models such as kinship structures, sociometry or Parsons' sociology, which he associates to this approach). The epistemological foundations of this intellectual orientation imply a distance from immediate experience, a holistic approach rather than a rationalist one (able to take into account irrational elements), a relativism put into practice by the comparison between the Western system and non-Western ones, and eventually a renouncement of idealism and philosophical subjectivism.

In his book entitled *Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, published by Columbia University Press in 1982, Thomas K. Seung observes in the "formalist-structuralist" programs—which according to him include New Criticism, formalist research programs in the history of arts and musicology, gestalt psychology and Freudism, structuralism in linguistics and in anthropology, and so on—a scientific hermeneutics that provides

the humanities with a status equivalent to the natural sciences. Born in 1930 to a Korean family, this philosopher obtained a PhD from Yale in 1965 with a dissertation on Kant. He taught a year at Fordham and became a professor at the University of Texas, Austin, in 1966. His book studies the transition from structuralism to post-structuralism, the effects of which on American campuses, relativism, intellectual anarchy, obscurantism, and so on, he judged to be devastating. According to Seung, these reactions stem from an aspiration to define universal cultural structures, an aspiration that, contrary to natural sciences, is challenged by historicity on one hand, and relativity on the other.

## Historical Approaches

In parallel to epistemological reflections, some books retrace the history of the movement. They differ from epistemological studies in their attempt to contextualize the emergence of structuralism, their focus on ideological stakes, and their critical views. Two of these books had a significant impact on the reception of structuralism in the 1980s: Edith Kurzweil's *The Age of Structuralism. From Lévi-Strauss to Foucault*, published in 1980 by Columbia University Press, and Eve Tavor Bannet's *Structuralism and the Logic of Dissent. Barthes, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan*, published in 1989 by Macmillan.

Born in Vienna in 1926, having earned a PhD in Sociology from the New School for Social Research, Kurzweil was a key figure in the English/American intellectual field as the editor-in-chief of *Partisan Review*; her second husband, William Philips, was one of the founders. Two chapters of her book had previously appeared in journals: the one on Foucault in *Theory and Society* in 1977 and the one on Althusser in *Marxist Perspectives* in 1979. In 1980, Kurzweil published an article entitled "French structuralist theories" in *Partisan Review* (vol. 47, no. 3). She then began to study structuralism at a time when, as she explained in her preface, structuralism was barely known beyond anthropology. By contrast, at the beginning of the 1980s, structuralist texts were circulating in most of the literature departments of elite universities in the USA, as well as in the professional associations and journals for literary studies, and they

aroused a growing interest in the social sciences, especially among sociologists (Lamont and Witten 1988). And if in France the era of structuralism seemed to have come to an end, structuralism still served as a basis for post-structuralism.

In her preface, Kurzweil contrasts structuralism with existentialism: while the latter used an intellectual position for political ends, the former avoided making political choices in searching for unconscious structures. Structuralists had to revise their theory in 1968 when economic and political structures collapsed. Yet these debates, which were “lively in France,” were lost in their American reception. It was to fill this gap that she undertook this book project.

Kurzweil explains she chose figures from different disciplines: leading structuralists (Lévi-Strauss, Althusser, Lacan, Barthes, Foucault) as well as some of their major opponents (Lefebvre, Ricoeur, Touraine). The rise of structuralism, she argues, resulted from the disenchantment of French intellectuals, first towards Marxism, and then towards existentialism, especially because of communism. According to her, structuralism helped the French intellectual left quit Marxism by providing a pseudo-political theory. She analyses this process as a “de-radicalization” that allowed these intellectuals to keep their humanist convictions. Thus, the structuralist movement became “the new conservatism of the left” (p. 4).

Published a few years later, Eve Tavor Bannet’s book was even more virulent. An English graduate from Simmons College in Boston, she earned a PhD from the Hebraic University in Jerusalem in 1979, with a dissertation on Lukács. She was an associate professor in the English department of Tel-Aviv University, before being appointed at South Carolina University in 1987, and as a professor of English at Oklahoma University in 1994. Tavor Bannet’s critique follows Henri Lefebvre’s argument: she observes a homology between structuralism—which expresses the idea that language as a system defines at the same time society as a system and its forms of thought—and the ideology of the technocratic state under the presidency of Charles de Gaulle. According to Lefebvre, bureaucracy is “essentially structuring and structured” (*structurante et structurée*). It is for this reason that Foucault rejected the label, she argues. She justifies her choice to focus on Barthes, Lacan, Foucault, and Derrida, given their critique of structuralism.

## Conclusion

The case of structuralism enables us to observe more general mechanisms of the international circulation of ideas. Publications, translations, anthologies, conferences, and critical volumes played a major role in fixing the label and in associating leading figures with it. They reveal two types of gaps created by reception of the label.

The first is a time lag. One observes a relative autonomy of the label's life in national spaces on one hand and in transnational spaces on the other: except for Italy, the circulation of the label abroad does not coincide with the period during which it retains most attention in France. This time lag is increased by the translation time, which varies according to the proximity or the distance to the original language and culture (extreme cases being Italy on one side and China on the other), but also according to the political conditions (end of dictatorial or communist regimes). The second gap can be observed spatially and reveals uneven exchanges between academic, intellectual, linguistic, and national spaces. A more in-depth study of these translation and publication circuits, as well as an examination of the varying uses of the labels according to the period or to the speakers, would enable us to analyze these effects more specifically, and to single out the role that some countries such as the USA played as intermediaries.

Finally, the variety of academic and intellectual positions occupied by the authors labeled as "structuralist" and their mediators suggests that the interdisciplinary circulation of structuralist approaches was one of the conditions of its success. The temporal, spatial, and disciplinary displacements produce new interpretations of intellectual works. The conversion of structuralism into post-structuralism in the English-speaking spaces is, from this point of view, still a convincing example of the displacements operated by the transnational circulation of intellectual works. At the same time, it demonstrates the return effects these displacements can have on native spaces and on the narratives conveyed by the intellectual history written in those spaces.

## Notes

1. See also Baert and Morgan (Chap. 4) in this volume.
2. Since data revealed are incomplete, we are relying on them here only indicatively. The authors taken into account are Althusser, Barthes, Genette, Greimas, Lacan, and Lévi-Strauss (sometimes co-authors). Foucault was not included in the database for the reason stated above, even though he is sometimes still associated with structuralism abroad.
3. For the methodology, see Sapiro and Bustamante (2009).
4. All percentages are built on previously mentioned data extracted from the UNESCO *Index Translationum*.
5. These publications were identified through a search of the book titles in the catalogs of the Library of Congress that were published between 1960 and 1982 using the keyword “structuralism.” The monographs require a separate study of the different receptions pertaining to individual authors. The timeline was selected because of the shift towards “post-structuralism” during the 1980s, which makes the identification of titles specifically dedicated to structuralism difficult. However, several significant titles published after this date are taken into account as examples of the fact that the interest in structuralism does not decrease until the end of the 1980s, and is even transformed.

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# 3

## The Reception of Structuralism in Argentina (1960s–1970s)

Ezequiel Grisendi and Andrea Novello

### Introduction

The international circulation of ideas is a research subject that is of great relevance in the history of the social and human sciences. Indeed, reconstructing the various routes taken by scientific paradigms, theories, and concepts in the transnational geography of culture allows us to place the production of knowledge in social and intellectual frameworks of varying scope. The translation of books is, in this sense, a fundamental dimension that helps us to understand these processes of academic cultural exchange. Studying international contacts between the fields that are producing and receiving ideas through the circulation dynamics of translated books reveals the power relations, the unequal distribution of symbolic capital, and the publishing and intellectual networks that are articulated by different mediating agents (Santoro and Sapiro 2017; Sapiro 2018).

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This chapter traces and examines the circulation and appropriation of structuralism in Argentina during the 1960s and 1970s, and its main exponents—Claude Lévi-Strauss, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Jacques Lacan. Structuralism was used to establish cross-disciplinary knowledge that linked literary criticism, communication theory, psychoanalysis, anthropology, and philosophy, and also organized the production of social knowledge along new axes. Far from presenting an epistemological unity, these appropriations and usages offered a conceptual consensus that was based on the complex and relatively autonomous theoretical constructions that emerged. The notion of “structure” became a conceptual tool of the so-called “new human sciences,” and a label that described a heterogeneous field of research practices (Bert and Lamy 2016). The remarkable ability of structuralism to transcend the context in which it was produced and overcome academic and linguistic boundaries seems to be based on the possibility of interpellation generated in different reception spaces and on the asymmetry of exchange between different points in the transnational intellectual field (Sapiro and Dumont 2016; see also Chap. 1 of this volume).

In this chapter, we will focus on the first reception of structuralism, which took place through the publishing of translations of key texts. This provides us with a theoretical and methodological framework that allows us to map the social conditions and processes, practices and agents that are articulated in the international circulation of ideas (Heilbron 2001; Bourdieu 2002), and through the study we seek to achieve a better understanding of the first journeys undertaken by the works of Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, Louis Althusser, Lacan, and Barthes, as well as their impact in the social sciences and humanities in Argentina, considering the correlations between the logics—connected but not the same—of publishing and academia (Sorá 2004; Sapiro 2012).

Without pretending to fully explore all the derivations of structuralist ideas, this chapter offers some guidelines towards understanding their dissemination. We intend to demonstrate that the local reception of structuralism was particularly intense because of the combination of three factors: (1) the changing dynamics of the Argentinian publishing industry, including the progressive recovery of the Spanish publishing

industry and the innovative intellectual projects undertaken by certain small-scale Argentinian publishing houses (Aguado 2014); (2) the close connection between Argentinian academic and political fields during the 1960s (Gilman 2012; Sigal 2002); and (3) the persistent centrality of French cultural production as a sign of intellectual prestige in Argentina since the nineteenth century (Willson 2004). Thus, we seek to reconstruct the channels through which structuralism was received by focusing on the main works that were translated and edited in certain publishing houses during this period, looking at their different editions and the main actors involved. Our approach combines a quantitative approach (analysis of databases of books translated and printed in Argentina) and qualitative-interpretive techniques.

## **The Reception of Structuralism in Argentina: Between Politics and Culture**

In the context of cultural renewal that took place in Argentina after the fall of Peronism in 1955, a wide range of political and intellectual efforts were made to discuss the hegemony of the traditional forms that the humanities had assumed in the interwar period. This opening of political debate, especially through different variants of Marxism, impacted the Argentinian cultural sphere. Its modernization was visible in the emergence and consolidation of new forms of literary and artistic expression, the expansion and renewal of universities, and the explosive dynamics of the publishing sector, with the founding of numerous publishers and cultural magazines that acquired both wide circulation and prestige. The exchange of ideas, cultural products, and people led to the introduction of new academic practices and the reconfiguration of existing ones. In the field of social sciences and the humanities, the change was remarkable. From 1956, there was a movement of intellectual innovation that took place in conjunction with a process of institutionalization and a renewal of various disciplines in terms of the theories that underpinned them: New careers were created in social science and the humanities, in sociology, political science, psychology, education science and anthropology,

while existing careers in literature and linguistics, philosophy, and history were reconfigured.

Likewise, the professionalization of research activity, with the creation of the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas [National Council of Scientific and Technical Research] (CONICET) in 1958 and the implementation of a system to fund scholarships, post-graduate studies, and research visits abroad, fostered new scientific institutions, and made increasing interaction with centers of transnational academic and cultural validation possible in the immediate postwar period (Sigal 2002; Buchbinder 2005). In addition, the international links of Argentina's cultural world took on a new rhythm. These political, aesthetic, and intellectual expressions had been relegated to a marginal position during Peronism, but gained a more prominent position from which they could interact with other points on the international map of cultural production (Giunta 2008). To a greater or lesser extent, this took place throughout the country, and new issues, concepts, and cultural figures moved out of purely academic circles into mass media and public debate. The structuralist movement was therefore able to spark discussions in different social and humanities disciplines, playing a central role in political and cultural debates. We will retrace the conditions in Argentina in the 1960s and 1970s that framed the reception and dissemination of structuralism, and explore the various ways in which it circulated and was appropriated, taking into account an analysis of the different ways in which it was received and the journeys taken by the main figures who mediated its arrival. We will note that the international role played by the agents who became the key mediators for the reception of these ideas was decisive, especially considering that structuralism began in a variety of unconnected contexts (Jeanpierre 2010).

Towards the mid-1960s, the constellation of structuralist ideas occupied an important place in the social sciences and in the broader Argentinian intellectual life. By reconstructing and examining the printed works that brought about this phenomenon, both in the world of books and in social and cultural journals, we were able to establish the physical aspect of this reception process. This allowed us to piece together the publishing experiences that made the translation and circulation of these works possible in the Argentinian cultural environment. At this time,

Argentinian publishing experienced a remarkable dynamism, thanks to an expansion in the number of readers, particularly thanks to the contribution of the professional middle classes and the growing number of university students. These favorable conditions spurred production in the domestic market (Aguado 2014).

Argentinian publishing houses were strongly attracted to books by the main figures of structuralism. As shown in Table 3.1, of the 20 main works by structuralist authors published in Spanish between 1961 and 1976, half were published in Buenos Aires. For the most part, the titles translated by these Argentinian publishing houses were those originally conceived as relating to production. As trade publishers, yet prestigious in the world of social and human sciences, these publishers managed to gain access to the translation rights for books from the most prestigious authors.

In general terms, it is possible to distinguish two large groups of publishing houses that devoted space in their catalogs to the novelties of structuralism. The first group is linked to the academic circuit, interested in closely following the renewal of the social and human sciences: it includes publishing houses such as Amorrortu, Nueva Visión, Siglo XXI, Paidós, la Editorial Univeristaria de Buenos Aires (EUDEBA), and the Centro Editor de América Latina (CEAL). A second group of publishers, mainly linked to the cultural left in Argentina, incorporated books on structuralism that related to the intellectual innovation that it entailed and also to the debate within Marxism that it provoked. This was the case for Ediciones Pasado y Presente, Editorial Universitaria de Córdoba (EUDECOR), Caldén, Tiempo Contemporáneo, Jorge Álvarez, Galerna, Quintaria, and Proteo. These editorial activities were connected to the emergence of a “new intellectual left” that, in a context of cultural modernization and political reconfiguration, would be characterized by active public intervention through articles in political and cultural journals, as well as through participation in the founding of numerous publishing ventures. These initiatives would form a network of editorial projects that were specifically interested in literature and the social sciences, and put into circulation works by the main exponents of structuralism, in conjunction with their aspiration to update and renew political debate.

Table 3.1 Main structuralist titles translated into Spanish, according to chronological order of local edition

Author	Title	Year of edition	Publishing house	City of edition	Original title	Year of original edition	Original publishing house
Michel Foucault	<i>Enfermedad mental y personalidad</i>	1961	Paidós	Buenos Aires	<i>Maladie mentale et personnalité</i>	1954	Presses Universitaires de France
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>El pensamiento salvaje</i>	1964	Fondo de Cultura Económica	Mexico City	<i>La Pensée sauvage</i>	1962	Plon
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>El totemismo en la actualidad</i>	1965	Fondo de Cultura Económica	Mexico City	<i>Le Totémisme aujourd'hui</i>	1962	Presses Universitaires de France
Louis Althusser	<i>La Revolución Teórica de Marx</i>	1967	Siglo XXI	Mexico City	<i>Pour Marx</i>	1965	Maspero
Roland Barthes	<i>El grado cero de la escritura</i>	1967	Jorge Álvarez	Buenos Aires	<i>Le degré zéro de l'écriture</i>	1953	Éditions du Seuil
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Antropología estructural</i>	1968	EUDEBA	Buenos Aires	<i>Anthropologie structurale</i>	1958	Plon
Roger Bastide (comp.)	<i>Sentidos y usos del término estructura en las ciencias del hombre</i>	1968	Paidós	Buenos Aires	<i>Sens et usages du terme structure dans les sciences humaines</i>	1962	Mountain & Co
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Mitológicas I: Lo crudo y lo cocido</i>	1968	Fondo de Cultura Económica	Mexico City	<i>Mythologiques I. Le Cru et le cuit</i>	1964	Plon
Michel Foucault	<i>Las Palabras y las cosas. Una arqueología de las ciencias humanas</i>	1968	Siglo XXI	Mexico City	<i>Les Mots et les choses. Une archéologie des sciences humaines</i>	1966	Gallimard



Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Las estructuras elementales del parentesco</i> <i>Tristes Trópicos</i>	1969	Paidós	Buenos Aires	<i>Les structures élémentaires de la parenté</i> <i>Tristes tropiques</i>	1967	Mouton & Co
Claude Lévi-Strauss		1970	EUDEBA	Buenos Aires		1955	Plon
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Mitológicas III: El origen de las maneras de mesa</i> <i>La arqueología del saber</i>	1970	Siglo XXI	Mexico City	<i>Mythologiques III. L'Origine des manières de table</i> <i>L'archéologie du savoir</i>	1968	Plon
Michel Foucault	<i>Para leer El Capital</i>	1970	Siglo XXI	Mexico City	<i>Lire le Capital</i>	1969	Gallimard
Louis Althusser; Étienne Balibar	<i>De la gramatología</i>	1971	Siglo XXI	Buenos Aires	<i>De la grammatologie</i>	1967	Éditions de Minuit
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Mitológicas II: De la miel a las cenizas</i>	1972	Fondo de Cultura Económica	Mexico City	<i>Mythologiques II. Du miel aux cendres</i>	1966	Plon
Roland Barthes	<i>Crítica y verdad</i>	1972	Siglo XXI	Buenos Aires	<i>Crítica et Vérité</i>	1966	Éditions du Seuil
Louis Althusser	<i>Para una crítica de la práctica teórica</i>	1974	Siglo XXI	Buenos Aires	<i>Réponse a John Lewis</i>	1973	Maspero
Roland Barthes	<i>El placer del texto</i>	1974	Siglo XXI	Buenos Aires	<i>Le plaisir du texte</i>	1973	Éditions du Seuil
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Mitológicas IV: El hombre desnudo</i>	1976	Siglo XXI	Mexico City	<i>Mythologiques IV. L'Homme nu</i>	1971	Plon

## Structuralism in the Renewal of the Social and Human Sciences

Among the publishers in the first group, we can distinguish two sub-groups: (1) those that already existed and, given the increase in the reading public who were consumers of new works on sociology, psychology, anthropology, and economics, oriented part of their lists to the dissemination of works that were related to the new disciplines of social and human sciences, which had been institutionalized in universities during those years; and (2) publishers set up during the 1960s as a result of these processes.

Among the first sub-group, let us consider the case of Paidós. This firm, founded in 1945, was initially focused on the training of new specialists in psychology and social sciences. Its list combined titles in anthropology, psychoanalysis, and American sociology, with the intention of broadening the conceptual horizon of sociology and psychology and fostering a renewal of knowledge within the social sciences by updating the books available (Blanco 2006). By becoming one of the most important publishers in the field of social and human sciences in the 1950s and 1960s, Paidós integrated an important network that brought together central figures in Argentinian intellectual life. For instance, the *Biblioteca de Psicología Social y Sociología* [Library of Social Psychology and Sociology], possibly one of the most important series issued by the publishing house, sought to make available to the public the latest innovations in social research. It was edited by the sociologist Gino Germani and the psychologist Enrique Butelman—who were the main drivers of the institutionalization of these disciplines in Argentina. Foucault's *Enfermedad mental y personalidad* [Mental Illness and Psychology] appeared in this series in 1961: in addition to gaining acceptance within the universe of left psychoanalysis, this title contributed to Foucault's visibility (Canavese 2014).

A few years later, in 1968, Paidós published *Sentidos y usos del término estructura en las ciencias del hombre* [Senses and Uses of the Term Structure in the Human Sciences], a volume that included texts by Roger Bastide and Lévi-Strauss and acted as an introduction, widely used in university

courses, to notion of structure in social sciences. That same year, echoing the increasingly important place of new trends in Argentinian intellectual life, Paidós inaugurated the Letras Mayúsculas [Capital Letters] series, mainly oriented towards the updating of literature and literary criticism, while also including works by the Argentinian and Latin American critical avant-garde. As an indication of the centrality that structuralism acquired in local cultural debate, the series was launched with the book *Lévi-Strauss: Estructuralismo y Dialéctica* [Lévi-Strauss: Structuralism and Dialectics], a translation of the special issue that the French magazine *Cahier de L'Arc* had dedicated to the work of the French anthropologist in 1965. This book was followed by others, such as *El pensamiento de Sade* [Sade's Thought], which included texts by Barthes and Philippe Sollers. Paidós's two most ambitious contributions to the reception of structuralism in Argentina are perhaps Lévi-Strauss's *Las Estructuras Elementales del Parentesco* [The Elementary Structures of Kinship] in 1969 and an edition of Lacan's *Seminarios* [Seminars], starting in 1975.

Among the new publishers sensitive to innovations in the social sciences, we can identify Amorrortu, Nueva Visión, and Siglo XXI. Amorrortu was founded in 1967 by Horacio de Amorrortu, grandson of Sebastián de Amorrortu, a Basque immigrant who, in 1922, created the printing company Artes Gráficas Sebastián de Amorrortu e hijos, dedicated to the printing of medical books and school texts, encyclopedias and dictionaries. Amorrortu devoted itself mainly to producing titles related to psychology and pedagogy, although a series of texts in its list became obligatory references for the spreading of structuralism in Argentina. These included successive translations of general studies on the structuralist phenomenon, such as *Los métodos estructurales en las ciencias sociales* [Structural Methods in the Social Sciences] by Jean Viet in 1970 and *Los estructuralistas* [The Structuralists] by Maurice Corvez in 1972, as well as two introductory essays to Lacanian psychoanalysis and structural anthropology, both by Jean-Baptiste Fages: in 1973, *Para comprender a Lacan* [Understanding Lacan], and in 1974 *Para comprender a Lévi-Strauss* [Understanding Lévi-Strauss].

At the same time, both Nueva Visión and Siglo XXI participated more actively in the reception of structuralism. Nueva Visión was born as an editorial project in 1955, from the eponymous journal that originally had

been oriented toward the artistic avant-garde and the architectural culture of 1950s Buenos Aires (Deambrosis 2011). This publisher put into circulation a diverse group of authors who were associated with renewing the world of architectural and design, before participating in the updating of social science theory towards the end of the 1960s. Its most important contribution was reflected in two series dedicated to structuralism: *El Pensamiento Estructuralista* [Structuralist Thought] and *Teoría e Investigación en las Ciencias del Hombre* [Theory and Research in the Human Sciences], both edited by the philosopher José Sazbón. These focused on the publication of translations of texts by notable figures who were associated with the new social and human sciences, with special dedication to those associated with structuralism. Thus, between 1969 and 1971, the Structuralist Thought series gathered the key texts of intellectuals such as Lévi-Strauss, Edmund Leach, Tzvetan Todorov, Althusser, Jean Pouillon, Jean-François Lyotard, Pierre Bourdieu, André Glucksmann, and Barthes, among others, in 12 thematically organized volumes. It also included the complete translation of *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism*, the collective volume edited by the British anthropologist Sir Edmund Leach in 1967 and published in Spanish as *Estructuralismo, mito y totemismo* [Structuralism, Myth and Totemism]. These volumes explored the main transformations that the structuralist model exerted on disciplines such as anthropology, linguistics, sociology, and psychoanalysis. The selection of articles to be included was made by the series' editor, who, in some cases, selected his own writings and officiated in most cases as a translator. Sazbón compiled articles that had been published in different French, American, Italian, and English journals—such as *Esprit*, *L'Homme*, *L'Année Sociologique*, *Communications*, *American Anthropologist*, *Yale French Studies*, *Aut-Aut*, and *New Left Review*, among many others—prioritizing the criteria of quality and topicality by selecting works that were inspired by structuralist ideas as well as those that offered critical analyses of them. He was thus able to offer a broad panorama of the theoretical and methodological problems that these ideas posed for social sciences. Owing to its magnitude, this series constitutes one of the most important publishing ventures for those interested in the circulation and diffusion of structuralist ideas in the Argentinian intellectual world.

Nueva Visión also included in its catalog titles that were of great importance to the Argentinian circulation of structuralism that was linked to Lacanian psychoanalysis. Within the framework of the series *Lenguaje y Comunicación* [Language and Communication], edited by the intellectual and essayist Oscar Masotta, the compilation *El inconsciente freudiano y el psicoanálisis francés contemporáneo* [The Freudian Unconscious and Contemporary French Psychoanalysis] was published in 1969, including texts by André Green, J. B. Pontalis, Jean Laplanche, and Serge Leclaire. In the same editorial series, the first Spanish translations of Lacan, *Las formaciones del inconsciente* [The Formations of the Unconscious] and *El deseo y su interpretación* [Desire and Its Interpretation], were published the following year, the latter translated by Masotta himself. His editorial work, as we will see, was key to the dissemination of Lacanian psychoanalysis in Argentina.

For its part, Siglo XXI became one of the most important channels for the importation of structuralism into Latin America. Established in 1966 in Mexico by the Argentinian publisher Arnaldo Orfila Reynal, the house opened its Argentinian subsidiary in 1969. From 1948 to 1965, Orfila Reynal served as editor of the Mexican publisher Fondo de Cultura Económica (FCE), a firm founded in 1934 that, in the second half of the twentieth century, would become one of the most important publishers in Ibero-America. Under the management of Orfila Reynal, the publishing house established itself as the main publisher in the region of indispensable translations that allowed the renewal of the social and human sciences taking place in various Latin American countries during the 1950s. The professionalization processes taking place in the social sciences at this time confirmed the publisher as a strategic cultural enterprise that allowed the international dissemination of ideas being put forward by great intellectual figures (Sorá 2008). Orfila Reynal's predilection for the European intellectual avant-garde of the period, and the significant share this subject area acquired in the catalogs of both FCE and Siglo XXI, was in part down to the imprint run by his second wife, the Italo-French archaeologist Laurette Séjourné (Sorá 2011). Both of them made strategic alliances and became friends with publishers such as François Maspero and intellectuals such as Lévi-Strauss and Lacan. In this context, the circulation of structuralism in Argentina was mediated

by the Mexican publishing market and intellectual milieu. For example, FCE brought out a Castilian translation of two central works of Lévi-Strauss: *El pensamiento salvaje* [*The Savage Mind*] and *El totemismo en la actualidad* [*Totemism*] in 1964 and 1965, respectively, as well as his *Mitológicas* [Mythological] series, translated and published between 1968 and 1976. During his management of Siglo XXI, Orfila Reynal published the translation of Althusser's *Pour Marx* [*For Marx*] in Mexico in 1967 under the title *La Revolución Teórica de Marx* [The Theoretical Revolution of Marx]. In the same year, the publication of the collective volume *Problemas del Estructuralismo* [Problems of Structuralism]—a translation of the 1966 issue number 246 of *Les Temps Modernes*, which included texts by Pouillon, A. J. Greimas, Maurice Godelier, Bourdieu, Pierre Macherey, and Marc Barbut—would mark a decisive milestone in the path of structuralism in Latin America.

Throughout the late 1960s, and more definitely from the 1970s onwards, Siglo XXI was the channel for a large percentage of the works identified as “structuralist” in relation to different disciplines. Given the company's organizational structure, with headquarters in different countries, many innovative texts were published by its different branches, although they circulated throughout the Ibero-American space. Thus, Siglo XXI was able to bring out the majority of the work by certain authors in Spanish, an example being Foucault: the company published the translations of *Les Mots et les Choses* [*The Order of Things*] (as *Las palabras y las cosas*) in 1968 and *L'archéologie du savoir* [*The Archaeology of Knowledge*] (as *Arqueología del saber*) in 1969. In the same year, it would also publish in Mexico *Para leer El Capital* [*Reading Capital*] by Althusser and Étienne Balibar; and in 1974, the headquarters in Buenos Aires was in charge of the translation of Althusser's *Réponse à John Lewis* [*Reply to John Lewis*], published as *Para una crítica de la práctica teórica* [Toward a Critique of Theoretical Practice]. In 1971, it published the first Spanish edition of *De la grammatología* [*Of Grammatology*] by Jacques Derrida, and between 1972 and 1974, it translated two of Barthes's works as *Crítica y Verdad* [*Criticism and Truth*] and *El placer del texto* [*The Pleasure of the Text*].

Finally, two other Argentinian publishing houses that played a role in the importation and circulation of structuralism in Argentina are

EUDEBA and CEAL. Both were promoted by the publisher Boris Spivacow, and they sought, through low-cost and large-circulation editions, to reach a wider audience than just university students. With EUDEBA, Spivacow developed an extensive catalog that was based on the new disciplines that could be studied at the University of Buenos Aires, in which the social sciences were an important part. Although it was not an imprint that specialized in this genre, its collections contributed to the dissemination of works in this area to the general public (Sorá 2004). In this context, the first Spanish translations of Lévi-Strauss's *Anthropologie Structurale* [Structural Anthropology] (as *Antropología Estructural*) and *Tristes Tropiques* (as *Tristes Trópicos*) were published in 1968 and 1970, respectively, through the mediation of the philosopher and sociologist Eliseo Verón. Through his management of CEAL, Spivacow also contributed to the dissemination of works that were related to structuralism, such as *Ensayos Estructuralistas* [Structuralist Essays] of 1971, with texts by Barthes and Todorov, and a popular edition of Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* [Course in General Linguistics], prepared by Sazbón in 1976 and entitled *Saussure y los fundamentos de la lingüística* [Saussure and the Foundations of Linguistics].

## Structuralism and the Readings of the “New Left”

As mentioned earlier, structuralist ideas also circulated in the Argentinian intellectual world via various publishing and cultural ventures linked to the so-called “new intellectual left” (Terán 2017), which led to translations and collections mainly in edited volumes. A book that compiled articles enabled editors who had lower economic resources, albeit high symbolic capital, to intervene in the publishing field with a supply of translated essays that had been published in journals in French but were unpublished in Spanish. As can be seen in Table 3.2, this translation and publication strategy was stimulated in particular by the editors who were associated with the political and cultural projects of the “new left.”

Among the publishing houses of the “new left,” we can consider the editorial projects associated with the intellectual group associated with

Table 3.2 Structuralist articles translated into Spanish, published in Argentina in collective volumes

Authors	Title of the collective volume	Year of edition	Publishing house	City of edition	Editor of the series	Original texts appeared in
Pierre Verstraeten; Paul Ricoeur; Enzo Paci; Claude Lévi-Strauss; Paolo Caruso; Raymond Bellour	<i>Claude Lévi-Strauss: problemas del estructuralismo</i>	1967	Editorial Universitaria Córdoba (Eudecor)	Córdoba	Oscar del Barco	<i>Esprit</i> (No. 322); <i>Les Lettres Françaises</i> (No. 1165); <i>Aut-Aut</i> (No. 77)
Serge Thion; Maurice Godelier; Roland Barthes; Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Aproximación al estructuralismo</i>	1967	Galerna	Buenos Aires	No data	<i>Revue Internationale des Sciences Sociales</i> (Vol XVI); <i>Aletheia</i> (No. 4); <i>Les Temps Modernes</i> (No. 246)
Jean Pouillon; Algirdas Julius Greimas; Maurice Godelier; Pierre Bourdieu; Pierre Macherey; Marc Barbut	<i>Problemas del estructuralismo</i>	1967	Siglo XXI	Mexico City	No data	
Gérard Genette	<i>Estructuralismo y crítica literaria</i>	1967	Eudecor	Córdoba	Oscar del Barco	<i>L'Arc</i> (No. 26)
Bernard Pingaud; Luc de Heusch; Claude Lévi-Strauss; Catherine Backès; Gérard Genette; Célestin Deliège; Jean Pouillon; Jean Guiart; J. C. Gardin; Pierre Clastres	<i>Lévi-Strauss: estructuralismo y dialéctica</i>	1968	Paidós	Buenos Aires	David Viñas	<i>L'Arc</i> (No. 26)



Nicos Poulantzas; Jean Pouillon; Jean-Paul Sartre; Claude Lévi-Strauss	Sartre y el estructuralismo	1968	Quintaria	Buenos Aires	José Szabón	<i>Les Temps Modernes</i> (No. 240); <i>Rinascita</i> (No. 51); <i>Cahiers de Philosophie</i> (No. 2–3); <i>Le Figaro Littéraire</i> (No. 1085)
Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Elogio de la antropología</i>	1968	Ediciones Pasado y Presente	Córdoba	Oscar del Barco	<i>Aut-Aut</i> (No. 88)
Louis Althusser	<i>La filosofía como arma de la revolución</i>	1968	Eudecor	Córdoba	Oscar del Barco	<i>La Pensée</i> (No. 132 y 152); <i>L'Unità</i>
Pierre Klossowski; Roland Barthes; Philippe Sollers; Hubert Damisch; Michel Tort.	<i>El pensamiento de Sade</i>	1969	Paidós	Buenos Aires	David Viñas	<i>Tel Quel</i> (No. 28)
Jean Laplanche; Serge Leclaire; André Green; Jean-Bertrand Pontalis	<i>El inconsciente freudiano y el psicoanálisis francés contemporáneo</i>	1969	Nueva Visión	Buenos Aires	Oscar Masotta	<i>Les Temps Modernes</i> (No. 183, No. 184, No. 195, No. 215); <i>The Cahiers pour l'Analyse</i> (Vol 2)
Alain Badiou; Louis Althusser	<i>Materialismo histórico y materialismo dialéctico</i>	1969	Eudecor	Córdoba	Oscar del Barco	<i>Critique</i> (No. 240); <i>Cahiers Marxistes-Léninistes</i> (No. 11)

(continued)

Table 3.2 (continued)

Authors	Title of the collective volume	Year of edition	Publishing house	City of edition	Editor of the series	Original texts appeared in
Pierre Daix; Jean Piaget; Louis Althusser; Michel Foucault; Roland Barthes; Émile Benveniste; Jacques Lacan; François Wahl	<i>Claves del estructuralismo</i>	1969	Caldén	Buenos Aires	Oscar del Barco	<i>Les Lettres Françaises</i> (1226, 1227, 1238, 1239, 1168, 1243, 1242, 1159, 1268)
Roman Jakobson; Claude Lévi-Strauss	<i>Los gatos de Baudelaire</i>	1970	Signos	Buenos Aires	Héctor Schmucler	<i>L'Homme</i> (Tomo II, No. 1)
Jacques Lacan	<i>Las formaciones del inconsciente y El deseo y su interpretación</i>	1970	Nueva Visión	Buenos Aires	Oscar Masotta	<i>Groupe d'études de psychologie de l'Université de Paris (Séminaire V et VI)</i>
P. Burgelin; O. D'Allonnes; M. Amiot; S. Le Bon; C. Ganguilhem; M. Foucault	<i>Análisis de Michel Foucault</i>	1970	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Esprit</i> (No. 35); <i>Raison Présente</i> (No. 2); <i>Les Temps Modernes</i> (No. 248); <i>La Pensée</i> (No. 137); <i>Critique</i> (No. 242)
Roland Barthes; Claude Bremond; Tzvetan Todorov; Christian Metz	<i>La semiología</i>	1970	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 4)
Roland Barthes; A. J. Greimas; Claude Bremond; Jules Gritti; Violette Morin; Christian Metz; Tzvetan Todorov; Gérard Genette	<i>Análisis estructural del relato</i>	1970	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 8)

Roland Barthes; Marie-Claire Boons; Olivier Burgelin; Gérard Genette; Jules Gritti; Julia Kristeva; Christian Metz; Violette Morin; Tzvetan Todorov	<i>Lo verosímil</i>	1970	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 11)
Abraham A. Moles; Jean Baudrillard; Pierre Boudon; Henri Van Lier; Eberhard Wahl; Violette Morin	<i>Los objetos</i>	1971	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 13)
Christian Metz; Umberto Eco; Jacques Durand; Georges Peninou; Violette Morin; Sylvain du Pasquier; Pierre Fresnault-Deruelle; Jacques Bertin; Louis Marin; Jean-Louis Schefer	<i>Análisis de las imágenes</i>	1972	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 15)
Jean Cohen; Tzvetan Todorov; Jean Simeray; Grupo µ; Claude Bremond; Jacques Durand; Lidia Lonzi; Pierre Kuentz; Gérard Genette	<i>Investigaciones retóricas I</i>	1974	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 16)

(continued)

Table 3.2 (continued)

Authors	Title of the collective volume	Year of edition	Publishing house	City of edition	Editor of the series	Original texts appeared in
Jean Cohen; Tzvetan Todorov; Jean Simeray; Grupo $\mu$ ; Claude Bremond; Jacques Durand; Lidia Lonzi; Pierre Kuentz; Gérard Genette	<i>Investigaciones retóricas II</i>	1974	Tiempo Contemporáneo	Buenos Aires	Eliseo Verón	<i>Communications</i> (No. 16)
Roland Barthes; Jean Thibaudeau; Julia Kristeva	<i>El proceso de la escritura</i>	1974	Caldén	Buenos Aires	Oscar del Barco	<i>Tel-Quel</i> (No. 47)

the journal *Pasado y Presente* [Past and Present], one of the most important political-cultural publications of Argentinian intellectual history, which would occupy a prominent place in the theoretical and cultural renovation of Marxism in Argentina. Although its theoretical reflection centered on debates within Western Marxism and the recovery of the figure of Antonio Gramsci, several of its members—located in the city of Córdoba—were active readers and critics of structuralism. Among them, the intellectual and publisher José Arico, the semiologist Héctor Schmucler, and the historian Oscar del Barco dedicated various projects to engaging in a dialogue with structuralism. After the discontinuation of the journal in 1965, its members embarked on other publishing ventures that continued the debate and made structuralist ideas accessible. Thus, for example, the newly born EUDECOR built a list that, in 1967, included publications such as *Estructuralismo y Crítica literaria* [“Structuralism and Literary Criticism”] by Gérard Genette, *Claude Lévi-Strauss: Problemas del Estructuralismo* [Claude Lévi-Strauss: Problems of Structuralism], and a collective volume, with contributions from Pierre Verstraeten, Paul Ricoeur, Enzo Paci, and Lévi-Strauss, which imported a series of debates that were taking place in the French intellectual field in journals such as *Les Temps Modernes*, *Esprit* and *Les Lettres Françaises* as well as the Italian *Aut-Aut*. A year later, the collective of intellectuals clustered around *Pasado y Presente* inaugurated a new publishing company called Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente [Past and Present Notebooks], and in 1968 this published *Elogio de la Antropología* [In Praise of Anthropology], a translation of the inaugural lecture given by Lévi-Strauss after his appointment as professor at the Collège de France in 1960. This publishing house also published various titles dedicated to the dialogue between Marxism and structuralism, most notably Althusser’s *La filosofía como arma de la revolución* [Philosophy as a Revolutionary Weapon] in 1968 and *Materialismo histórico y materialismo dialéctico* [Historical Materialism and Dialectical Materialism] by Althusser and Alain Badiou in 1969.

In Buenos Aires, Caldén, associated with the *Pasado y Presente* group, published part of the catalog started in Córdoba by EUDECOR. Especially because of its close relationship with del Barco, who had edited the series *El hombre y su mundo* [Man and His World] since 1968, Caldén made room for the new theoretical movements coming from France, ranging

from Jean Hyppolite's *Introducción a la filosofía de la historia de Hegel* [*Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy of History*] to various texts by Derrida. In this series, a remarkable selection of books associated with the new French intellectual movements was published over about ten years, partly related to structuralism, but also with several texts critical of this theoretical approach. Among the most important titles were *Marxismo, dialéctica y estructuralismo* [Marxism, Dialectics and Structuralism] by Lucien Goldmann, released in 1968; the collective volume *Claves del estructuralismo* [Keys to Structuralism], which in 1969 brought together texts by Pierre Daix, Jean Piaget, Althusser, and Foucault, along with interviews with Barthes, Émile Benveniste, Lacan, and François Wahl, which had originally appeared in *Les Lettres Françaises*; *El proceso de la escritura* [The Writing Process], a selection of texts by Barthes and Julia Kristeva, issued in 1974. The works published by Caldén show that structuralism was received by this group as a fundamental innovation for the human sciences, but one that at the same time was being criticized.

Among other publishers linked to the “new left” one must mention Jorge Álvarez Editor, which was decisive in putting into circulation in the early 1960s books related to new intellectual developments, including structuralism. Founded in 1963, the firm was positioned as a point of reference in the publishing market for literary studies and the new social sciences, with a strong commitment to cultural and literary modernization. Concentrating on this publishing segment, Jorge Álvarez Editor, together with its eponymous bookstore, soon became a cultural avant-garde space that attracted figures from relevant intellectual fields. In fact, authors such as Masotta and Verón published their first works with the company: Verón's *Conducta, estructura y comunicación* [Behavior, Structure and Communication] and Masotta's *Conciencia y Estructura* [Conscience and Structure] came out in 1968 and 1969, respectively. These were among the first works written by local intellectuals who were dedicated to articulating the corpus of structuralist ideas in their own intellectual area. Likewise, in 1967, the publishing house undertook the translation of the seminal text by Barthes, *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* [Writing Degree Zero] (as *El grado cero de la escritura*). Thus, the Jorge Álvarez Editor bookstore and publishing house functioned as a dynamic space in which intellectuals could socialize, enabling the creation of new

professional and personal links. It was a space where writers and intellectuals linked to the space of the “new left” could network, creating relationships that would lead to other publishing ventures. Among these, Galerna and Carlos Pérez Editor stand out, inspired and edited by remarkably dynamic figures such as Guillermo Schavelzon and Daniel Divinsky, former collaborators with Jorge Álvarez Editor. In 1968, Carlos Pérez Editor released Althusser’s *Lenin y la filosofía* [*Lenin and Philosophy*]; the following year, Galerna published *Aproximación al estructuralismo* [Approach to Structuralism], an anthology of texts by Barthes, Maurice Thion, Maurice Godelier, and Lévi-Strauss, which had originally been published in the French magazine *Aletheia*.

One of the marks that Galerna would leave on the intellectual and editorial fields of the 1960s and 1970s is perhaps the magazine *Los Libros* [The Books]. This was launched in 1969 by Schmucler, who had returned to the country after completing a graduate degree in semiology under Barthes’s supervision at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris, from 1966 and 1969. Inspired by the model of the French journal *La Quinzaine Littéraire*, *Los Libros* presented reviews and critiques of recent publications. Schmucler embarked on this endeavor by betting on a renewal of literary criticism in relation to the process of modernization that was being achieved by the social sciences and the aesthetic vanguard, and thanks to the new approaches provided by semiology, linguistics, psychoanalysis, structural anthropology, and history (Espósito 2015). We could say that the perspective of French structuralism had an important place in the magazine, as evidenced by the frequent analysis and comments on the works of Lacan, Lévi-Strauss, and Althusser.

For its part, the publishing house Tiempo Contemporáneo, also linked to the editor Jorge Álvarez, became one of the projects promoting the process of political-cultural modernization that took place towards the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s in Argentina by creating a catalog that combined avant-garde literary aesthetics, Marxist criticism, and the new theoretical tools coming from the French academic arena, especially the corpus of structuralism (Álvarez 2012/2013). The most important structuralist titles released by this firm were collected in three series edited by Verón: “Análisis y Perspectivas” [Analysis and Perspectives], “Signos” [Signs] and “Comunicaciones” [Communications]. Indeed, Verón cre-

ated a significant space for the circulation of structuralist ideas and made one of the largest efforts to disseminate this corpus in Argentina. For example, the edited volumes *Análisis de Marshall McLuhan* [Analysis of Marshall McLuhan] and *Análisis de Michel Foucault* [Analysis of Michel Foucault] were published in the Signs series. Released in 1970, the latter managed to gather texts about Foucault's work that were still untranslated into Spanish. In the Communications series, Verón, for his part, managed to put into circulation the innovative contributions of semiology and, within it, the constellation of structuralist ideas as the theoretical framework in which it was inserted, through a set of compilations and contributions that in France had appeared in the academic journal *Communications*. The series became the local version of the French magazine, which Verón arranged to publish through an exclusive agreement that he signed with Éditions du Seuil, thanks to the links he had maintained with several French intellectuals (Zarowsky 2017). In this context, Verón managed to translate six issues of the French magazine, published in Argentina in seven books: *Lo verosímil* (1970), *Análisis estructural del relato* (1970), *La semiología* (1970), *Los objetos* (1971), *Análisis de las imágenes* (1972), *Investigaciones retóricas I* (1974), and *Investigaciones retóricas II* (1974). These brought together works by Christian Metz, Kristeva, Barthes, Todorov, Greimas, Abraham Moles, and Genette, among others.

Finally, two small publishers, Quintaria and Proteo, were important in the circulation of structuralism in Argentina. Quintaria published two books that were central to the debates about the intellectual transformations of the late 1960s: *Sartre y el estructuralismo* [Sartre and Structuralism], in 1968, a volume edited by Szabón that included works by Pouillon, Nicos Poulantzas, Sartre, and Lévi Strauss; and *Estructuralismo y Marxismo* [Structuralism and Marxism] in 1971, gathering texts by Roger Garaudy, Charles Parain, and Michelle Jalley-Crampe. Both books combined frank discussions about the theoretical and political nature of structuralism in contrast to Sartrean existentialism and Marxist humanism. Proteo, meanwhile, participated in the editorial expansion of structuralism in Argentina with the publication of a significant number of books strongly committed to new readings in psychology and psychoanalysis. Thus, its catalog gave rise to two works related to the structural aspect of Piaget's theories: the collective volume *Las nociones de estructura y génesis* [Notions of



Structure and Genesis], published in 1969, and *Qué es el estructuralismo* [What is Structuralism?] in 1971. To these works were added a number of books oriented toward re-reading Freud through Lacan's proposal, within the framework of the series Campo Freudiano [Freudian Field]: *Introducción a la obra de Jacques Lacan* [Introduction to the Work of Jacques Lacan], a work by Masotta that was published in 1970, and was the first book in Spanish dedicated to Lacanian psychoanalysis; and *Jacques Lacan: lo simbólico y lo imaginario* [Jacques Lacan: the Symbolic and the Imaginary], a translation of Jean-Michel Palmier's book that had been published in 1971.

## The Mediating Figures of Structuralism in Argentina

As we have seen, the circulation and diffusion of structuralism in the social sciences and humanities and in the Argentinian intellectual world of the 1960s and early 1970s was associated with several key figures who mediated and made these processes possible, through editing, research, and teaching. Certain names from the fields of philosophy, sociology, psychoanalysis, semiology, and literary criticism, such as Sazbón, Verón, del Barco, Masotta, and Schmucler, were associated with certain academic and institutional enclaves and specific editorial ventures, such as Nueva Visión, Tiempo Contemporáneo, EUDEBA, EUDECOR, Siglo XXI, and Galerna. Together with the specialized bookstores of the period, these spaces and subjects formed an area for reflection on structuralist ideas and established a network of geographical, social, academic, and intellectual flows and exchanges, favoring the circulation of this constellation through different institutional and even national spaces. A brief reconstruction of the trajectories of these figures demonstrates this process. For example, Sazbón, a graduate of the National University of La Plata, served as a professor and researcher at the same university until he obtained a CONICET scholarship in 1970 to continue his doctoral studies; in this context, he spent a period researching at the École Normale Supérieure and the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris between 1972 and 1974, under the direction of Derrida and Manuel Castells.

Upon his return to Argentina, he prepared a book that reflected and commented on the work of Lévi-Strauss, *Mito e Historia en Antropología Estructural* [Myth and History in Structural Anthropology], published by Nueva Visión. Throughout his career, Sazbón contributed writings to several of the cultural magazines of the period. He also undertook intense editorial work, collaborating as an editor and translator in a number of the publishing houses analyzed here, such as Quintaria, Nueva Visión, Tiempo Contemporáneo, and CEAL.

After completing his studies in philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires, Verón, another of the leading mediators in the reception of structuralism in Argentina, became a visiting researcher at the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, directed by Lévi-Strauss, thanks to a CONICET scholarship. He supplemented this initiation into structuralism by attending Barthes's seminar at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. Upon his return to Buenos Aires, Verón presented Lévi-Strauss's work in his teaching at the University of Buenos Aires first, and then at the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella,<sup>1</sup> where he continued his academic work after 1966. There, Verón developed one of the most original derivations of structuralism in Argentina: a set of elements of psychoanalytic psychiatry in dialogue with sociology, structural linguistics, Lévi-Strauss's structural anthropology and Barthes's semiological tools, thus creating a novel combination for the empirical social research approach. At the same time, in about 1970, he founded the Argentinian Association of Semiotics, an institution associated from its beginnings with the International Association of Semiotics (see Chap. 4), and in which he established a network of contacts with figures such as Benveniste, Kristeva, Umberto Eco, and Roman Jakobson.

Masotta taught his seminars and study groups on Lacan and psychoanalysis in the same institution. Coming from the intellectual circles formed at the University of Buenos Aires, Masotta oriented his intellectual activity as a self-taught essayist, managing to promote study programs and writings that made a substantial impact. With his publications, he ventured into the fields of semiotics, literary criticism, and artistic avant-garde expression, later becoming one of the primary mediators of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Dedicated to disseminating psychoanalysis in Argentina, he founded the Freudian School of Buenos Aires in 1974, and

in 1975 he traveled to Paris, having been invited to give a lecture at the École Freudienne, where he was named a practicing analyst for his contribution to the cause of Freudian psychoanalysis. But his activity as an editor was also fundamental for the consolidation of Lacan's reception in Argentina. In addition to the companies already mentioned, in 1971, together with another group of intellectuals, he founded the series *Cuadernos Sigmund Freud* [Sigmund Freud's Notebooks], a means of disseminating the activities of the Freudian School of Buenos Aires, which quickly became a point of reference for Lacan's re-reading of Freud.

If we examine the careers of those who imported structuralism to Argentina, their different academic profiles and disciplinary interests, as well as their varied social milieux, are revealed. Their interest in structuralist theory was specified in the various projects, both academic and editorial, that they undertook, fostering divergent and multiple spaces for reflection and debate on these ideas. In this sense, although they maintained more or less extensive exchanges throughout the period analyzed, they did not necessarily establish ties of solidarity or concentrate on a certain experience of intellectual sociability; however, they can be grouped together if their efforts to put into circulation this body of ideas are considered. However, they share a distinctive characteristic: most of them visited Paris during their postgraduate studies and thus had the opportunity to discover the theoretical innovations that structuralism favored and to establish contacts with its main intellectual figures, such as Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, and Derrida. In this sense, we can consider international scientific mobility as key in the process of importing these ideas into Argentina, since it specifies the formation of new reference networks and the establishment of new cultural, academic, and geographical circuits that energized the investigative task and promoted a new intellectual profile.

## Some Final Reflections

Structuralism's reception in Argentina and its early circulation and appropriation were related to the particular conditions of the social space and the intellectual arena in the 1960s and early 1970s. In the first place, the

process of modernization that the social sciences underwent in the late 1950s implied an important theoretical and intellectual renovation. In this framework, the structuralist perspective was articulated as one of the primary and most innovative conceptual tools, thus identifying structuralism with the new social sciences. Articulated together with the expansion of the publishing world that took place in the 1960s, the revamping of diverse disciplinary fields contributed to the emergence of new intellectual profiles, new ways of exercising knowledge, and new relationships between renewed social theories and Marxism, which modified articulations between culture, politics, and social knowledge. In this context of cultural modernization, a process of political reconfiguration also took place that witnessed the emergence of a new intellectual left, characterized as we have seen by its public interventions and its participation in numerous publishing ventures. Throughout their varied catalogs, they knew how to put into circulation the work and the contributions of structuralism's main exponents, this correlating with an aspiration to update theories and renew political debate. In this context, structuralism was used as a means to rebut Marxism. This articulation would enable the emergence of a new intellectual profile: positioned on the left but, at the same time, separate from the immediate demands of politics and working within the scientific field. On the other hand, the circulation of new structuralist approaches favored by disciplines such as sociology, linguistics, and literary criticism made it possible to deploy an ideological critique from a scientific perspective, while the development of semiology allowed the incorporation of new objects of analysis, such as comics, advertising, movies, and so on.

Although this greater intensity of editing, debating, and commenting on the works of Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Lacan, and Althusser was concentrated between the mid-1960s and the end of the 1970s, we can affirm that the centrality of these authors, their books, and the debates that emerged both in academia and in politics, remains to this day. Partly a fashion and partly a key to intellectual renewal, the reception of structuralism implied the recomposition of a social and cultural universe as complex in its relationships as it was heterogeneous in its elements.

## Note

1. This institution, created in 1958 by an important family of the Argentinian industrial sector and organized in a corporate model of autonomous financing, brought together a significant number of specialized research centers, offering many scientists continuity in their careers and a work experience involving institutionalized research, in the face of precarious university structures affected by political instability, especially after the 1966 coup (Sigal 2002).

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# 4

## A Case Study of the Reception of “Structuralism” in English Studies in the United Kingdom

Marcus Morgan and Patrick Baert

### Introduction

Colin MacCabe had been both an undergraduate and then PhD student at Trinity College, Cambridge until 1974, and then a Research Fellow at Emmanuel from 1974 to 1976. In the year that his Research Fellowship came to an end, he was awarded his doctorate, became a Fellow and College Lecturer at King’s College, and was appointed to the now-abolished position of University Assistant Lecturer, which was reviewed for the possibility of upgrading to the effectively permanent position of University Lecturer at the end of a five-year term.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, over the course of 1980 and 1981, major disagreement arose both between

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and within the various committees and boards charged with rendering a decision on MacCabe's upgrading, and a fierce controversy ensued. Space does not allow us to elaborate the details of the affair here, though we have attempted to tackle this task elsewhere (Morgan and Baert 2015). Importantly for our current concerns is the fact that the affair came to be seen—rightfully or wrongfully—as a defense against the infiltration of new forms of literary theory, primarily what was referred to as “structuralism,” into English studies in the United Kingdom.<sup>2</sup> What might conceivably have been quickly forgotten as merely a trivial and routine workplace disagreement very quickly turned into a *cause célèbre*, seen as illustrative of fundamental shifts taking place within both the university system in England and within the particular discipline of English studies at the time. The event rapidly swelled to heroic proportions, drew vast media attention, and became invested with considerable moral and symbolic consequence.

After introducing the affair, this chapter locates these events within the broader context of changes in English higher education taking place at that time.<sup>3</sup> We argue that the vast university expansion that followed the Robbins Report was linked to a cleavage of epistemological styles within English studies (Lamont 2009). One side of this divide intended to retain the discipline's mooring within a traditional humanistic frame, while the other hoped to shift both the discipline's methods of analysis, as well as its object of study in accordance with insights developing out of cognate disciplines, and in particular, those coming from the burgeoning social sciences.<sup>4</sup> We also suggest that the late establishment of English studies in England, and especially in Cambridge, combined with Cambridge's subsequent influence in defining what came to be seen as a paradigmatic approach, contributed towards creating a situation in which perceived threats to this particular center, and its established approach towards criticism, were felt particularly acutely. Finally, we discuss how the term “structuralism” was used as a semantic weapon within the debate, and conclude by drawing out some insights that may be useful for studying the circulation of ideas in the social sciences and humanities more broadly. In what follows, we use the terms “antis” and “pros” to describe, respectively, those against inquiring into the conditions surrounding MacCabe's failure to be appointed to a permanent post, and those in support of such



an inquiry. We will also frequently refer to a transcript of one of the central scenes of the affair: the two-day discussion held in the university's historic Senate House, cited as SHD hereafter.

English studies was institutionalized strikingly late within English universities (Doyle 1986), establishing itself first in Scotland, India, Germany, and France (Baldick 1987; Finkenstaedt 1983; Viswanathan 1989). In England, it was initially considered a rather lowly pursuit—a pastime for leisured bourgeois women, or a civilizing and calmativ force for the lower classes and colonial populations.<sup>5</sup> Reading literature was considered capable of elevating minds and lowering passions, impressing upon its participants the cultural achievements of the more refined classes, and providing an arena for vicarious wish-fulfillment in which bourgeois or aristocratic lifestyles could be safely lived out in fantasy by those denied access in reality (Eagleton 1983, 23). When it did eventually institutionalize in England in the 1820s, its first home was the newly established University of London, rather than the medieval universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and it gained much ground with the explosion of the redbrick universities at the beginning of the twentieth century, and again in 1921 with the Government's publication of the Newbolt Report (Board of English 1921). The principal reason for the exaggerated tardiness of its arrival at Cambridge, with the first actual Professorship of English Literature not arriving there until 1911, and a School of English only being established in 1917,<sup>6</sup> was the dominance of the Classical curriculum.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of this late start, after the First World War it developed very rapidly, eclipsing the Classics as the central humanities discipline, with the characteristically critical and analytical Cambridge School playing an important role. The influential, zealous, bolshie, and highly opinionated Cambridge scholar F. R. Leavis was central to this development, championing the essential importance of the discipline and helping establish what became an orthodox humanistic approach arguably right up until the 1960s, and to some extent, and in certain locations—as the incident under study indicates—far later too.<sup>8</sup> For Leavis, the close analysis of great works was understood to be the primary task of literary studies, and this analysis was considered a deeply moral pursuit, whereby the critic employed his or her whole intuitive humanity as a test for the work's

sincerity and merit. Reading well was seen to hold the possibility of cultivating the moral sensitivities of the reader. This centrality of the basic instinctive human response to literature, over and above any methodologically formalistic modes of analysis extended to Leavis's distrust of other forms of abstract reason, such as that which characterized scientific thought and the instrumentalism of modernity more broadly (Leavis 1980).

The experiences of the Second World War had provoked suspicion among some towards this antebellum belief in the humanizing forces of an education in English Literature, since, as Steiner pointed out, it was now impossible to ignore how little humanistic acculturation had done to avert the barbarity of war. "We know now," Steiner wrote, "that a man can read Goethe or Rilke in the evening, that he can play Bach and Schubert, and go to his day's work at Auschwitz in the morning. To say that he has read them without understanding or that his ear is gross, is cant" (1967, ix).

Forces of pluralism had also slowly battled their way into English studies during the late 1960s and 1970s (Easthope 1991), especially outside Oxbridge. In part this occurred through the arrival of a more socially diverse student and staff body following the 1963 Robbins Report, and a broadening of the gaze of the discipline to include cultural creations that had traditionally been excluded from the narrow version of the canon that Leavis's *The Great Tradition* (2011/1948) came to represent. Awareness was also beginning to dawn that different forms of English were being spoken and written by a varied body of people throughout the Anglophone world, and to match the new subjects of study, a new plurality of theoretical perspectives (feminist, Marxist, semiotic, psychoanalytic, phenomenological, hermeneutic, structuralist, and by the time of the "MacCabe Affair," poststructuralist and deconstructionist) also began to appear in the period leading up to the dispute (Jones 1981, 9). Notions of the wholeness or completeness of a literary work were made problematic, and the historical, social, and political contexts in which texts were produced, a matter that had been self-consciously bracketed in Cambridge under the influence of I. A. Richards's formalism,<sup>9</sup> were put back into the center of critical reading.

The shift is expressed well by the novelist and literary professor Malcolm Bradbury in his description of his own career through English departments:

During the 1950s ... the dominant mood in the study of English literature was a moral and humane one; literary studies were the essential humanist subject ... But with the expansion and hence the increased professionalization of the subject, the tune changed: there was a hunger for literary science. By the 1960s, a volatile mixture of linguistics, psychoanalysis and semiotics, structuralism, Marxist theory, and reception aesthetics had begun to replace the older moral humanism. The literary text tended to move towards the status of phenomenon: a socio-psycho-culturo-linguistic and ideological event, arising from the offered competencies of language, the available taxonomies of narrative order, the permutations of genre, the sociological options of structural formation, the ideological constraints of the "infra-structure" .... (1981, 137)

While the humanities were expanding at a fast pace during this post-Robbins period, they were not expanding anywhere near as rapidly as many of the social sciences (Morgan 2019), whose theories and methods were making significant incursions into the humanities themselves (Savage 2010). Importantly in this respect, the emergence of "Theory" in English departments was not merely an import from abroad (most obviously France), but also largely an import from other disciplines, in particular the social sciences (Steiner 1981, 135). Many of these social scientific influences could be perceived as undermining the established mode of literary studies, because of the possible threat of their dissolving, or at least "decentering," the very thing upon which literary study was assumed to be based: literature. While exogenous insights from the social sciences were not entirely neglected by the Leavis model of criticism,<sup>10</sup> and while the aspiration to science, and an interest in anthropology in particular, had in fact been linked directly to Richards's earlier project,<sup>11</sup> as Donoghue notes, for Leavis, "a critic's relation to other pursuits, notably philosophy, history, and sociology, was a vital matter only when it had the effect of making his criticism more aware" (1981, 135).

Wider society had also turned away from poems, plays, and novels as their primary source of cultural expression and experience, and a maverick minority at Cambridge was suggesting that those media to which their attention had increasingly been drawn could themselves be productively analyzed in a comparable manner to literature. Stephen Heath (a University Lecturer) was interested in cinema, Raymond Williams (by then a highly influential Professor of Drama in the Faculty) used film in his lectures, MacCabe had just published a book on Godard and the Dziga Vertov Group (MacCabe 1980) and after the affair, went on to develop “screen theory” with Heath and others. Williams’s (1958) expansion of the term “culture” to cover practices beyond the more restricted zones of “high culture” was of course a characteristically social scientific—and, in particular, anthropological—move to make (Tyler 1891). Leavis, by contrast, believed that genuine culture could only ever be the preserve of a gifted “tiny minority” whose role it was to protect against the majority’s philistinism, and where possible guide the cultural discrimination of the masses (Leavis 1930; Carey 1992, for variations on this theme). His, like Richards’s before him, was a vision of modern cultural decline.

As had previously been the case with the Classics, a Newmanesque idea of the university as the creative center of civilization, and in particular English studies within it as chief of the humanities, was key to Leavis’s elitist account of how this decline was to be countered, and an idealized version of Cambridge; and indeed Leavis’s, and his collaborators’ role within Cambridge, provided the immediate model (Leavis 1943). Leavis was born and raised in Cambridge, and eventually died there, and claimed of his *Scrutiny* colleagues that “We were, and knew we were, Cambridge—the essential Cambridge in spite of Cambridge” (2013/1962, 76).

Echoes of Leavis’s famous public feud with C. P. Snow (Leavis 2013/1962; Snow 1956) over the relative merits of the more ancient humanistic mode of understanding, and the more modern scientific one, can be discerned amid the din of the MacCabe Affair. Whether or not it was in fact accurate, Snow’s disparaging description of the “mainly literary” “traditional culture” as “behaving like a state whose power is rapidly declining ... occasionally letting fly in fits of aggressive pique

quite beyond its means" (Snow 1956) bears more than a passing resemblance to one of the main strategic characterizations of the antis. Snow, moreover, had been in support of the social science-favoring Robbins expansion, whereas Leavis had been deeply opposed (Collini 1993, xl), and another of Leavis's public feuds had been with Noel Annan,<sup>12</sup> a key champion of the importance of the social sciences to universities, and in particular, a key supporter of the introduction of sociology to Cambridge.

Further evidence that the MacCabe Affair was related to a perceived threat to humanistic modes of criticism from more social scientific approaches comes from the fact that both the pros and the antis associated the kinds of work MacCabe came to represent with the social sciences (Mulhern 1981). Sykes-Davis, for instance, used the term "linguistic sociology" (SHD, 336) to mock what he saw as MacCabe's defective approach—an epithet that might reveal as much about the perceived status of sociology at Cambridge in 1981, as about MacCabe's own work (cf. Rose and Ziman 1964, 121). Geoffrey Kirk, on the other hand, defended the perspectives "that anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and psychology have opened up for us" and chastised factions of the English Faculty for ignoring them (SHD, 345). Bradbury used the term "literary science" in the passage quoted above, and MacCabe has noted how the radical 1960s Parisian theory from which his work drew inspiration, was grounded in a "fundamentally anthropological approach," and that Cambridge was "in need of rejuvenation" from "linguistics and anthropology" (MacCabe 2009; also 2010a). The situation was also described in similar terms in a letter written at the time to the *Times Literary Supplement*:

In an age in which the powerful intellectual movements of Marxism and modern sociology and anthropology have cast convincing doubts on the absoluteness of cultural values, and in an age of active contact with cultures in which literature and literary studies have not enjoyed the privileged position they traditionally have in our own, the elite status once claimed for them, particularly at Cambridge, must now be actively defended if it is to be maintained. (Beaton 1981, 199)

One of the more drastic solutions entertained by certain members of the pro team was the foundation of a break-away Department of *Modern* English studies (Heath SHD, 331; seconded by Clemmow SHD, 362), again on the basis of the Faculty's wary relationship to the social sciences. As Williams put it: "can radically different work still be carried on under a single heading or department ...? Or must there be some wider reorganization of the received divisions of the humanities, the human sciences, into newly defined and newly collaborative arrangements?" (1983, 211).

Although many of the theoretical shifts at issue had already occurred in departments elsewhere in the country (Williams 1983, 211), Cambridge had come to be perceived as something similar to what Callon (1986) has called an "obligatory passage point" for a redefinition of the mainstream of the discipline. Since English had only relatively recently secured its professionalized position in Cambridge, and since the paradigm of English studies in general was so bound up with Cambridge English in particular, this set the scene for great potential anxiety once this center was considered to be under threat, especially from an "enemy within." Leavis's primary concern, after all, had been to ensure that English became "disciplined" (1943, 33). Too much pluralism, too quickly, could undermine the discipline's recently won status. An English don at Oxford wrote at the time that the fears produced through the accommodation of "theory" in English studies may have concealed a deeper anxiety common to all relatively young disciplines: "the possibility that the subject is not really an academic discipline at all" (Ball 1981, 136). The struggle was therefore to maintain a precarious balance between pluralism and innovation on the one hand, and coherence and continuity on the other (e.g. Bergonzi 1990, 16).

Having discussed the context of the affair, we will now turn to examining some examples of the more localized symbolic strategies employed within it.

One strategy employed by the pros was an attempt to position the antis as conservative, both culturally and politically, and so attach the affair to a well-worn narrative of generational conflict: that of an out-of-touch Old Guard stubbornly resisting necessary progress.<sup>13</sup> This strategy also helped reinforce the notion that the denial of tenure was "related to a sense among Cambridge traditionalists that the time had

come to mount a strong resistance to further incursions by the tendency MacCabe was thought to support" (Doyle 1986, 130).

Since this was linked to the introduction of modes of thinking developed abroad, a further dimension of this strategy involved positioning the antis as suspicious of foreign influences. Moreover, because Cambridge as a place is tied so strongly to a particular mythologized and classed imaginary of England as a place, and English studies is in turn intimately wedded to the English nation to a degree that other disciplines simply are not, the narrative that its conservative defenders might themselves be prone to xenophobia and intent on preventing *Rive Gauche* deconstructionists from crossing the fortress-like thresholds of the university's ancient buildings was rendered all the more resonant. Casting the antis in a nationalistic role simultaneously meant positioning them as anti-professionalization, not simply vis-à-vis the formalizing methods that certain versions of structuralism appeared to offer, but also in respect to their opposition to the modernizing movement towards closer integration with other academic systems such as France.

MacCabe's prominent supporters were, after all, interested in ideas from across the channel. Heath "taught much in French" (Inglis 1995, 279), had written a study, in French, of the French literary theorist Barthes (Heath 1974), and had also translated some of his work into English (Barthes 1977). Frank Kermode (the King Edward VII Professor of Literature in the Faculty) had encouraged the reading of French theory in his seminar at University College London before moving to Cambridge, and describes being influenced by "the much despised French theorists, people like Derrida, who was quite unjustly treated as a kind of madman around here [Cambridge]" (2008). During his PhD, MacCabe had spent a year at the École Normale Supérieure, where he had, by his own account, "sampled Parisian intellectual life to the full," worked with Althusser and Derrida, and attended Barthes' seminars and Lacan's lectures (2010b). The "theory" that permeated his first book on James Joyce (1979) was as distinctly Gallic as the subject matter of his second,<sup>14</sup> on the new-wave filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard (1980).

Williams told his Faculty colleagues that protecting the established canon was often not merely about safeguarding "a body of writing ... but a national identity ... from which more general notions of Englishness,

of values, of tradition are defended against all comers; until even native dissidents (to say nothing of all those foreigners) are seen not merely as different but as alien—speaking not our language but some incomprehensible jargon” (1983, 195). This slide from “English” as a body of literature to “Englitness” as a set of values which were “not merely academic” was also acknowledged by commentators on the affair (e.g. Scruton 1981, 137). Others highlighted the academic parochialism revealed in English studies’ sluggish response to theoretical developments on the Continent (e.g. Bowie 1981, 136; Bradbury 1981, 137; Donoghue 1981), and accused the antis of harboring “an in-built fear of what is going on elsewhere in the world” (Heath, quoted in Williams and Collings 1981, 45). Again stressing how the new forms of literary theory were linked to the social sciences, Steiner stated that outside “Britain, the paramount fact in modern literary studies has been the application to these studies of ways of reading, of techniques of analysis, which drew ... on other disciplines in the *sciences humaines*—i.e. linguistics, epistemology, the social sciences, psychology, anthropology” (1981, 135).

For their part, the antis defended English literature as sacred, associating it with universal values, and positioned threats to it as profane pollutants. Long, for instance, suggested that “structuralism” ought not be given any “special privileges,” since “along with all the other methodological ‘isms’ [it is] irredeemably secondary, and in some sense irredeemably unimportant, in comparison with literature itself” (SHD, 344). If English studies was the discipline that most defined the national culture, and Cambridge English had come in the eyes of some to define what English studies in general should mean, then the symbolic environment was arranged in such a way that any threat to Cambridge English could be positioned as not only a threat to the local practice of English studies in Cambridge, but moreover to the discipline at large, and what is more, even an implicit threat to the national culture itself. In this manner, the emotive momentum and symbolic weight of the affair quickly snowballed, rapidly assuming proportions much greater than whether or not a young lecturer was to be offered a permanent post. As we have noted, this threat increasingly became associated with, and condensed into, the catch-all term of “structuralism,” which, in spite of repetitive protestations that it was of absolutely no relevance or value to the debate



whatsoever, participants and commentators seemed incapable of ceasing to use (e.g. Stevens 1981; Simpson 1990; 263; Williams SHD, 347).<sup>15</sup>

The term was frequently used by the *antis* simply as a stigmatizing epithet (e.g. Sykes-Davis SHD, 336; Long SHD, 343). In this manner, it served as an imprecise shorthand for everything the *antis* believed was wrong with the kinds of work they understood MacCabe and others to be supporting. As Simpson puts it, it became "the term that the 'business as usual' faculty majority chose as their *omnium gatherum* definition of the enemy" (Simpson 1990, 246; also Lewis 1982, 3). In order for this stigmatizing strategy to work, the term itself needed to be (re)positioned as the pollutant the *antis* wished to claim it was. If this could be achieved, then disinfecting the faculty of its influence might then be taken as being of paramount importance.

Towards accomplishing this end, Erskine-Hill suggested that in spite of the scientific pretensions some of them held, structuralists embraced a radical relativism he dubbed "cognitive atheism" in which "one interpretation is as valid as another," and "touchstones, criteria, different degrees of probability, and indeed the concept of truth" are carelessly thrown to the wind (SHD, 338). He also highlighted its terminological imprecision; that among its various definitions there was "little that the philosopher could recognize as a theory to define them" (*ibid.*). Those who readily associated with it were clearly muddled in their thought, or prone to intellectual fads, since as the surrealist poet Sykes-Davis argued, "structuralism" was "like all other Parisian fashions ... very passing" (SHD, 336). Sykes-Davis went on to whimsically joke that,

like all words that end in the suffix *-ism* it has no ascertained meaning—always excepting "prism," and perhaps "schism," for the sake of its usefulness in discussing the English faculty though, I am glad to learn that there is no schism here ... I can for example, say quite grammatically, and what matters more, truthfully, that not all members of the Faculty of English are brushed with the same tar. If you see one or other of them smeared with a gooey black substance, you should not assume that he has rubbed against some structure or structuralist. He may be a perfectly honest man. (*Ibid.*)

As we have already highlighted, in addition to positioning it as a sophistic doctrine, the *antis* also alluded to the fact that like most pollutants “structuralism,” and its authors, were foreign things, both in national and disciplinary terms; so as Bowie noted, it became “almost a matter of public hygiene not to read them, and to discourage the student population from doing so” (1981, 136).

Commentators on the affair, such as the conservative philosopher Roger Scruton, aided the *antis*’ efforts by flipping the notion that Leavis’s approach was elitist, and instead suggesting that the new French theory that MacCabe & Co. were championing was itself the genuinely elitist culprit because it failed to address itself to an idealized common reader, instead speaking its own private, technical, and esoteric language. This also explained, he argued, why it had “entered into so overt a conflict with the traditional Cambridge school. For the entire claim of Cambridge English to academic centrality ... rests in the fact that it has addressed itself not to the high priesthood of an arcane religion, but to a recognisable ideal of the reader of literature” (Scruton 1981, 137).

Likewise, another commentator, assuming structuralism to be necessarily a form of political radicalism, pointed to the irony that compared with Leavisite criticism “structuralist writing is so obscure that it totally bars any working-class adult, the liberation of whose class is the declared aim of the philosophy behind such writing, from any comprehension of it at all” (Hughes 1981, 257).

One challenge with this strategy of positioning structuralism as a toxic force, as with the strategy of defending a predefined and stable notion of “English literature,” was that at some point it inevitably came into conflict with the attempt to convince doubters that the *anti* camp were welcoming of new ideas, capable of identifying their merits, and willing to integrate them into faculty teaching (e.g. Sykes-Davis SHD, 336–337; Stevens 1981, 191). Moreover, the sting of the label was somewhat removed when those whom it was contrived to discredit readily adopted it as a banner of pride. Kirk, for instance, suggested that it “is an approach, or set of approaches, that cannot be simply ignored in any respectable university in Europe,” adding—rather dubiously given the circumstances—that it “is one that often increases understanding” (SHD, 345). Kirk also proposed that the *antis* were simply ignorant, and that “to label

the whole structuralist movement as mindless and somehow wicked is the reaction, I am afraid, of those who usually do not have the faintest idea what it is really about" (SHD, 345; also Bowie 1981, 136).

Also addressing this apparent ignorance, Williams (1983) argued that on at least one dominant understanding of the term—that of the analysis of language and literature as "an internal rule-governed system"—structuralism might in fact be understood as a "long-lost cousin who had emigrated from Cambridge via Empson in the late twenties and early thirties," visited North America where it had been associated with New Criticism, and then returned back to Cambridge via France in a modified form in the 1960s (1983, 206). He was suggesting that the work of Richards and his student Empson was a form of structuralism *avant la lettre* (also Steiner 1981, 135). This meant that contrary to the antis' claims, structuralism could in fact be understood, at least in one of its guises, as having originated in germ form within the very social unit that was now misidentifying it as alien and attempting to expel it (also Jones 1981, 9).

Writing in *The Guardian*, Williams (1981) also argued that because the charismatic figures of the Cambridge tradition—Richards, Empson, the Leavises, the Knights, and so on—were themselves iconoclastic rebels against the gentleman-dilettante model of literary scholarship that they felt oppressed the discipline of their day; the new work that MacCabe and others in the faculty represented in fact showed a greater fidelity to this spirit of Cambridge English than the apparently defensive behavior of the antis (Mulhern 1981, 27–28; also Eagleton 1981). Heath also suggested that Richards's and Leavis's deep interest in contemporary literature (Eliot and Lawrence, in particular), had failed to be carried over into the following generation at Cambridge. Leavis's tradition instead "served as an embattled standard that excluded contemporary creative work" (Heath 1994, 32). Mulhern, however, pointed out that the other side of the "Cambridge tradition," to which the antis were in fact demonstrating a far greater adherence, was the unrelenting, and to some extent successful drive to establish English studies as the "moral control-point of the entire culture," a status to which "no other discipline entered a rival claim" (1981, 28; also Leavis 1943), again supporting the notion that the

new forms of literary analysis understood to be championed by MacCabe were perceived as threatening to English studies's recently won status.

## Conclusion

To conclude, we would like to draw out three points of interest from our discussion for studying ideas on the move within the social sciences and humanities. First, that whether it occurs implicitly or explicitly, disciplinary institutionalization and reproduction usually involves *disciplining* those who fail to operate within its prescribed confines. This disciplining promotes a degree of coherence within branches of intellectual endeavor in terms of aims and criteria of judgment and allows disciplines to extend themselves in recognizable form over time. However, operating simultaneously to this imperative of disciplinary reproduction, there is an equally important countervailing pressure for disciplinary innovation and development, and such innovation often occurs through the importation of approaches both from other disciplines,<sup>16</sup> and from other countries. Secondly, an interesting feature of both the *antis*' strategy of positioning structuralism as a pollutant, as well as the various counterstrategies mounted by the *pros* to re-dignify the term, is that they demonstrate how ideas themselves, or even ideas about ideas such as "structuralism," can become the objects of positioning moves just as effectively as can individuals themselves, at least to the extent that individuals or groups are put into association with such ideas. Moreover, the fact that different strategies operating side by side can act to both support, as well as undermine, one another again highlights the importance of achieving coherence across one's strategic repertoire if one's overall performance within symbolic struggles is to "come off" convincingly. Finally, since the term "structuralism" itself became weaponized in the debate we have examined, its deployment can therefore be seen to have been performative. What we mean by this is that the term was used to do things, rather than merely to describe them (Austin 1962). This therefore raises the methodological point, noted by Bourdieu (2002), that when examining the circulation of ideas we must be careful not to take the categories used by social actors themselves at face value, without first understanding the

symbolic power complexes within which such categories are—especially when dealing with the humanities and social sciences—almost invariably embedded.

## Notes

1. At Cambridge, admissions and small-group “supervision” teaching is conducted within the colleges where students live, and employs a certain number of College Teaching Officers who usually do not hold any University post. Most lecturing, however, is delivered by the University’s relevant Faculty or Department, via University Teaching Officers (UTOs). Most UTOs employed by the Faculty or Department also hold college positions.
2. The two books MacCabe had published by the time the affair erupted demonstrate, respectively, his interests in new forms of French literary theory, and in extending the application of literary criticism beyond literature to cinema.
3. For a more detailed account of these shifts see Morgan (2019).
4. Interestingly, the social sciences attempted to distance themselves from the humanities as part of their own institutional establishment during the 19th Century (Lepenies 1992; Morgan 2016, 76–81).
5. A sense of its social standing can be grasped from a participant in a debate before its establishment at Oxford opining that “women should be considered, and the second and third-rate men who were to become schoolmasters” (Palmer 1965, 111).
6. To put this in context, the first department of our own subject, sociology—usually considered a fledgling discipline—was established at the London School of Economics some ten years earlier.
7. Heath quotes from an early discussion over a proposed English Lectureship in Cambridge, in which it was argued that “literary attainments should be acquired through erudition in the Greek and Latin languages” (Heath 1994, 23–24).
8. A journalist wrote at the time of the MacCabe quarrel that “the shadow of Leavis hangs heavily over Cambridge” (Jenkins 1981, 112).
9. Richards’s (1929) “practical criticism” helped systematize and formalize the discipline, distancing it from its earlier dilettantish and belletristic characteristics, and providing a method of analysis that could be readily

examined in a methodical manner. This method emerged from his practice of distributing poems—highly variable in quality and with no indication of author or date—to students for critique. Richards prescribed a close encounter with texts themselves that focused on an analysis of the complex relations between their internal compositional elements. While this approach and its later development by Empson, and its influence upon the American “New Criticism,” allowed for formalization, it also treated texts as autonomous things, abstracted from the contexts of their production.

10. MacKillop claims that a “sociological” sensibility was central to the Leavis crowd, and fundamentally at odds with the “gallant individualism” of the Bloomsbury set (MacKillop 1995, 214).
11. Malinowski had written a chapter in Ogden and Richards’s (1923) *The Meaning of Meaning* that was interested, among other things, in the “sociological and scientific understanding of language.” However, it was precisely over this issue of allying English studies too closely with more “scientific” forms of analysis that Leavis (far from uncharacteristically) fell out with Richards, even though as a student he had been inspired by his lectures, and Leavis’s wife Queenie’s PhD had been supervised by him.
12. Leavis’s reputation for public controversy, combined with his avoidance of the Faculty that had done so much to retard his promotion, earned him the affectionate moniker from a grateful former student of the “Ogre of Downing Castle” (Jacobson 1963).
13. Although MacCabe was of course younger than most of his Faculty opponents, and the younger student body generally sided with him, many of his more powerful allies (most obviously Williams and Kermode) were nearing retirement age. For more on the use of “positioning,” see (Baert 2012).
14. See Note 13
15. In the index of MacCabe’s (1979) book on Joyce we find a list of authors—Althusser, Barthes, Cixous, Derrida, Foucault, Irigaray, Jakobson, Kristeva, Lacan, Saussure—some of whom would nowadays be grouped under the heading “poststructuralism,” itself a notoriously inadequate label, and one that commanded less widespread currency in the early 1980s. The name Levi-Strauss is conspicuously absent. Edmund Leach was Provost of MacCabe’s college until 1979, and the primary exponent of anthropological structuralism at Cambridge, but his

scathing (1981) review of MacCabe's edited collection of essays on Lacan underlines the distance between the approaches going on under the same label within these two disciplines.

16. Examining the contribution of career-mobile physiologists in helping establish the new field of psychology in Germany, Ben-David and Collins (1966) show how—as long as roles exist for the innovators to occupy—such innovation sometimes results in the establishment of new scientific fields.
17. SHD: all citations refer to the Senate House Debate on the "State of the English Faculty" (February 3–4, 1981), the transcript was published in the *Cambridge University Reporter*, February 18, 1981.

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# 5

## The Importation of the “Frankfurt School” (and “Critical Theory”) in France

Louis Pinto

### Introduction

There is a major difference between this chapter and the existing literature on the subject<sup>1</sup>: the latter doesn't question why the Frankfurt School was imported, but only asks why it wasn't introduced into France earlier given its outstanding intellectual contribution. This chapter, in contrast, deals with the importation itself, not considering it to be a mere process of translation, as the authorized mediators see it, but rather as the construction, by the latter, of a set of meanings. Rather than looking into the thoughts of Adorno, Horkheimer, and other members of the School to discover what the French readership was able to take from these texts

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This chapter was translated by Camille Joseph. The quotations have been translated by her whenever there was no English translation.

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after they were made available, the complex framework built by the French mediators is reconstructed—in order to understand what their interests were and what intellectual tools were at their disposal.

Instead of lamenting the “lateness” of the translations and commentaries, it is more interesting to find the reasons for this discrepancy, which has to do with the configuration of each national intellectual world. No hypothesis should be ruled out *a priori*, neither that of a disparity between circumstances in originating countries and France, nor that of perceived resemblances between the two arenas, which could give the impression of duplication or, perhaps, a more or less perceptible rivalry. The imported authors may be seen instead as the equivalent either of strangers or of family members.

To begin with, some preliminary reflections on the methodology used here are essential, some of which are of a general nature. The first question is how we should measure the volume and the efficacy of the importation: should we rely on the number of translations or of reviews? How can we judge whether a text, even if it is a bestseller (cf. Marcuse), has been read and appropriated?

The second question is how we can escape the temptations of hagiography and identify the relevant characteristics that the importers considered when deciphering the messages that seemed to be meant for them. In their texts, the mediators embody different roles: they are messengers (they disseminate the ideas of a given author), commentators (they highlight strengths, weaknesses, obscurities, contradictions), quasi peers (they present their use of the author), and also admirers (they confess what they like about him and what they dislike about his opponents). One way to avoid getting lost in the potential maze of hermeneutics is to adopt an objective stance that, to experts, has every chance of appearing simplistic, sociologizing, in other words “barbaric”: by putting on hold the intellectual nature and value of the texts at stake, one can determine the capitals of the agents who hold them and the objective and subjective interests that ensue. The aim is not to establish a mechanical relationship between some objective properties and a particular intellectual stance, but to conduct an analysis of relations that takes into account the importers’ intellectual positions and their perception of the objects and problems that are forced upon them when their discipline has reached a certain point;

in short, we should aim to describe the space of possibilities as a relatively systematic set of well-delineated paths, closed roads, opportunities, and so on. In the present case, it is crucial to understand, as we will see, that the French mediators of the Frankfurt School are characterized by their distancing from the dominant areas of the academic philosophical field on the one hand and from avant-garde philosophers on the other.

Other questions are of a methodological nature. First, how do we define the authors of the School and their works? They may be given a more or less precise name or label. In what follows, I shall delineate the principles according to which the group can be identified, as well as the practical definitions that the French importers had in mind.<sup>2</sup> The term "Research Institute" (*Institut de recherches*) is a neutral and institutional label. That of "Frankfurt School" (*École de Francfort*) is more recent, only dating back to the 1960s. It designates a more or less formal group of people who are connected by social and intellectual affinities; it also refers to a vast project of cultural production that, owing to its size and the number of people involved (collaborators, disciples, allies), cannot be ignored or underestimated. Despite the fact that it is common for intellectual groups to claim their openness to new ideas, the lack of orthodoxy has often been put forward as a distinctive trait of the Frankfurt School. "Frankfurt" refers to a new university and a German-speaking cultural production in its modernist form (in contrast to Berlin, Heidelberg, Freiburg, and Marburg). The phrase "critical theory" (*théorie critique*) (CT), with which French readers would have been quite unfamiliar at first, is a mix of scholarly references and, less perceptibly, of intellectual disobedience towards dogmas and traditions. The word "Marxism" refers to a tradition that is inseparably political and intellectual, of which the School may be seen as an original ramification.

The next question, which clearly has to do with the previous one, is about how to describe the members of the group. There seem to be two definitions of the School. The first is extensive and includes not only the well-known figures but also some more marginal authors or companions; while the second is more restricting and implicitly gives Adorno and Horkheimer a central position as theoretical representatives. We may also ask whether the School has come to an end, and if so when: can someone

such as Jürgen Habermas (and, even more so, writers of the next generation) be considered to “still” belong to the School?

In order to answer these difficult questions, the decision has been made to take into account what, for reasons given later in the chapter, the French importers focused on: what they called CT, hence the figures of Adorno and Horkheimer who seemed to have been particularly important for them. Therefore, we will concentrate on the period when the reception of this theory imposed itself in the intellectual field (from the 1960s to the 1980s). At that time, the categories of perception were predominantly philosophical in comparison to others, in particular those of sociology.

Before analyzing the properties of the mediators and their mediation work, we will examine the various phases of translation and commentary.

## **Ignorance and Recognition**

Members of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research were far from being complete strangers in France. As early as the 1930s, contacts were made after the forced emigration of these intellectuals who were persecuted by the Nazis. To many of them, Paris was a welcoming shelter. It was there that the Institute was able to maintain its academic existence (to a limited extent) thanks to the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) and its director, Célestin Bouglé, a disciple of Durkheim. The Institute’s journal, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, which was no longer published in Germany, was taken over by the publisher Alcan from 1933 to 1938. But this presence went hand in hand with some sort of intellectual invisibility. Like others (Bouglé, Halbwachs, also a disciple of Durkheim, Koyré, a phenomenologist converted to the history of sciences), the young Raymond Aron had had the opportunity to participate in the journal and was a devoted partner; but he did not appear to be much influenced by the ideas that were then developed in the *Zeitschrift*. The books he wrote at the time on German philosophy of history and German sociology make no mention of members of the School. It was as if, to him, the field of social sciences was above all structured by a tension between the German thinkers (the neo-Kantians, the phenomenologists, Dilthey,

Simmel) and the Durkheimian school. It appeared as a final alternative that left little room for new options, which, to Aron, still appeared indecisive.

One would have expected French Marxists to pay more attention to foreign radical thinkers. But before the war, philosophers close to the Communist Party (Henri Lefebvre, Paul Nizan, Georges Politzer) were busy popularizing their ideas or engaging in politico-intellectual controversies. After the war, discussions around Marxism included Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, who were then the dominant thinkers, but the most prominent Marxist in France seems to have been Georg Lukacs: with many admirers and commentators, he embodied the serious and politically committed thinker who could not be reduced to Marxist orthodoxy. Yet Lukacs had expressed some strong reservations about the School, which he saw as the “Grand Hotel Abyss,” or in other words a construct that was attractive and refined, yet threatened by irrationalism. In one of the first texts ever written about the School (namely in the journal *Arguments*), Kostas Axelos, a former member of the Greek Communist Party, a philosopher with no academic roots who was seeking to reconcile Marx and Heidegger and who, as editor of the *Arguments* series for Éditions de Minuit, had translations of Lukacs and Korsch published, displayed his respect for the Frankfurt School while insisting on keeping this in proportion: even if Adorno at least *was trying* to think, he “wasn’t a great thinker, a founder,” he was more of an “epigone” who “was part of the Hegelian tradition and the current neo-Marxist production” (Axelos 1959, 20).

Among the Marxists (Lefebvre, Nizan, Politzer, Naville), those who could or should have been the first French readers of the School were above all lacking an interest in an approach for which they did not have the keys. Because they had no overarching institutional framework, some of them being quite distant from any research into the social sciences, they seem to have oscillated between dogmatism and dilettantism. This is particularly striking when one compares them to the members of the Frankfurt Institute,<sup>3</sup> and takes a look at the contents of the Institute’s journal: articles ranged from theoretical works (materialism; rationalism), sociological studies (the mechanistic vision of the world; the sociology of language, of literature, of music; race ideology), psychoanalytical and historical studies (the Asian mode of production), to economic

studies (Marx and the problem of crisis; economic planning). The authors, not of all of them being members of the Institute (Paul Lazarsfeld and Otto Neurath, for instance), often wrote about topical issues.<sup>4</sup>

The Institute remained almost invisible until the 1950s. However, Adorno was invited by Lucien Goldmann, a major mediator of Lukacs in France, to participate in his seminar at the École Pratiques des Hautes Études (EPHE) in 1958, then to the Colloque de Royaumont on the sociology of literature in 1965. The School became known through *Arguments*, which published translations of Adorno's texts as well as an article by Kostas Axelos (1959). Moreover, it is thanks to Goldmann that Marcuse was invited to the EPHE as visiting professor in 1960, 1962, and 1964.

The classification of some authors raises some methodological problems that are best illustrated by some individual cases: one may ask whether their belonging to the Frankfurt Institute is helpful in explaining how they became known and consecrated in France. There are two cases of "mavericks" who, at two different times, were translated a lot, read, and commented upon: Walter Benjamin and Herbert Marcuse. And even though some commentators pointed at their connection with members of the Institute, these authors always went their separate ways.

Walter Benjamin was the first to become famous. He had connections with several French avant-garde intellectuals (Bataille, Blanchot, Klossowski) and made himself known by doing some translations and, from 1935 on, by publishing articles (in the *Cahiers du Sud* and *Les Temps Modernes*). In 1959, his *Oeuvres choisies* were published. The fact that he was the most "literary" among the members of the group certainly explains why he could be dissociated from any specific theoretical framework and read for his own sake. Since he was introduced in France, he had always been at the ever blurred boundary between philosophy and literature, where philosopher-writers, writer-philosophers, and essayists wrote about "modernity," the "city," the tragedy of history, and so on. Yet Benjamin's fame only began in 1969 (Höhn and Raulet 1978, 136–137).

The case of Marcuse was studied in detail by Manuel Quinon (2003). It is a well-established fact that Marcuse preceded the other members of the School, as many indicators show. In the 1960s, his work was diffused around two clusters: the neo-Marxist philosophers on the one hand and



collaborators on a political magazine published by Éditions Maspero, *Partisans*, on the other hand. The first cluster was made up of trained and aspiring philosophers who occupied academically marginal positions. For them, sociology might have been a disciplinary refuge allowing them to fulfill their initial expectations: Kostas Axelos, Jean Duvignaud, Henri Lefebvre, Edgar Morin, as well as Serge Mallet. They were gathered around the journal *Arguments* (1956–1962), which was published by Éditions de Minuit, also the publisher of several of Marcuse's major books. We can add to these authors André Gorz, a journalist (*Le Nouvel Observateur*), essayist, and member of the directory board of *Les Temps Modernes*, and Jean-Michel Palmier, a young and aspiring philosopher. Most of them were quite well known at the time: in Marcuse, they saw a peer who would confirm their own ideas about the new forms of alienation, the "integration" of the working class in the capitalist system, the "consumer society," and the renewal of Marxism. The case of Palmier is different. Born in 1944, he studied philosophy at the University of Nanterre, did not pass the competitive examination for high school teachers, the *agrégation*, but was noticed by several professors with progressive views. With close ties to Lefebvre, Duvignaud, and Axelos, at the end of the 1960s he was beginning to access the intellectual field. As his publications show, he was interested in a wide range of subjects, with a particular inclination towards German authors and works crossover between philosophy, aesthetics, sociology, and intellectual history. Under the supervision of Paul Ricoeur, he defended a brief PhD thesis (*thèse de troisième cycle*) in philosophy in 1970 on Georg Trakl; under Pierre Dommergues, then an English studies professor at the University of Vincennes, he defended another brief dissertation in 1974 on Marcuse; and then in 1987, he wrote a larger thesis (*thèse d'Etat*) on the intellectuals who had emigrated from Germany during the Nazi period. Enjoying a certain profile, he collaborated on *Le Monde des livres*, a supplement to *Le Monde*, and *Le Magazine littéraire*, a publication dedicated to book criticism. After lecturing in different universities, including Vincennes, he became professor of aesthetics at the Department of Aesthetics of Paris 1.

In the second cluster are two mediators who were related to the journal *Partisans*: Boris Fraenkel (born in 1921), a Trotskyist with close ties with

several members of the *Arguments* group (such as Kostas Axelos), a reader and admirer of Reich and Marcuse, to whom he became a friend. Through the popular education movement, where he was an instructor, he met Jean-Marie Brohm (born in 1940), a gymnastic teacher turned academic (in educational science and then sociology). In *Partisans*, where they came to occupy a central position in the mid-1960s and which dealt with issues such as sexuality, education, and the women's liberation movement, they developed a critical analysis of the capitalist repression of desire based on Reich and Marcuse (whom they translated).

Thus, several texts by Marcuse, which were later reprinted in books, first appeared in several journals as early as the 1960s (*Médiations, Arguments, Partisans, Diogène, L'Homme et la société*). Most translations were published between 1963 and 1972, and several studies between 1969 and 1974. Furthermore, journals devoted some special issues to Marcuse (see Appendix 1).

While Marcuse was often presented as one of the reference thinkers of the “revolutionary” students, his decline appears to have started as soon as 1969 (Höhn and Raulet 1978, 138). Nevertheless, he paved the way to the reception of the Frankfurt School, if on a more subversive and sometimes more optimistic note.

The reception of the School took place over roughly three decades: the 1960s, the 1970s, and the 1980s.

In the 1960s, Marcuse was the dominant figure, only loosely tied to the other members of the School. Adorno was first known for his reflections on music: his *Philosophie de la nouvelle musique* was published by Gallimard in 1962 and then reprinted in 1979; *La Musique et ses problèmes contemporains* was published by Julliard in 1963, and his *Essai sur Wagner* by Gallimard in 1966.<sup>5</sup> His text on “cultural industries” was published separately in 1964 in *Communications*, a journal run by Roland Barthes and Edgar Morin.

The Frankfurt School gained real notoriety and became known as such in the 1970s, especially in 1974–1975 (Höhn and Raulet 1978, 137). Adorno gained new visibility with the *Revue d'esthétique* and through teaching at the Sorbonne by Olivier Revault d'Allones, who supervised the first PhDs on this author, and by Marc Jimenez. His work began to be recognized and commented upon more widely. This increased the

symbolic capital of some representatives of the sub-discipline of aesthetics, who tried to claim more autonomy for themselves and their area of research from the original discipline of philosophy in a context of growing academic empowerment for some specific fields. Aesthetics (and plastic arts) enjoyed the support of some important names: Olivier Revault d’Allones, Jean-François Lyotard, and Bernard Teyssède. In a few years, other mediators joined in. References made to the School expressed the extent and density of the intellectual network as well as the diversity of disciplines, but Adorno and Horkheimer were assigned the position of theoreticians among the School’s members. The notion of CT that was put forward by the School tended to merge, in the eyes of those who were reading philosophy, with these two authors, whose book *La Dialectique de la raison* was published in 1974 by Gallimard. The empirical works of other members, which were not included in CT, received far less attention. There is a double problem of delimitation in the way CT was presented and analyzed. The first is in its relationship with other areas of the philosophical space, in particular Marxism and structuralism (Althusser). The second problem is whether or not one must take into account the growing influence of younger authors, an example being Jürgen Habermas. French readers were able to find many common points between *La Dialectique de la raison* by the elders, Adorno and Horkheimer, and *La Technique et la science comme “idéologie”* by Habermas, a much-read and commented-upon book (Höhn and Raulet 1978, 138). Our objective here is not to take sides on this question, which has been largely dealt with. However, one cannot but notice that these authors are connected in terms of the time when their works were diffused and in terms of the agents who helped to expose them: this is notably the case for Jean-René Ladmiral and Gérard Raulet, translators of and commentators on many of these authors (see Appendix 2).

In parallel to these translations, more and more commentaries appeared in books, special issues, and articles on the School. An issue of *Esprit* entitled “L’École de Francfort,” published in May 1978 with articles by Luce Giard, a historian and collaborator with Michel de Certeau, Olivier Mongin, the journal’s secretary, and others, as well as a critical bibliography on the Frankfurt School in France by Gerhard Höhn and Gérard Raulet, made the School known to a wider audience. Academic journals

such as the *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, *La Revue philosophique*, and the young *Philosophies*, were silent on the subject, and would remain so for quite a while.

### The First Philosophical Exegeses

**Books:** Marc Jimenez. 1973. *Theodor Adorno. Art et idéologie. La théorie de l'art*, Collection 10–18. Paris: Union générale d'éditions; Pierre V. Zima. 1974. *L'École de Francfort. Dialectique de la particularité*. Paris: Éditions universitaires; Jean-Marie Vincent. 1976. *La Théorie critique de l'École de Francfort*. Paris: Galilée; Martin Jay. 1977. *L'Imagination dialectique. Histoire de l'École de Francfort et de l'Institut de Recherches sociales*. Paris: Payot; Paul-Laurent Assoun and Gérard Raulet. 1978. *Marxisme et théorie critique*. Paris: Payot.

**Articles published in philosophical journals:** Rudiger Bubner. 1972. "Qu'est-ce que la théorie critique?" *Archives de philosophie* 5; Gaby Kortian. 1973. "Le problème de l'Aufklärung et de l'intérêt de la raison. Quelques aspects de l'École de Francfort." *Les Études Philosophiques*, July–September.

**Article published in social science journal:** Mario Hirsch. 1975. "L'École de Francfort, un outil de la raison instrumentale," *L'Homme et la société*, January–June.

The 1980s saw the consecration of CT authors as classics of philosophy. Paul-Laurent Assoun published *L'École de Francfort* in 1987 in the series "Que sais-je?" (an encyclopedic book series consisting of short, didactic volumes published by the Presses universitaires de France). Academic journals provided a new form of legitimacy. *Archives de philosophie* published several issues on members of the School: "L'École de Francfort" in 1982 (April–June); "Histoire et nostalgie de Dieu à l'occasion du 90e anniversaire de Max Horkheimer (1895–1973)" in 1986 (April–June); "Faut-il oublier Marcuse? 90e anniversaire de Herbert Marcuse (1888–1979)" in 1989 (July–September). Jean Grondin wrote about Adorno's ethics in *Études philosophiques* in 1987 (no. 4); *L'Homme et la société* published a special issue on "Actualité des philosophes de l'École de Francfort" in 1983 (no. 69–70). Finally, Adorno became one of the stars of the Collège International de Philosophie and of its journal, *Rue Descartes*, alongside Levinas, Deleuze, and de Certeau. But it was

only in the mid-1990s that the first PhD dissertations on Adorno were defended.<sup>6</sup>

## Importers at Odds

Overall, the publishing houses of the members of the School were far from being university presses: neither the Presses universitaires de France nor the scholarly publisher specializing in philosophy, Vrin, published these authors. L'Arche was a small press with a specialty in drama (Brecht) that also published texts in the fields of aesthetics (Adorno) and Marxism (Lukacs, Reich). The Éditions de Minuit was connected to different avant-gardes, whether in literature (Bataille), philosophy (Axelos, Deleuze, Lukacs), or the humanities (Hjelmslev, Jakobson, Bourdieu). As mentioned previously, it was within the *Arguments* group that the first French readers emerged, and they were mostly interested in Marcuse.<sup>7</sup> Gallimard, where some of Adorno's texts on music were published quite early, published other texts, also on music, and *La Dialectique de la raison* (with Horkheimer). It was also Gallimard that published a book by Horkheimer (*Théorie traditionnelle et théorie critique*) and the first translation of Habermas (*La Technique et la science comme idéologie*).

But the major texts by the members of the School, as well as Martin Jay's important book *L'École de Francfort* (1977), were published by Payot, a medium-size publisher specializing in the human sciences: *La Dialectique négative* by Adorno (1978) and other texts by Adorno (*Trois études sur Hegel* in 1979) and by Horkheimer (*Les Débuts de la philosophie bourgeoise de l'histoire* and *L'Éclipse de la raison* in 1974, *Théorie critique* in 1978), to which we must add several books by Habermas (among which *L'Espace public* in 1978). These texts appeared in the series *Critique de la politique*, created in 1974 and directed by Miguel Abensour, a major figure in the importation of the School in France (see below).

The mediators fall into three main categories: the translators, the translator-commentators, and the commentators. To the first category belong professional translators who may have written on other writers but not on the members of the School: Daniel Bresson (Marcuse), Axel Lindberg (Adorno), Hans Hildebrand (Adorno, Bloch, Buber, Freud,

Marx, Nietzsche), Eliane Kauffholz (Adorno, Karl Kraus, Leo Spitzer), Pierre-Henry Gonthier (Marcuse), Cornelius Heim (Auerbach, Freud, Marcuse, Nietzsche), Jean Lacoste (Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Cassirer, Habermas, Nietzsche), Marc de Launay (Auerbach, Cassirer, Hermann Cohen, Habermas, Nietzsche, Karl Popper, Franz Rosenzweig), Sybille Muller (Benjamin, Elias), and an English-studies specialist Jacques Debouzy (Horkheimer). Belonging to the second category are Marc Jimenez (translator of Adorno), Gérard Raulet (translator of Benjamin, Bloch, Habermas, Marcuse) and Jean-René Ladmiral (translator of Adorno, Fromm, Habermas), and to the third Miguel Abensour and Paul-Laurent Assoun. The former had a background in German studies and turned to philosophical interpretations of contemporary German thinkers, while the latter studied philosophy.

The position that products imported under the CT label took up in the field of philosophy reflects their social and intellectual properties and those of the agents occupying the dominant positions in the field. While it is true that the Frankfurt thinkers may be seen as belonging to “German philosophy,” which in France reigns over the pantheon of philosophy (Pinto 2009), they do not enjoy the same legitimacy as its most prominent figures; far from it. This is clearly shown if we compare the academic careers of various specialists from the same generation. The *agrégés* (and/or *normaliens*, i.e. former students of the elite school ENS) are entitled to the interpretation of Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Husserl, and Heidegger (Jean-François Courtine, Jean-Luc Marion, Alain Renaut, Jean-Louis Veillard-Baron), and thus show highly developed skills as prominent historians of philosophy, which give them access to the most prestigious academic positions (University Paris 4-Sorbonne, ENS). The case of Alain Renaut is particularly interesting. Born in 1948, he is a *normalien* and *agrégé* who alongside his friend Luc Ferry tried to integrate the Frankfurt School. Together they coordinated the issue on the School published by the *Archives de philosophie* in 1982 and wrote several books for the series *Critique de la politique*. It is remarkable that their interest in the School was very much episodic and that they both rapidly turned either to more legitimate thinkers or to more mundane forms of philosophy, to journalism, and to popularization. Renaut obtained a *thèse d’État* on Fichte’s philosophy of law under the supervision of a specialist in

German philosophy, Alexis Philonenko. He started his career as a professor at the University of Nantes in 1984, then at Paris in 1994. As for Ferry, he was first a lecturer at the University of Reims, Paris 10, Paris 1, and the ENS, then defended a *thèse d'État* in political sciences from the University of Reims under the supervision of Miguel Abensour and was able to gain a position at the university thanks to the then new system of *agrégation* in political sciences (1982), which gave access to higher education and allowed several aspiring philosophers to escape the sole judgment of philosophers. From 1982 to 1988, Ferry was a professor in the Department of Political Science of the University of Lyon. In a 1985 pamphlet entitled *La Pensée-68*, Ferry and Renaut expressed their distance from the French avant-garde thinkers at a time when the Frankfurt School no longer seemed to be a central reference. Ferry became part of the “anti-totalitarian” movement, in particular by joining the Fondation Saint-Simon, created in 1982 and directed by François Furet and Pierre Rosanvallon.

The oldest and more lasting mediators of the Frankfurt School did not enjoy the legitimate attributes of academic philosophers: some were originally Germanists and most did not have any background in philosophy or did not pass the philosophy *agrégation* (Abensour, Raulet, Ladmiral, Jimenez). On their Wikipedia pages (consulted in November 2016), only one is presented (or presents himself) as a “French philosopher” (Miguel Abensour), the others being designated as “philosopher and Germanist,” “philosopher, Germanist and translator,” “Germanist, philosopher and translator,” and “psychoanalyst.” They made a career outside the university philosophy departments. Casting aside the traditional and mainstream pathways, these aspiring philosophers challenged the academic orthodoxy by proclaiming that it was possible to access philosophy through reference to politics and history. To those who occupied dominant positions in the field, CT offered the symbolic resources for a bottom-up strategy: as a theory, it allowed them to comply with the field's norms, while as a critical approach, it allowed them to claim the external standpoint of outsiders who were emancipated from intellectual routines: “It is a *critical theory of society* (Marx) which, from a dialectic criticism of political economy and a criticism of ideologies, aims at participating in the



transformation of this society, in the work of emancipation” (Abensour 2005, 20).

CT therefore presents itself as a pariah variation of German philosophy. Even though it is less legitimate, it is part of a prestigious cultural context and can be accessed only by those who master the (German) language, multiple German references, including Hegel and Marx, and the political and cultural history of Germany. One commentator, who has been otherwise very critical of CT, positively acknowledges this: “Critical theory restores the connection with the great philosophical tradition, in particular with Hegel” (Hirsch 1975, 116). The growing number of outcast approaches to German philosophy in the years 1968–1980 accounts for the importation of marginal or atypical thinkers, often of Jewish origin: Hannah Arendt, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Georg Simmel, Franz Rosenzweig. But despite their interest in the School, the mediators can hardly be considered as mere disciples, since the names of Adorno and Horkheimer are blended with all sorts of other references (Arendt, Bloch, Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, Levinas). Neither are they strictly on the side of erudition or devoted to the study of only one subject.

Aside from Ferry and Renaut, the main mediators of the 1970s and 1980s were on the margins of academic philosophy, because of their career and their writings. This is the case for Jean-Michel Palmier, already mentioned, and also for the first commentators. Marc Jimenez mainly worked on aesthetics. Born in 1943, he defended a brief thesis in 1972 under the supervision of Bernard Teyssèdre on Adorno’s aesthetics. In 1982, he defended a larger thesis on the Frankfurt School’s aesthetics (Adorno, Benjamin, Marcuse), under the supervision of Olivier Revault d’Allones, and translated Adorno’s *Théorie d’esthétique* in 1974. He spent his career at Paris 1 in the Department of Aesthetics and Plastic Arts and was one of the coordinators of *La Revue d’esthétique*. Miguel Abensour played a fundamental role not only as commentator but also as director of a series for Payot, which published many books on Adorno and Horkheimer. Born in 1939, he studied philosophy. As a student he fell for the ideas developed by the non-communist radical left, read Lukacs and Korsch, and discovered Marcuse’s *Eros et civilisation* in 1965. In 1973, he defended a “thèse d’État” in the Department of Law of Paris 1 on “the socialist-communist utopia.” He taught political science at the



University of Reims (1973) and then at Paris 7. He was a collaborator on many journals, such as *Textures*, *Passé-présent*, and *Libre*—where he was close to a disciple of Merleau-Ponty, Claude Lefort, who specialized in political philosophy and was a figure of left-wing anti-totalitarianism. He was president of the Collège International de Philosophie from 1986 to 1989, and became more and more influenced by Levinas' thinking. Paul-Laurent Assoun and Gérard Raulet belong to the generation of young commentators for whom the Frankfurt School provided an ideal access point to the intellectual field, and they collaborated on a book on CT. Born in 1948, Paul-Laurent Assoun is a former student of the ENS of Saint-Cloud. With an *agrégation* in philosophy, he has devoted himself to the interpretation of thinkers such as Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, on whom he wrote his brief doctoral thesis in 1977. In 1987, he defended a larger thesis in political science on the historians of the Restoration under the supervision of Professor Georges Lavau. He then became professor of political philosophy in Nijmegen. After turning to psychoanalysis, he taught the discipline at the University of Amiens and then Paris 7; he also taught at the Collège International de Philosophie. Raulet was born in 1949. He is also a former student of the ENS Saint-Cloud and has an *agrégation* in German. In 1981, he defended his brief PhD thesis on Ernst Bloch under the direction of Olivier Revault d'Allones and in 1985 a larger one, still on Bloch. He was a lecturer and then senior lecturer at Paris 4, and obtained a position at the University of Rennes 2 in 1987. His institutional position and his teachings have more to do with German studies and the history of philosophical ideas in Germany.

Jean-René Ladmiral may be added to the list, even though he mainly worked on Habermas. Born in 1942, he is a Germanist. His first translation was of a book by Erich Fromm. In 1974, he defended a doctorate in philosophy on Habermas (which consisted of the translation of four texts with their commentaries) under the supervision of Paul Ricœur. As a specialist in "translation studies," he was a professor at the University of Nanterre.

These mediators, who were drawn in by Marxism and the left, never seemed to have any long-term party affiliation, neither with the Communist Party nor with any other radical group. Against Althusserian Marxism based on French epistemology, on the lines of Bachelard and

the “science” of the “History Continent” (Althusser), their Marxism highlighted the prestigious capital of German philosophy and, in particular, the major figure of German idealism, Hegel. Through the dialectical method, the latter offered a properly philosophical logos, a rationality of a superior kind that would overcome a certain narrow-mindedness that is typical of the philosophy of understanding and the empirical sciences, and would rise to totality, to the becoming, to the flux, to the internal movement of history in opposition to a petrified present and a subject separated from the object.

Discourses on CT are recognizable by the “self-important tone” that Bourdieu ascribed to Heideggerians and Althusserians: they emphasize the unfathomable depth of the issues at stake, facing the great theoretical “tasks” and rising to the occasion, thereby revealing the consequences of hasty readings and denouncing multiple “resistances” (Bourdieu 1991). More importantly, these discourses seem far less interested in contributing to solutions to specific philosophical problems than in positioning themselves in the space between theories: they oppose to a theory that has been clearly understood, a new kind of theory made of an endless series of delusions and shams, phony improvements, decoys. Alternating serious comments with condescending mockery, the commentators provide a theoretical direction that, they hope, will get them into the “inner circle,” as Adorno illustrated with his description of Heidegger’s disciples listening to the “essential word.” CT offers an opportunity to express scholastic dispositions that never appear as clearly as they do in dialectical exercises that reverse, conciliate, surpass, and (finally) outline new perspectives for thought.

## **Emancipation Within the Limits of Academic Reason**

But it is not enough to consider the type of cultural capital possessed by the mediators. To understand their interest in the Frankfurt School, this must be put in the context of the restructuring of philosophy that began in the 1970s and has three features. First, the growing number of aca-

demic jobs and students opened new positions in the field of philosophy. Secondly, the relative fluidity of a space where the disciplinary boundaries (between philosophy, literature, psychoanalysis, sociology) were tending to fade, therefore creating original and unconventional positions that allowed the expression of unorthodox theoretical aspirations, for instance at the Université de Vincennes (1969) or the Collège International de Philosophie (1983) and in sub-disciplines such as aesthetics and political philosophy. Finally, one must consider the channels of cultural mediation that competed with academia in order to create new and hybrid forms of intellectual study: intellectually challenging cultural media (the daily *Le Monde*'s weekly books supplement, the weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the books magazine *La Quinzaine littéraire*, the radio station France Culture), intellectual journals for a large audience (*Esprit*, *Le Débat*), and public lectures (at Centre Georges-Pompidou, Université de tous les savoirs, and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, for example).

Furthermore, the political context of the mid-1970s had an impact on the political choices that were considered to be intellectually legitimate. While so-called radical thinkers had delivered prophetic messages to "revolutionary" students, in particular at Vincennes ("schizoanalysis," the libidinal economy, structuralist Marxism), the end of leftism (*gauchisme*) made it necessary to redefine progressive philosophical discourses in order to address the overtly political criticism that was coming from the "new philosophers" (*nouveaux philosophes*), who, in the light of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* (published in French in 1974), challenged not only Marxism but also the Enlightenment for what they suspected to be its "totalitarian" inclination. The effervescence surrounding the radical counter-culture subsided from the mid-1970s onwards. On the left, the *Union de la gauche* between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party (PCF) in view of the 1978 election offered a political perspective that would help to overcome the disappointment of leftism. As for social democracy, it never seemed to have been an option, except for a few "half reformist, half revolutionary" slogans calling for "autogestion" and "anti-Jacobinism." Therefore, those who wanted to escape both the reactionary right and the "orthodox" Marxism of the PCF,<sup>8</sup> without succumbing to the artistic excesses of philosophical leftism, had to create a posture of intellectual radicalism that would allow them to be members

of the avant-garde both in terms of “theory” (philosophy) and in “practice” (politics), to use the indigenous terminology.

The changing political and intellectual context may explain the partial rehabilitation of the Hegelian-Marxist culture against the background of which the philosophical avant-gardes of the 1960s specifically developed.<sup>9</sup> Because they were focused on structuralism and the development of the human sciences, this group was able to lose interest in the Frankfurt School: it must be remembered here that Lyotard had shown (in “Adorno come diavolo”) that, whatever his merits, Adorno was in fact still stuck with the old philosophy, that of subject, dialectic, and reconciliation (Lyotard 1973), and that Deleuze and Guattari did not even mention Adorno in *L'Anti-Oedipe* (1972). It is also interesting that Michel Foucault later said he regretted that he had let the Frankfurt School pass him by (Foucault 1994, 73–74). Finally, Bourdieu never showed any great interest in the School, even though he published the translation of Adorno’s book on Mahler in his series “Le sens commun”: “I’ve always had a pretty ambivalent relationship with the Frankfurt School: the affinities between us are clear, and yet I felt a certain irritation when faced with the aristocratic demeanor of that totalizing critique which retained all the features of grand theory, doubtless so as not to get its hand dirty in the kitchens of empirical research” (Bourdieu 1990, 19).

Given the distribution of theoretical capital and the balance of power between the holders of this capital, it would have been inconceivable in the 1970s for aspiring philosophers to turn away from the debate over Marxism. Yet, in order to exist philosophically, the importers of CT had to relate to it and at the same time dissociate themselves from positions that were either forbidden to them or that they judged to be too commonplace: they could accept neither the “massive and erudite dogmatism of Althusserianism” nor the “leftists who continued to sanctify the masses,” but equally repudiated the “cheap anti-Stalinism of the ‘New Philosophy’” (Höhn and Raulet 1978, 140). The Frankfurt School was interesting precisely because it offered a subtle and “dialectical” mix of proximity and distance, allegiance and improvement. In other words, Marx eventually appeared as both inescapable and dismissible. He should still be read, but free from the illusions that had befallen his previous readers, who had been blind to the serious flaws affecting Marxism. “France elected a left-wing

government after an evolution which sealed the death of Marxism on the theoretical scene [...]. The Frankfurt School was rejected not only because it revised Marxism [...] but also because, in the 70s, it interfered with the agony of Marxism and the theoretical enterprises that contributed to it” (Raulet 1982, 164). According to Abensour, it is “theoretically sterile [...] to turn Critical Theory into a lifesaver for Marxist minds at bay” (Abensour 1982, 184). Then came the inevitable question: “At the time of its composition, did Critical Theory entirely belong to Marxism or was it at its margins? Or was it already aiming at a phase out from Marxism?” (ibid., 184). The answer does not lie in a simplistic alternative. In 1982, Ferry and Renault were anxious not to sever all links with materialism and the revolution and therefore rejected the all too easy criticism of CT’s idealism: “One feels the right to speak of an idealism, finally unmasked, of CT and having thus pronounced the ancient anathema, one finds in this route or in its end nothing that refers to an authentically materialistic enterprise” (Ferry and Renault 1978, 10). This theory, which is “not a simple ‘abhorrent’ form of Marxism,” is “to be taken seriously by *all* project still claiming today to be aiming at a ‘revolutionary science’” (ibid., 40).

This kind of relation to Marx, and to the Marxists, is the principle of a whole set of alternatives. May one say that CT is rationalist and progressive? It is, without a doubt. But in a complex and conspicuous way, a way that is not that of the common left, of the activists and primary school teachers (*instituteurs*). To Abensour, Adorno is “tirelessly on the look-out: with always an eye on emancipated society, he never stops looking out for the inversions of reason, the reversal of the emancipation into its opposite” (Abensour 2005, 22). “Critical Theory is an example of an actually critical theory, that of a historical reason which thinks about its own contradictions with no indulgence, opening itself to the cracks of meaning that are imposed upon Logos in modernity—from metaphysics to politics, including *Kultur*—while continuously encouraging to think” (Assoun 1987, 117–118). “It is no coincidence that Critical Theory, which is decidedly optimizing in its rationalism, came to play at the idea of a *radical evil* in history. But this vertigo never ends with an irrationalism or escapism” (ibid., 121). “Critical Theory reintroduces the concern with the ‘care of thinking’ that reminds the subject of the lures of power and tells them that they must face ‘the trouble of living’” (ibid., 122).

Jean-Michel Palmier is less dramatic in his reviews of recently published translations of Horkheimer, and gives a minimalist version of CT, which can convince almost anybody. The culprit for the evils of the century is not reason, but rather a non-“dialectical” conception of reason: “Thus Horkheimer insists on what separates bourgeois reason from dialectical reason, traditional theory from critical theory. If rationality goes astray, one must in turn fight it. As soon as it loses its dialectical dimension, it is but a hypocritical mask that hardly dissimulates the powers of oppression and domination that have seized it. Hostile to all kinds of dogmatism, Horkheimer can only note that irrationalism led to fascism, that bourgeois reason sustains capitalism, and that dialectical reason degenerated into Stalinism” (Palmier 1974, 13).

Is CT materialistic? It is indeed (and it is also dialectical), but for the mediators it was never as simple as that. “One may speak of an internal debate within the School as to its own theoretical identity in relation to Marxism. When from the start it turns to historical materialism, it points at its own theoretical need. When it then sways between a theory of reconciliation and a theory of non-identity through the same object—the materialist dialectic—it experiences its own in-between. When it finally splits Marxism, it consumes its own practico-theoretical cleavage” (Assoun 1987, 86). Some may have been tempted to see here a “re-irruption of the unfortunate consciousness at the heart of materialism,” a “regression to idealist positions” (Assoun and Raulet 1978, 245). It definitely has to do with “the resurrection of German idealism” (ibid., 247), a “new Holy Family” (ibid., 246).<sup>10</sup> One should also acknowledge that “Critical Theory goes back and forth from one position to the other” (ibid., 247).

Is CT optimistic or pessimistic? The discourse about emancipation undeniably bears the stamp of the left, which in principle seems to validate an optimistic view. But in fact, it is nothing more than a mere slogan that advertises brighter days without committing to anything. One may as well speak of a left-wing pessimism, a clever one, that of a demobilized radicalism (different from an activist radicalism as much as from a renegade’s repentance), a radicalism in an undetermined state. In its introduction to the issue on the School that she edited in the journal *Esprit*, Luce Giard writes about this “post-Enlightenment” mood with some solemn-

nity: “For us who come after the Enlightenment, after the defection of scientism, after the rationalised organization of totalitarian regimes, it is difficult to put all our hopes in Reason alone for an emancipation”; “Horkheimer offers us a way to think in accordance with the evil of present time, *crumbs of thought*, a philosophy which is shattered and ruins all certainties, questioning all convictions, an incisive and corrosive philosophy” (Giard 1978, 55–57). Abensour underlines “a radical distance from the rationalism of Western philosophy. [...] However this is not to give up the project of emancipation in a general movement of resignation, but rather to turn emancipation as a problem in itself and to think about it as such” (Abensour 1982, 182).

The mediators’ theoretical discourse is made up of this constant oscillation between opposites. CT indeed distances itself from the old “historical materialism,” but it would be hasty to dismiss it as “idealism” (in the style of the “young Hegelians”); it emphasizes theory, but never stops questioning practice; it does not speak of revolution but bets on emancipation. It gets dangerously close to irrationalism and seems to challenge reason in a radical way, but in the end it stays faithful to reason and only denounces technico-scientific domination while it waits for brighter days when it can develop a (post-rational?) way of thinking that is still to be defined; it exposes domination but does not meddle in class struggle; it acknowledges the limits of dialectic but in a dialectical way; it seems pessimistic but it raises great theoretical expectations; finally, it is not averse to a kind of “religiosity” (Ferry and Renaut 1978, 35) when it flirts with ideas such as “negative theology” or the “radical evil of history” (Assoun 1987, 119–121), but needless to say it does not subscribe to any dogma.

What makes CT so attractive is that by maintaining an undecided intellectual position, by always falling between two stools,<sup>11</sup> it can always adjust to a multiplicity of indefinite or contradictory expectations while cultivating a form of philosophical suffering that is characteristic of very deep reflection and serious experience. Beyond their favorite interpretations, the readers will remember that they are invited to renounce any simplistic approach in order to meet present challenges.

Yet CT, which is presented by the mediators as a victim of powerful “resistances” of a political and philosophical kind, was perfectly compatible with the categories of philosophical understanding that existed in



academia in the country to which it was imported. Such is the case for the critique of “instrumental” reason: the denunciation of the “secret complicity of myth and reason” (Abensour 2005, 21) is a left-wing variant of anti-objectivism in philosophy. The translations of Habermas’ *La Technique et la science comme “idéologie”* (1973), *La Dialectique de la raison* (1974), and later *La Dialectique négative* (1978) may seem to offer converging ideas for a wider readership: the instrumental reason why these authors oppose emancipation is expected to find another incarnation in science and technology. Not only is science accused of conceptual weakness that some intellectual, and often conservative, approaches observe in ways of thinking that they deem inferior and secondary (“science does not think,” in the words of Heidegger), but its principles are associated with totalitarianism and domination. Philosophy is regarded as the real safeguard for and protector of freedom of thought and of potential emancipation.

The privileged position of philosophy among the academic disciplines finds its main expression in the critique of positivism. The mediators were led to acclaim the legacy of the Frankfurt School, in part made up of high-quality empirical works, and to restate the prominence of philosophy (“Adorno must be considered for what he is first and foremost, that is a critical theoretician” [Abensour 2005, 19]). Left on their own, social sciences seem to be bound to a blind approach: as a non-“critique,” they accumulate facts without considering the totality that gives them meaning, and only organize these facts in a manner that is coherent and, most importantly, operational. The ambiguous relation to social sciences appears to be a specific modality of the intellectual strategy, which consists in giving the greatest value to the tension between opposing poles: this strategy highlights the originality of some of the thinkers who take on the dignity of philosophy without dismissing the historical and (what is more) materialist approach. But when the time comes to identify the essence of CT, philosophy is brought forward: “CT is a *reflexive theory* [...] that must not be confused with sociology of knowledge” (ibid., 19–20). Because it is vitiated by its original positivism and scientism, as well as its compromise with the “administered society” (bureaucracy, totalitarianism, capitalism, Sovietism), sociology seems fundamentally unable to rise to the critical perspective of emancipation: “The critique of



politics is defined by its rejection of political sociology which, while claiming to build a science of politics, turns politics into a science,” says Abensour, as a professor of political philosophy, in his presentation of the series “Critique de la politique” that he directs at Payot. “The critical theory of society refuses to confuse domination with exploitation, to reduce the political to the economic, to include a critique of politics into a more general critique of political economy” (Abensour 1982, 193). CT’s object is society as understood in its more important context, that of politics, rather than giving in to the simplistic approach of “sociologism” (or “economism”) that ignores theory and relies only on hypotheses, laws, and so on. It thus becomes possible to understand why, at least during the period under scrutiny here, French sociologists did not show any great interest in CT, nor in the sociological works produced by the Frankfurt School.

Thus, the importers of CT are always assured to be on the bright side. Politically, they stand against “domination” and for freedom or emancipation, without necessarily falling on the side of revolution. Philosophically, they are on the side of theory and of the fundamental, without turning their backs on the emergencies and requests of “modernity.”

## Conclusion

The importation of CT is far from being a mere transfer from one country to another, or an erudite contribution to the diffusion of scholarly texts. Its mediators have indeed contributed to making the views of the Frankfurt School known. But they have also done more, contributing to a new intellectual style, a kind of avant-garde academism, within the field of philosophy. While the most visible representatives of the old French philosophical avant-garde, sometimes known as postmodern (Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard), were able to create at the margins of the academia a subversive position that was irreducible to traditional categories (deconstruction, archaeology, etc.), the mediators of the School were newcomers with less important capitals. They couldn’t oppose head on the old avant-garde with whom they shared some characteristics, such as

a wide-ranging taste for everything that the West has thought and not thought, and the heroic endeavor to think beyond old concepts such as identity. Because they had to deal with the collective label of Marxism, which they could hardly do without, they turned towards a specific kind of political radicalism that was aimed at reconciling the need for theoretical distinction provided by an original access to German philosophy and its distinguished academic values with the fact that progressive thinking rises above the common meaning that it is endowed with in intellectual or social life. Such a reconciliation required two things: first, the search for an intelligent relationship with Marxism (or else an intelligent Marxism) characterized by a disenchanted and painful, but not disavowed progressivism; and secondly, a set of announcements, statements, or proclamations consisting less of contributions to theory or knowledge of the social world than to indefinitely reiterate the holy words of emancipatory thinking.

## Appendix 1: Marcuse in France

### Books by Marcuse

- Herbert Marcuse. 1963a. *Le Marxisme soviétique*. French trans. Bernard Cazes. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1963b. *Eros et civilisation. Contribution à Freud*. French trans. J.-G. Nény and B. Fraenkel. Paris: Minuit.
- . 1968a. *Raison et révolution. Hegel et la naissance de la théorie sociale*. French trans. R. Castel and F. H. Gontier, Présentation by R. Castel. Paris: Minuit.
- . 1968b. *L'Homme unidimensionnel*. French trans. M. Wittig. Paris: Minuit.
- . 1968c. *La fin de l'utopie*. French trans. L. Roskopf and L. Weibel. Paris: Seuil.
- . 1969a. *Philosophie et révolution*. French trans. C. Heim. Paris: Denoël.
- . 1969b. *Vers la libération. Au-delà de l'homme unidimensionnel*. French trans. J.-B. Grasset. Paris: Minuit.
- . 1970. *Culture et société*. French trans. G. Billy, D. Bresson and J.-B. Grasset. Paris: Minuit.

- . 1971. *Pour une théorie critique de la société*. French trans. C. Heim. Paris: Denoël.
- . 1972. *L'Ontologie de Hegel et la théorie de l'historicité*. French trans. G. Raulet and H. A. Baatsch, Preface by M. Cranaki. Paris: Minuit.

## Books on Marcuse

- Michel Ambacher. 1969. *Marcuse et la critique de la société américaine*. Paris: Aubier.
- André Vergez. 1970. *Marcuse*. Paris: PUF.
- Alasdair MacIntyre. 1970. *Marcuse*. Paris: Seghers.
- André Nicolas. 1970. *Marcuse*. Paris: Seghers.
- Jean-Michel Palmier. 1973. *Marcuse et la nouvelle gauche*. 1973. Paris: Belfond.
- Alain Cohen. 1974. *Marcuse: le scénario freudo-marxien*. Paris: Éditions universitaires.

## Special Issues

- "Connaissez-vous Marcuse?" 1969. *Esprit*, January.
- "Marcuse, cet inconnu." 1969. *La Nef*, January–March.
- "Nouvelle actualité du marxisme." 1968. *Diogenes* 64.

## Appendix 2: Adorno-Horkheimer in France in the 1970s

In this period, the main translations were published in the following order:

### Adorno

- Theodor W. Adorno and Hans Eisler. 1972. *Musique de cinéma*. French trans. J-P. Hammer. Paris: L'Arche.
- . 1974. *Théorie esthétique*. French trans. M. Jimenez. Paris: Klincksieck.
- . 1976a. *Mahler: une physiologie musicale*. Translated and presented by Jean-Louis Leleu and Theo Leydenbach. Paris: Minuit.

- . 1976b. *Autour de la théorie esthétique: paralipomena, introduction première*. French trans. M. Jimenez and E. Kaufholz. Paris: Klincksieck.
- . 1978. *Dialectique négative*. French trans. by the translation group of the Collège de philosophie, postface by Hans-Günther Holl. Paris: Payot.

## Horkheimer

- Max Horkheimer. 1974a. *Eclipse de la raison suivi de raison et conservation de soi*. French trans. J. Debouzy and J. Laizé. Paris: Payot.
- . 1974b. *Théorie traditionnelle et théorie critique*. French trans. C. Maillard and S. Muller. Paris: Gallimard.

## Habermas

- Jürgen Habermas. 1973. *La Technique et la science comme "idéologie."* Trans. and preface by Jean-René Ladmiraal. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1974. *Profil philosophiques et politiques*. French trans. Françoise Dastur, Jean-René Ladmiraal and Marc B. de Launay, preface by Jean-René Ladmiraal. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1975. *Théorie et pratique*. French trans. Gérard Raulet, Paris: Payot.
- . 1976. *Connaissance et intérêt*. French trans. Gérard Cléménçon, preface by Jean-René Ladmiraal. Paris: Gallimard.
- . 1978a. *Raison et légitimité: problèmes de légitimation dans le capitalisme avancé*. French trans. Jean Lacoste. Paris: Payot.
- . 1978b. *L'Espace public: archéologie de la publicité comme dimension constitutive de la société bourgeoise*. French trans. Marc B. de Launay. Paris: Payot.

## Notes

1. See Höhn and Raulet (1978), Abensour (1982), Trebitsch (2000).
2. From the start, this question has been central to commentators. See, for example, Assoun (1987).
3. On the organization of the Institute, see Jay (1977), Wiggershaus (1993).

4. The French journal *Recherches philosophiques*, perhaps the closest to the *Zeitschrift*, was not linked to any research center and was not identified as Marxist.
5. Gallimard benefited from the collaboration of Boris de Schloezer, who specialized in “new music.” He had written a book on Stravinsky, whom Adorno had also worked on.
6. There were five PhDs in the 1990s. In the 1970s and 1980s, PhDs on Adorno were brief dissertations, with the exception of that by Marc Jimenez.
7. However, it was in the series “Le sens commun,” whose director was Pierre Bourdieu, that *Raison et révolution. Hegel et la naissance de la théorie sociale* was published in 1968, with an introduction by Robert Castel.
8. It became necessary to face “both the condescending contempt of the reactionary right, which was anxious to show that Adorno was powerless to explain the present reality, and the aggressive invectives of the Communists” (Jimenez 1973, 40).
9. It was only partial, because there was no discussion about turning back to authors such as Axelos, Goldmann, Lefebvre, and Sartre.
10. In their study of the Frankfurt School, “traditional” Marxists such as André Tosel (1974), close to the PCF, and Jean-Marie Vincent, close to Trotskyism, highlighted the idealist and theoretical deviations of the School.
11. The ambiguity that accounts for the success of CT may be dissimulated in two ways: either by putting forward the “dialectic,” which tolerates all kinds of paradoxes on the part of the commentators, or by celebrating the incredible “openness” of a theory that is never fixed, expressing itself through fragments, aphorisms, and periodical redefinitions of its programs and projects.

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# 6

## Crossing Disciplines Across Borders: How (British) Cultural Studies Have Been Imported (and Translated) in Italy, France, and German-Speaking Countries

Marco Santoro, Barbara Grüning, and Gerardo Ienna

### Introduction

What are *studi culturali*, *estudios culturales*, *estudos culturais*, *Kulturelle studies*, *kulttuurintutkimuksen*, *studime shqiptare*, *études culturelles*? What, if anything, do they all have in common? And what about apparently similar established historical formations such as the German *Kulturwissenschaften*?

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What are the differences between them? Are they different research areas or just national declinations of the same research program? Common to the first series of labels is the centrality of so-called cultural studies (henceforth CS),<sup>1</sup> an originally Anglophone intellectual formation that, in some ways, represents a paradigmatic instance in the circulation of ideas across countries as well as disciplines. This chapter tries to reconstruct these patterns of circulation without forgetting local peculiarities, focusing on three national and/or linguistic cases: Italian, French, and German. How did British cultural studies (BCS) enter these countries and/or languages, and through which channels? Who were the main scholars responsible for their circulation and reception? Which disciplines were primarily involved?

In these three cases, we will examine how boundaries have been renegotiated among established disciplines (sociology, history, literary studies, philosophy, etc.) and approaches (*Kulturwissenschaften*, structuralism, ethnography, etc.) in order to construct new representations of research objects and a different sensitivity to matters of culture.

We begin with a short description of what CS looks like according to current scholarly wisdom, then focus on the intellectual and institutional experience responsible for the invention and circulation of this now globally accepted label—the Birmingham-based Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), founded in 1964. We will briefly show how CCCS originally received ideas, concepts, and methods from French, Italian, and German scholarly traditions and reworked them in a new intellectual mix in response to local concerns—a mix successful enough to become, in only a few years, a new disciplinary formation as well as the reference point for renegotiating boundaries among other disciplines and reinventing some of them in various settings all over the world, in both Western and non-Western contexts.

As is well known (and as we will document in the following), CS is a broad and far-from-homogeneous intellectual formation, loosely held together by an original, but variously intended, reference to Marxism. In a way, it should really be understood as a *field* in the Bourdieusian sense; that is, a *field of forces* but also *of struggles* that tend to transform or conserve this field of forces, where the very definition of the field's legitimate contents, methods, and borders is at stake (Bourdieu 1984, 1992). Generated by various events and reworked in time and space, the field of CS is structured

across at least two axes: one opposing the more humanistic pole to the more social-scientific one, the other contrasting the more politically engaged with the more academically oriented poles. These axes also account for the different ways in which CS would be received, not only in different countries, but also in different regions and circles within national fields.

The story of CS is interesting because it makes clear how the circulation of ideas may affect their meanings and functions to the point that they can return to their original place and be newly received, different enough to enjoy new life and become resources for other intellectual projects. Moving from this point, in the following we advance a major theoretical claim about a substantive distinction between two kinds of reception processes: the selective reception of individual authors and ideas through certain disciplinary filters (e.g., sociology or history), on the one side, and the reception of a whole package of authors and ideas recognized as an intellectual formation *in itself* (in our case, as a whole intellectual formation called CS), on the other. Neither process is “innocent” as both are part and parcel of intellectual projects variously located in local intellectual and academic fields. The reader is asked to always keep this major distinction in mind.

Even if reconstructions of the reception of CS in individual countries already exist, to our knowledge this is the first attempt to systematically compare different cases with a common framework. As such, our comparative approach required us to conduct new research in all three countries. Our research sources were mixed: published memoirs, bibliographic repertoires, existing narratives, interviews with scholars and publishers engaged in the reception processes, and, last but not least, participant observation.

## What Are Cultural Studies, Anyway?<sup>2</sup>

There are plenty of articles and books about CS, describing what it is, what it could be, what it should be, what it has been and will be. We are not going to add a further definition to the many already in circulation—including the one any reader can find on Wikipedia. For our ends, it suffices to say that CS is a British creature, dating back to the early 1960s, which has been successful enough to become the reference point of various higher education and scholarly institutions located in various

parts of the globe, making it a truly transnational enterprise. In 1996, the first international conference was held in Tampere, Finland, which initiated a bi-annual series that continues today, called “Crossroads in Cultural Studies.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in 2002, an international Association for Cultural Studies (ACS) was created from this same initiative, based in Finland but with a worldwide reach and constituency.<sup>4</sup> National associations for CS have also been founded in the United States (USA), Canada, Taiwan, Spain, Australia, Japan, and Turkey. More than one international journal exists: starting with *Cultural Studies* (born as the *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies* in 1983, but “internationalized” three years later) and, going forward, the *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies: Travesia* (founded in 1995), *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (1998), *European Journal of Cultural Studies* (1998), *Journal of African Cultural Studies* (1998), and *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (2000).

The exportation of CS from its original British home in Birmingham as an even loosely identifiable research paradigm (whose label could work as a sort of intellectual brand) started quite early; by 1979, its central idea had already traveled across the Atlantic, influencing the foundation of *Social Text* by a New York-based intellectual collective. In 1982, not so far from Birmingham (on Teesside, in northeastern England), a journal was launched under the name *Theory, Culture & Society*, with the mission, among others, of fostering critical dialogue between CS and critical social theory.<sup>5</sup> It was, however, in 1983 that a journal explicitly invoking the CS label in its title was founded, though not in the United Kingdom (UK) but in its very antipodes, in Australia. The founding of journals claiming an affiliation with CS spread in the 1990s, when even previously established journals began changing their names, according to the new formula (e.g., *Travesia* became the *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, *African Languages and Cultures* was renamed the *Journal of African Cultural Studies*). Although there are many CS practitioners working in both area studies and ethnic studies programs and their professional associations (e.g., American studies, Asian studies, African-American studies, Latina/o studies, European studies, Latin American studies, etc.), CS is not synonymous with either “area studies” or “ethnic studies.” Indeed, what exactly CS is and how it crosses other research fields has been one of the main issues at stake in the formation of CS as an interdisciplinary

endeavor since its beginning. The disciplines involved in this formation are many and come from different research areas: literary criticism, sociology, semiotics, history, political theory, philosophy, aesthetics, and geography are just the most commonly mentioned in standard narratives (e.g., Turner 1990; Hartley 2003; Miller 2008; Hall 1980a, b, 2016).

To make things even more complex, during its early life, CS intersected variously with other influential political-intellectual movements such as feminism, the gay and lesbian movement, race studies, and others. The outcome is well described in the following excerpt from the first page of an authoritative reference text:

Cultural studies is a tendency across disciplines, rather than a discipline itself. This is evident in practitioners' simultaneously expressed desires to: refuse definition, insist on differentiation, and sustain conventional departmental credentials (as well as pyrotechnic, polymathematical capacities for reasoning and research). Cultural studies' continuities come from shared concerns and methods: the concern is the reproduction of culture through structural determinations on subjects versus their own agency, and the method is historical materialism [...]. Cultural studies is animated by subjectivity and power—how human subjects are formed and how they experience cultural and social space. It takes its agenda and mode of analysis from economics, politics, media and communication studies, sociology, literature, education, the law, science and technology studies, anthropology, and history, with a particular focus on gender, race, class, and sexuality in everyday life, commingling textual and social theory under the sign of a commitment to progressive social change. (Miller 2008, 1)

As Toby Miller recognized, this amounted to “a comprehensive challenge to academic business as usual” (ibid.).

## Where Does “British” Cultural Studies Come From?

Two factors contributed to the rise of CS in the UK. First, the postwar development of political discourses and practices contributing to the rise of the so-called New Left, a broad political movement consisting of

educators, agitators, and others seeking to implement a broad range of civil and cultural reforms, in contrast to earlier leftist or Marxist movements. Second, a new generation of scholars entered academic life, members of a generation with working-class backgrounds who were proud of their experience and work with not-so-young students in adult education. These two trends converged in 1964 with the founding of the CCCS at the University of Birmingham, where Richard Hoggart had just become a professor of English. Hoggart was the pivotal character in this enterprise,<sup>6</sup> but other scholars played leading roles as well: social historian E. P. Thompson, literary scholar Raymond Williams, and Caribbean scholar Stuart Hall, who would go on to have perhaps the most significant impact on contemporary academic culture of any scholar of color during his lifetime.

It is not by chance that CS's intellectual genealogies conventionally start with these three older British authors plus a younger one coming from an ex-colony (Jamaica), united in challenging the received wisdom in the humanities as they had been cultivated and taught in postwar England. Among their key points was the claim that "high" culture, as evaluated and transmitted in formal education, was just one expression of culture, which should be taken in the more anthropological sense of a way of life—"culture is ordinary," as Williams titled one of his seminal early essays—and understood as embedded in broader social, political, and institutional contexts. For example, in *The Uses of Literacy*, subsequently recognized as one of the founding texts of CS, Hoggart tried to make sense of the changing culture of the working class through a close reading of pubs and family life, as well as popular songs and literature, capitalizing on both his critical skills as a literary scholar and his personal experience of that culture as a child (Hoggart 1957). While not so personally grounded, both Williams's *Culture and Society* (1958) and Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) addressed problems of historical change in cultural life, approaching them from the point of view of literary consciousness in the first case, and ordinary people's reflexive awareness and creativity in the second. In their work, Hoggart, Williams, and Thompson acted as *critical* analysts of cultural experiences taken in their lived form, moving from the humanities in

which they had been educated into a true appreciation of cultural and social reality.

Even though the earliest beginnings of CS can be identified in debates occurring in a few New Left journals and clubs in the 1950s (Dworkin 1997), its institutionalization as an intellectual project began at the University of Birmingham, where Hoggart founded the CCCS in 1964 as a graduate research institute under his direction and with Hall as secretary. Life at the CCCS, where staff and students cooperated in its administration, was not without consequences for the working style of CS and its identity as a collective intellectual practice. The Centre worked through self-governing “groups” of researchers (who were often Master’s degree or PhD students) and teachers devoted to specific projects and issues, such as working-class history, youth subcultures, media audiences, and so on. Such groups as these produced most CCCS books, including *Resistance Through Rituals* (Hall and Jefferson 1976), *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al. 1978), and *The Empire Strikes Back* (CCCS 1982), which soon became classics in the field. Even though fellow students were encouraged to publish their own works (and many did: see, e.g., Hebdige 1979; Morley 1980; Willis 1977, 1978), the “collective book” was typical of Birmingham scholarship in its heyday.

One of the ironies of CS is that, although it was born in England as the outcome of an indigenous intellectual tradition—the so-called “culture & civilization” tradition at the center of Williams’s *Culture and Society*—and very local social transformations in working-class conditions (as described by Hoggart in his quasi-autobiographical *Uses of Literacy*), it soon evolved toward a very translocal, if not transnational enterprise. It is not by chance that the main person responsible for this transformation was the least “British” of the men involved in establishing CS, Stuart Hall. A student of literature, he was apparently aware that only through other resources could a complex matter such as “contemporary culture” be tackled. He read widely, gathering influences from fields ranging from anthropology to history, sociology to philosophy. The CCCS Annual Reports give access to the Centre’s student reading lists from that time, as well as the cultural policies it followed in order to find its way across the knowledge formations to be explored and mastered to a certain extent.

The lists of authors and texts reveal much about the intellectual origins of CS, even more than their representatives might readily admit, or its current commentators and practitioners are probably aware of.

Importing thinkers from continental Europe was common practice at the CCCS in the 1970s, including not only Antonio Gramsci, Roland Barthes, and Louis Althusser, as is widely known, but also sociologists such as Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, and Lucien Goldmann, and Pierre Bourdieu,<sup>7</sup> critical theorists such as Walter Benjamin, political writers such as Hans Magnus Enzensberger, linguists and philosophers of language such as Émile Benveniste, Umberto Eco, and Valentin Vološinov, and even psychoanalysts such as Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. The scope and variety of CCCS's readings were impressive in those years: indeed, an entire field of research was being created through the reworking and "translation"—literally and figuratively—of different intellectual resources drawn from disciplines that were usually separated and cultivated by different groups of scholars. Anything that could be useful for approaching "culture" as both a text and a practice, as a lived experience and a class of objects, could become a reference for students at the CCCS, especially if it was useful for bypassing traditional approaches such as "close reading" in literary studies or functional analysis in sociology.<sup>8</sup>

The rationale, but also the set of constraints, namely linguistic skills, as well as disciplinary ones, underpinning the CCCS approach to foreign scholars is well captured in the following excerpts from an interview with Stuart Hall that focused on the specific case of German scholars and of the non-reception of the Frankfurt School at the beginning (Winter and Azizov 2017, 264)<sup>9</sup>:

The Frankfurt School wasn't so important at the beginning, for various reasons. Most Frankfurt School texts were not translated. And lots of people didn't speak German. So when the Centre started up we didn't have the key texts of the Frankfurt School. Theodor W. Adorno's work wasn't known to us, we didn't know Walter Benjamin. There was Adorno's *The Authoritarian Personality* which is a wonderful book, but it is not a classical "Adorno" text. Later on we read Herbert Marcuse, but in his Californian stage. We are speaking about the early stage of the Centre, 1960s, early 70s.

We were not very philosophical. We had historians, visual theorists, philologists, but no philosophers. We should also think of the state of English language philosophy, which hated the European metaphysics [...]. That is why early Cultural Studies was formed as the field without philosophy. You shouldn't be surprised that it is so. Well, when we went into political questions we came across philosophy via Louis Althusser, via his critique of Hegelianism, deep critique of certain kind of Hegelianism. Not until later on some books became available, when Horkheimer become available in translations we understood what a serious project it was. It is the missed moment in the history. Cultural studies had a huge dialogue with sociology, including German sociology, Mannheim, Weber, but not philosophy as such. It is a real weakness of early Cultural studies, but it also has one strength: escape from the theory speculation.

In addition, Hall comments specifically about the Centre's approach to reading other scholars, with insights that apply more in general to the ways in which the selective appropriation of sources became an intellectual practice:

We were coming from anything, we were reading, borrowing, putting together. Something was taken from sociology, something was not, something taken from theory, something not, transdisciplinary field of work, not purified conceptually. Cultural studies have always been weak conceptually. That is why my work is very eclectic. I have never been Weberian, never been Gramscian, and never been Althusserian.[...] People say: You used to be a Marxist, but you are not anymore. It is not true, because I was never an economic Marxist, I was never an economic reductionist, and I was taking something out of Marx, because I thought it was adequate for ideology and culture [...]. In this period the Centre was working like that too. (Winter and Azizov 2017, 265)

## Three Reception Stories

We could ask how these authors circulated after their British rereading and remixing at the CCCS, but that would make for another chapter. Instead, we focus on how the intellectual production of BCS, grounded



on this wide and variegated set of intellectual sources, circulated in certain continental countries—those same countries that had provided the CCCS and scholars such as Thompson and Williams with crucial intellectual resources for their own creativity. In this section, we offer three analytic narratives devoted to Germany (more precisely, German-speaking countries, as Austria contributed to the circulation in German with a reception of its own), Italy, and France. How did BCS enter these countries, and through which channels? Who were the main scholars responsible for its circulation and reception? Which disciplines were most involved? What effects did it have?

We have tried to map and to track the different paths of this reception process, moving from a reconstruction and analysis of published translations of key authors (Williams, Hoggart, Hall, and others), to textbooks and other reference texts published in these countries (and in their national languages) by local scholars explicitly acknowledging their connection to the field of CS in its specific British genealogy. We also gathered information about journals devoted, *in toto* or in part, to CS, as well as about teaching and curricula.<sup>10</sup> In the following Tables 6.1 and 6.2 and Figs. 6.1 and 6.2, we quantitatively summarize the main results of our comparative research.

These tables and figures are just a frozen picture of the processes and stories that created the concrete possibility both for translations and the local production of books on BCS. In the next sections, we will synthesize the large quantity of data that we collected about these processes and stories through bibliographic analysis, web research, personal interviews with reception agents (translators, editors, and so on), documents, and—for Italy at least—participant observation.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 6.1** Number of translated titles (books + collections) of BCS works, by language (1960–2017)

Period	French	Italian	German
1960–1979	2	7	3
1980–1989	2	10	7
1990–1999	2	7	2
After 2000	11	10	5
Total	17	34	17

**Table 6.2** Number of works devoted to CS, by language and type (1970–2017)

Period	French		German		Italian	
	Handbooks/ textbooks	Other works	Handbooks/ textbooks	Other works	Handbooks/ textbooks	Other works
1970s				1		
1980s				2		1
1990s		4	3	9		1
After 2000	7	11	18	36	7	12

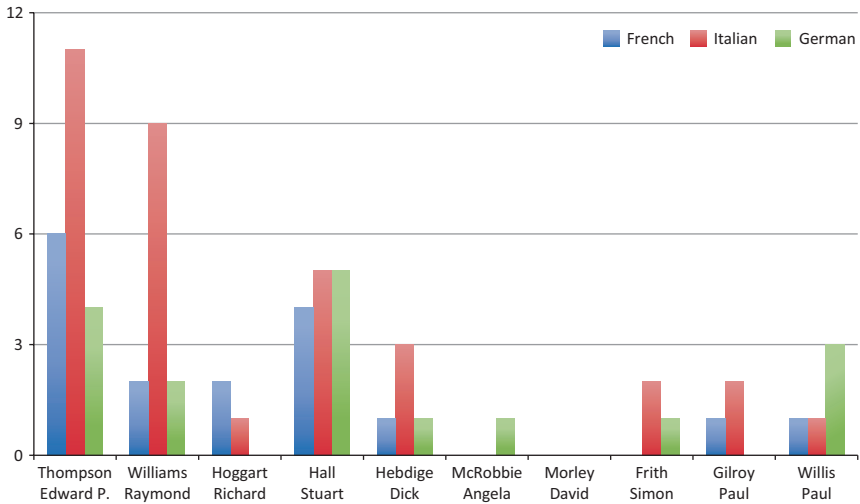


Fig. 6.1 Number of translated titles of selected BCS authors, by author and language (1960–2017)

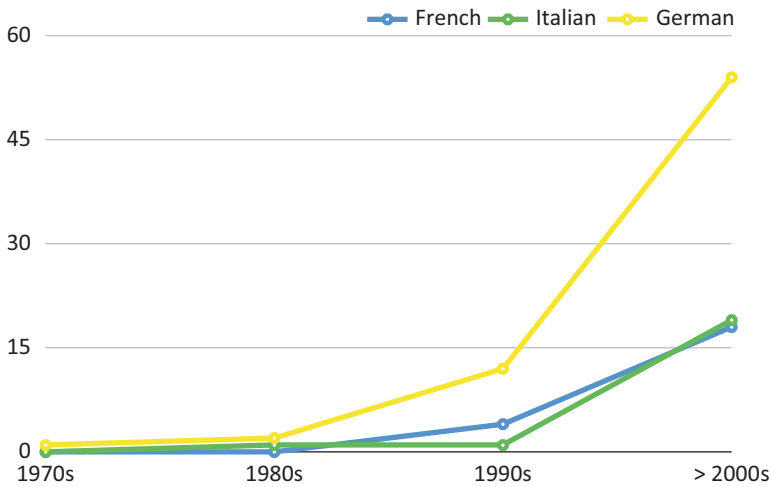


Fig. 6.2 Number of works devoted to CS, by language (1970–2017)

## Germany (and Austria)

In these German-speaking countries, the reception of BCS can be divided into three (slightly overlapping) temporal phases. In the first one, from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s, the main stakeholders of CS's works in West Germany were young social scientists close to alternative groups of Marxist intellectuals. Conversely, in the field of human sciences, CS's works did not take hold. Hence, the hegemony of *Kulturwissenschaften* for what concerns both its historical understanding of culture and its theoretical orientation at this stage prevents humanists from embracing a different intellectual style, shaped by "a politically motivated project" and aiming at "producing changes in society" (Middeke et al. 2012, 263). In the second phase, during the rest of the 1980s, we can identify two main reception processes in West Germany. The first one is an increasing reception of the political writings of CS's authors beyond the academic field. In parallel with this trend, we notice a feeble reception of Thompson's works within the field of historical sciences (namely in social history) thanks to the emergence of a new generation of academics. Nevertheless, because of the rigorous epistemic and symbolic boundaries of the disciplinary field, the interest remains limited to some of his works, and it fades in the next decades. Even in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), we can observe in this phase a circulation of some concepts borrowed by CS's works. The appropriation of these concepts enabled the emerging of new research areas, partially defying the political (Marxist orthodox) understanding of the social sciences in the small socialist country. Finally, the third phase, from the 1990s to 2010s, sees a progressive academic institutionalization of some CS's research areas, especially in media studies, thanks to a new generation of key mediators, especially from Austria, more influenced by American CS.

As mentioned earlier, the first phase began in the early 1970s, with the translation of some BCS works by newly founded small publishers closely affiliated with undogmatic Marxist groups.<sup>12</sup> The first translated monographic work was Raymond Williams's *Culture and Society* in 1972 (*Gesellschaftstheorie als Begriffsgeschichte: Studien zur historischen Semantik von Kultur*), published by a small Munich-based publisher, fol-

lowed in 1977 by another of Williams's works, *Marxism and Literature* (*Innovationen: über den Prozesscharakter von Literatur und Kultur*), released by Syndikat, a publisher founded by two ex-editors from Suhrkamp.<sup>13</sup> In the following years, Syndikat also published two works by Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour* (*Spaß am Widerstand: Gegenkultur in der Arbeiterschule*, 1979) and *Profane Culture* ("Profane culture." *Rocker, Hippies: Subversive Stile der Jugendkultur*, 1981). Influenced at the time by radical left culture (Frohn 2014), Rowohlt published *The Sociology of Rock* by Simon Frith (*Jugendkultur und Rockmusik: Soziologie der englischen Musikszene*, 1981) and *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* by Dick Hebdige (*Schocker: Stile und Moden der Subkultur*, 1983) in the early 1980s. Finally, the German translation of Thompson's *The Poverty of Theory* (*Das Elend der Theorie*) was published in 1980 by Campus, a new publisher of critical social science works. *The Poverty of Theory* was edited by the sociologist Michael Vester who, in 1968, had used Thompson's concept of social class (Thompson 1963 [1987]) as a "lived relation" for his PhD dissertation, *Die Entstehung antikapitalistischer Theorie und Praxis in England*.

Thus, through the early 1980s, the main mediators of BCS were young sociologists and political scientists (Horak 1999; Janssen 2010),<sup>14</sup> who were especially attracted to authors such as Willis, Williams, Hebdige, Frith, and Angela McRobbie for their studies on youth (sub)cultures (cf., Mikos 1997; Hepp 1999; Horak 1999, 2002; Göttlich 2013). Furthermore, many of them were involved in editorial activities, primarily for the publisher Syndikat and the political-cultural journal *Ästhetik und Kommunikation. Beiträge zur politischen Erziehung*, which, in 1976 and 1978, published two special issues focused on BCS concepts and works (Lindner and Wiebe 1985).<sup>15</sup> The first was devoted to leisure time in workers' neighborhoods (*Freizeit in Arbeitsviertel*) (Lindner and Paris 1976) and the second to rock music, accompanied by an excerpt from Willis's *Profane Culture*. On the other hand, the journal's subtitle, "papers on political education," defined the main framework for investigating everyday life phenomena and youth subcultures in Germany, probably a consequence of the student protests in the 1960s and 1970s.

The emergence of new ideas about youth socialization, influenced in part by the aspiration toward a more democratic German educational system, highlighted the inadequacy of the existing pedagogic canon and

inspired a search for new symbolic sources. At the same time, the institutionalization of political education within the faculties of political science and the transformation of pedagogic high schools in universities favored the enlargement of the social space of the academic field of pedagogy (Bleek 2001) by attracting young scholars from other disciplines who were unsatisfied with the canons of their disciplines (Kneisler 2015).<sup>16</sup> Thus, it is no coincidence that they published their BCS-inspired articles primarily in educational journals,<sup>17</sup> and that the first German/English conference on critical youth studies,<sup>18</sup> in 1984—with the participation of McRobbie, Phil Cohen, and Hebdige—was also included in the framework of political education (Lindner and Wiebe 1985).<sup>19</sup>

In contrast, (Marxist) scholars of literary studies and the humanities remained, for a long time, aloof from BCS, more interested in Jauss's reception theory (Funke 2004). Despite the fact that Jauss's theory was similar in some respects to the conceptual framework of BCS, it also differed from it on three crucial points: first, it restricted its analysis exclusively to literary texts; secondly, following Dilthey and Weber, it privileged a phenomenological-historical perspective (Assmann 1992; Böhme et al. 2000; Göttlich 2013; Herrmann 2004)<sup>20</sup>; thirdly, its concept of culture was imprinted by the German tradition of *Kulturwissenschaften*, which had been rooted in the academic field since the early decades of the twentieth century (and was close to the “sciences of spirit,” *Geisteswissenschaften*). As a result, humanities scholars were not interested in cultural phenomena related to everyday life.

In the 1980s, the existing panorama of publishers of BCS works changed radically, in parallel with a shift of interest towards other authors. In 1983, Suhrkamp, one of the most influential publishers in social sciences, reedited Williams's *Marxism and Literature*, and four years later it published Thompson's masterpiece, *The Making of the English Working Class* (as *Die Entstehung der englischen Arbeiterklasse*). A first book by E. P. Thompson, *Plebeische Kultur und moralische Ökonomie: Aufsätze zur englischen Sozialgeschichte des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (Folklore, Anthropology and Social History), had already been published in 1980 by the publisher Ullstein, a division of the conservative major publisher Springer (Jung 2016). The work was included in the “Social History Library” book series edited by Dieter Groh, student of the conservative

social historian Werner Conze (cf. Etzmüller 2001; Hardtwig and Schütz 2005),<sup>21</sup> and one of the few German historians interested in the history of the working class (cf. Lüdtke 1998). In any case, Thompson's reception in Germany began several years after the English publication of his masterpiece *The Making of the English Working Class*, and his reception by social historians was long overdue for two reasons. First, German social history, as understood in particular by the Bielefeld School (which included Kocka and Wehler, see note 21), was based on theories and concepts imported from the social sciences, such as the concept of "structure," which was absent in Thompson's works, who developed instead a processual and relational definition of class, contrasting also with Dahrendorf's structural-functionalist understanding of class (Lindenberger 2016, 19). Secondly, the student protests of the 1960s had raised new political and scientific interest in the history of the Nazi regime. However, focusing on its social structures entailed considering which roles the different social classes, included the working class, had played during the regime, but this perspective contrasted strongly with Thompson's analysis of the working class in the British context, whereby it reflected a different involvement of the working class in the previous phase. As a result, as Lindenberger stressed, at this stage there was "a consistent asymmetry in terms of possible transfers between the academic cultures of Great Britain and post-fascist West Germany" (ibid., 36).

Thompson's reception in the field of social history in the 1980s was possible thanks to the emergence of a new generation of historians who had socialized in the 1970s at spontaneous historical workshops close to the undogmatic leftist milieu, becoming interested in a "history from below" that dealt with the everyday lives of individuals (Lindenberger 2016; see also Kocka 1972, 2006). However, interest in Thompson's work remained temporally circumscribed. With the institutionalization of the history of everyday life research stream within the field of social history and with the need to adapt to the logic of the field, even for these scholars Thompson's works presented too little theorization.<sup>22</sup> Not least, with the exception of *The Making of the English Working Class*, the canonization of Thompson in the field of history was hindered by the reception of his political essays (six from 1981 to 1986) by peace and ecology movements close to the unorthodox Marxist wing (Lindenberger 2016).

During the same phase, BCS works also began to circulate in the GDR in various scientific contexts and networks. However, the reception of “Western” authors was hardly mediated by translating foreign works and, indeed, only Williams’s *The Welsh Industrial Novel* (1979 [1986]) was translated there. Translating Western authors in the GDR was difficult not only because of ideological but also financial and legal constraints.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, according to Wiedermann and Wicke, the appropriation of BCS authors did not represent an ideological rift with the universe of Marxist authors, and their ideas were assimilable to the workers’ culture promoted by the German socialist state at this stage (that is, during the so-called Honecker era). The difficulty consisted more in the possibility of “quoting” Anglo-Saxon authors, even though BCS works could be mentioned in bibliographies, as they were rarely controlled by government censors.<sup>24</sup> As a consequence, concepts imported from CS were often used in the text without references when these concepts were not discussed critically. Hence, these general social (and political) conditions highlight how the reception of CS authors, works, and ideas could occur only on a semi-institutional level, which also entailed in several cases the use of “two languages” and, consequently, of two levels of reading, one official and one unofficial.

If we look more deeply at the various fields of knowledge in which CS authors and concepts were appropriated, it is important to return to the 1960s, a phase of meaningful changes in the scientific social sciences and humanities. It is at this stage that we can note a first, feeble reception to Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class* by an internationally well-known economic historian, Jürgen Kuczynski. At this time, Kuczynski was writing one of the most imposing works on the history of the working class after 1789 (Kuczynski 1962–1971), which he concluded in 1971 (38 volumes), and was strongly criticized by West German historians both for its ideological orthodoxy and feeble methodology (Bottigelli et al. 1990). Kuczynski’s intellectual trajectory shows us how the ideological constraints of the field in the 1960s imposed on him a specific interpretation and selection of the materials and sources (Reulecke and Friedemann 1990). In 1964, he published a critical review of Thompson’s work (Kuczynski 1965) in which his ambivalent position is also visible (Lüdtke 1998). While on the one hand he criticized Thompson



for his use of the class concept (both in the Marxist sense of class in itself and class for itself), he appreciated the “complex way” in which Thompson approached the question of the working class in history. This approach was, in some ways, replicated in a later work on the everyday life history of the German people (*Geschichte des Alltags des deutschen Volkes*) published between 1980 and 1982 (in five volumes, 1980–1982). Nevertheless, within the discipline of History, where the history of the working class constituted an identity grounding the subdiscipline for the East German state, his position remained isolated. Until the end of the 1980s, following Marxist-Leninist ideology, historians’ research was mainly aimed at demonstrating a strong correspondence between the Party as the avant-garde of the working class and the working class itself as the subject of history (Reulecke and Friedemann 1990).

Thus, Thompson’s reception was stronger in the last decade of the GDR in the subdiscipline of “Cultural History” (*Kulturgeschichte*) which, together with Cultural Theory (*Kulturtheorie*), Ethnology, Arts and Aesthetics and Cultural Sociology formed the nucleus of the *Kulturwissenschaften* in the GDR and, especially, at the Humboldt Universität where their institutionalization began in 1963 with a degree course and led to the foundation of an autonomous institute in 1969 after the third university reform. Over time, its founder, Dieter Mühlberg, also a scholar with international networks and interests, developed a broader understanding of culture with respect to its political and scientific understanding in the more ideologized disciplines regarding both the “socialist way of life” and the routines and habits of individuals, considered singularly or in different socio-cultural contexts from the family to the work team to free-time institutions (Gransow 1984; Reulecke and Friedemann 1990; Saldern 1998). In particular, through this new understanding of “culture” at both social and academic levels, Mühlberg distanced himself both from philosophy, also a strongly ideologized discipline, and from the humanist tradition of the German *Kulturwissenschaften*, which was also pivotal to the political culture of the GDR (Abusch 1959). Thus, in 1975, Mühlberg founded a small research group, AG Kulturgeschichte, in his institute, with the aim of reconstructing the cultural history of the German working class by producing, over time, critical reviews and international bibliographies (including BCS authors) on various related

topics as well as, more broadly, on the existing international literature in the fields of cultural theory, cultural sociology, cultural anthropology, et cetera. (cf. the 38 volumes of the journal *Mitteilungen aus der kulturwissenschaftlichen Forschung* published from 1978 to 1989, one of the main forums for GDR cultural scholars, together with *Weimar Beiträge*). What is interesting to notice is that, in this case, not only were the works of writers such as Thompson and Williams appreciated by the members of this research group, but that criticism of their concepts, for example, Thompson's definition of "class," were sometimes discussed through the lens of other Western authors, such as Bourdieu (Dietrich 1981).

Here, it is important to mention two other important mediators of CS in the GDR who also built a network of collaborators and scholars around them, which facilitated the dissemination of CS concepts. Lothar Bisky and Peter Wicke were two scholars with international prestige, thanks to whom three subdisciplines were particularly receptive towards BCS: music science, youth studies, and communication studies (always part of the *Kulturwissenschaften*). Bisky was a sociologist of culture with influential contacts in the political sphere, while Wicke had been his student and was the first academic in the whole of Germany to have a post studying popular music. What is worth mentioning is that, in the latter case, the main difficulties for disseminating BCS ideas mostly derived from internal resistance in the field of music sciences. Conversely, the GDR government was interested in the new cultural and musical tendencies of GDR youth. At the end of the 1970s, Wicke succeeded in establishing a center for popular music at Humboldt University that served over time as an international graduate school, in this way satisfying the GDR's desire for international acknowledgment. Above all, the existence of this structure allowed Wicke to invite BCS representatives, such as Hebdige, to his center. Bisky played a pivotal role in disseminating BCS concepts at the Institute for Youth Studies at Leipzig and at the high school for film studies in Babelsberg, where he was director in the late 1980s. The main limitation for all three research areas (and broadly for the GDR's *Kulturwissenschaften*) was that the investigations based on BCS concepts carried out in these institutes circulated almost exclusively within the academic milieu through informal networks, without being officially published. In any case, the fact that the reception of BCS in the GDR

primarily concerned these new research areas, with a small degree of institutionalization,<sup>25</sup> highlights a weakening of the influence of Marxist-Leninist ideology in the academic field (Herrmann 2004).

Since the end of the 1980s, the BCS authors that have been most translated into German are Hall, McRobbie, and David Morley. Some works of Hall and McRobbie had already been translated in the early 1980s, but their reception was mostly limited to the political-cultural subfield of (undogmatic) Marxist social sciences (Räthzel 2000). Since the 1990s, several of Hall's essays have been included in handbooks and textbooks on cultural and media studies,<sup>26</sup> whereas McRobbie's case is paradigmatic of the progressive academic institutionalization of gender studies.<sup>27</sup> Her work has especially been reframed around the topic of the precarious working conditions of women in the post-Fordist era (Bock 2007; Manske and Pühl 2010).

In general, it could be argued that, since the 1990s, CS has experienced a progressive institutionalization, witnessed by the growing production of textbooks, handbooks (cf., Bromley and Göttlich 1999; Hepp 1999; Lutter and Reisenleitner 2002), and book series devoted to them (cf., Transcript and Turia + Kant). This process was marked symbolically by a conference held in 1994 in Vienna at the Institute für Kulturstudien—IKUS (Lindner 2000), highlighting the increasing interest in CS in Austria. With respect to the previous reception, three changes should be stressed: the growing importance of American CS, the shift from social sciences to cultural sciences and the humanities (*Kultur- and Geisteswissenschaften*), and the shift from an ethnographic to a textual perspective (Mikos 1997).<sup>28</sup> CS's reception especially expanded in two macro-disciplinary fields. The first field was media studies, especially as it developed in Austria. In Germany, in contrast, the reception of BCS authors (especially Morley) was hindered both by the influence of the Frankfurt School's mass media industry analysis (Mikos 1997),<sup>29</sup> and by the American empirical quantitative methods employed in studying media effects. As a consequence, in Germany BCS authors have become influential in smaller subfields, such as journalism studies.<sup>30</sup> The second reception field was that of English and literary studies. Thus, since the early 2000s, it seems that there has been an attempt to establish a dialogue between CS and the German tradition of *Kulturwissenschaften*

(Nünning and Nünning 2008), which has also been reflected in the development of (relatively) new research fields, such as translation studies (cf., Nünning 2012; Bachmann-Medick 2015).

## Italy

Scholars linked to BCS arrived in Italy very early,<sup>31</sup> even before something known as BCS had come to be identified. The first translations of writings by Thompson and Williams date back to the early 1960s, and were related to the Italian reception of the New Left (especially texts on nuclear disarmament and student movements). Williams was the first to be translated as a scholar (and not as a militant intellectual),<sup>32</sup> with his foundational *Culture and Society*, aptly published by Einaudi in 1968 with the Italian title *Cultura e rivoluzione industriale*. This was also the historical frame into which Thompson's masterpiece arrived in Italy one year later (*Rivoluzione industriale e classe operaia in Inghilterra*, 1969). Published without any preface or introduction, these two books could not be regarded as elements of the same research program.

The existence of something known as "cultural studies" came to the attention of an Italian readership in 1970 through a young scholar of English literature, Lidia Curti, who had encountered the CCCS very early during her formative years. As she recently wrote (after Hall's death in 2014):

As to me I cannot but recall Stuart's sunny face when I first met him in 1964. He was starting his work in Birmingham, and I was a newcomer to the Centre with a copy of Gramsci's *Lettere dal carcere*, not yet translated into English, and there to carry out research on English working class theatre. In spite of being by then far from his previous concerns with literature and theatre, Stuart showed interest and offered guidance as the real educator he was, though of course Gramsci was far more interesting for him. We were both in our early thirties and on the utopian journey to a revolution that seemed not too far away. We were close friends and comrades through the excitement of '68, and the pangs of its aftermath that Stuart resumed in his essay "The missed moment." Our respective paths crossed many

times mostly at and through the Centre where I was welcomed nearly every summer and then for over a year in 1974–75, in the moment of my abandonment of the Italian Communist Party that was becoming something else. From the mid-sixties onwards, there were Stuart's and Catherine's [his wife] constant visits to Naples and the Orientale where he brought his intellectual insight, his revolutionary perspectives on knowledge and politics, his extraordinary oratorical gifts and his capacity to listen and communicate to our students, some of whom were quite eccentric and a bit out of their heads. His generosity in keeping the link between Naples and cultural studies never wavered: from being contested by the Maoists in those heady days to recent times, more tranquil alas, when his health made it difficult and his contribution even more generous. (Chambers and Curti 2017)

Curti's relationship with the CCCS at the time was so close that a new book series was started, co-edited by Hoggart and published by a new, militant publishing house in Rome, Officina. Two seminal texts of BCS were issued in this series in 1970: Hall's *The Popular Arts*, co-authored with the British Film Institute's secretary Paddy Whannel, and, above all, Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*, the latter under the Marxist title of *Proletariato e industria culturale*—an effect of the recent arrival in Italy of Adorno and Horkheimer's thinking.<sup>33</sup> Still, in 1979, in the same book series, Williams's seminal text *The Long Revolution* was published with the editorship of another student of English literature, Paola Splendore, who like Curti was located academically in Naples, at the L'Orientale University—a public higher education institution specializing in the study of languages and cultures. This is the place where the early reception of BCS occurred in Italy, also thanks to the personal relationships between Curti and a former student at the CCCS, Iain Chambers, who migrated to Italy in the 1970s, starting his academic career there as a sociologist and contributing through his teaching and writing to the diffusion (as well as reworking) of ideas and methods originally shaped at Birmingham.

While Naples and Birmingham were cultivating their close relationship on both personal and professional levels (Curti had been a visiting lecturer at the CCCS for all the 1970s), CCCS's ideas were also spreading through other channels. Subculture theory, especially *music* subculture,

was probably one of the most appealing topics for publishing houses in the 1970s and early 1980s in Italy because of a strong demand for texts by the more or less politicized youth. Both Hebdige's *Subculture* and Frith's *Sociology of Rock* made their appearance at the beginning of the 1980s, the former in a book series on aesthetic studies, the latter with a presentation by Franco Fabbri, a musician and scholar who was trying to introduce Italy to the new discipline of popular music studies. In the meantime, Thompson's works found a new audience and interpretation among social historians close to the "microhistory" movement (such as Edoardo Grendi, who edited a seminal collection of Thompson's articles in 1984 for the Einaudi book series "Microstorie").<sup>34</sup>

Paradoxically, Hall's students such as Hebdige and Chambers were, for many decades, more renowned and in circulation in Italy than Hall himself. Albeit translated only very recently, Paul Willis also knew some degree of fame because of the widespread reputation of his *Learning to Labour* among sociologists.<sup>35</sup> Nothing existed of Hall in Italian except his early book co-authored with Paddy Whannel on the popular arts—a book that never really circulated, and whose impact on scholars could be said to be close to nothing. However, in the 1990s, Hall's work found an unexpected audience among sociologists, especially media sociologists, in Florence and in Rome,<sup>36</sup> and cultural sociologists located at the Catholic University in Milan who were eager to find new tools that could be useful for making sense of the cultural transformations occurring in the metropolis.

While, in the former case, it was the CCCS's Hall, the Hall of "encoding/decoding" who was finally discovered, in the latter it was the more sociological Hall who emerged, in particular, with the idea of the culture circuit he had set forth in an influential series of textbooks developed for the Open University (du Gay et al. 1997). However, it took almost another decade for the first translations of Hall's seminal works to arrive in Italian. Curiously, two collections appeared in the same year, 2006, which were partly overlapping yet differently framed by their respective editors: Giovanni Leghissa, a philosopher formed in the Italian tradition of *pensiero debole*, 'weak thought' (Rovatti and Vattimo 1983), and anthropologist Miguel Mellino, Argentinian by birth but Italian by adoption,

who since then has been one of the most influential promoters of postcolonial studies in Italy.

The real turning point in the Italian reception of BCS (and, more generally, CS) was the establishment of a few new journals specially devoted to this new formation: in 2000, *Agalma* was founded by the philosopher and aesthetic theorist Mario Perniola (who in his youth had been close to the Situationist movement), while in 2004 a collective of scholars then in their 30s and 40s founded *Studi culturali*, a sort of interdisciplinary laboratory where sociologists, semioticians, philosophers, historians, and literary scholars met and tried to find intersections for their competences and concerns. The fact that this latter journal was published by what was possibly at the time the most mainstream publisher in Italy for the (academic) social sciences and humanities, Il Mulino, surely helped to give further academic legitimacy to CS—not only as a potential source of useful ideas but as an intellectual enterprise and an academic label in itself.

It is not by accident that the first CS textbook did not appear until 2008, edited by two of Eco's students (Demaria and Nergaard 2008). Already in 2004, however, the *Dizionario degli studi culturali* had been issued, promoted by a Germanist who had encountered CS through its German and, above all, Austrian reception (Cometa 2004). These cultural initiatives notwithstanding, CS today still has a weak presence in the Italian academic system. Indeed, in the national classification of disciplinary sectors (the spine of the Italian academic system, around which everything happens, from recruitment to teaching organization to grant distribution) something like *studi culturali* is still missing—as are gender studies and even media studies (topics being pursued inside and across different disciplinary sectors, such as sociology, literature, and film studies).

As a matter of fact, until 2016, CS had been the identity noun reference for just three degree courses,<sup>37</sup> and three PhD programs, the latter in Naples, Palermo, and Bologna, the three major academic centers where CS has been imported into Italy in the last four decades. The impact of BCS on Italian academic research and teaching cannot be reduced, however, to these official initiatives, as its authors and ideas have been circulating widely in research fields including communication, gender studies, deviance/criminology, and even literary studies, especially when studies



are undertaken in a comparative manner (see, e.g., Benvenuti 2006). Although it is almost impossible to identify it in some “pure form,” BCS has contributed to a renewal of Italian Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), being the main reference point for those younger scholars especially sensitive to identity politics and the effects of mediation on all sorts of cultural production and consumption.

On the margins of academia, in the interstices between intellectual research and various kinds of militant scholarship, one of the most impressive effects of the circulation of BCS has been its early merging with currents of Italian radical theory, especially so-called *operaismo* (e.g., Neilson 2005), as well as its impact on the Italian rereading of Gramsci. Indeed, beginning in the 1950s, Gramscian studies were home to both militant appropriations and philological concerns. BCS’s reading of Gramsci helped to resituate him in intellectual debates and research programs, less as an object of political appropriation or specialized scholarship and more as an intellectual resource for the study of contemporary cultural life (see Dei 2002; Vacca et al. 2008; Filippini 2011).

## France

The French contribution to the theoretical and methodological apparatus of BCS has been strong. Scholars and authors such as Althusser, Bourdieu, Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Morin, Baudrillard, De Certeau, and Derrida figure prominently in BCS writings—after having found their way into the reading lists of the CCCS. As an early instance of interdisciplinarity, the intellectual project of the *Annales*, founded by Febvre and Bloch, also had some influence. But as has been pointed out (Neveu 2008, 2011), this Paris–London line of influence has been a one-way street for a long time. In our research, we have attempted to track the various moments of the reception of BCS in France through an analysis of French translations and publications in French on and about (B)CS.<sup>38</sup> Looking at the previous tables and figures, it is apparent that France (with 17 translated works, most of which came after 2005) is the country that has imported this scholarly tradition to a lesser extent (which is different from “received,” of course) than the others we have analyzed.



In terms of translations, sociology has been the most involved discipline, followed by history (relevant, above all, with respect to Thompson, of course), English literature, and education. As for textbooks and introductions (including special issues), they are the outcome of people working at the intersection between sociology and media/communication studies.<sup>39</sup> The French case is interesting because it sheds light on the issues at stake in the disciplinary *doxa* of the academy, especially those related to the place of sociology and its hegemonic role. We underline our claim (see the introductory paragraph) about a substantive distinction between the reception of individual authors through a selective and disciplinary filter (e.g., sociology or history), on the one side, and the reception of a whole package of authors and ideas recognized as an intellectual formation *in itself* (in this case, an anti- or post-disciplinary formation), on the other. To simplify these rather complex processes, we can distinguish three stages in the history of BCS reception in France.

Early reception (1970–1995). The first text to be imported and translated in France was Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (*La culture du pauvre: étude sur le style de vie des classes populaires en Angleterre*), edited by Jean-Claude Passeron in 1970 (12 years after its original publication, but the same year as its Italian translation) and published in the Minuit book series "Le sens commun," directed by Pierre Bourdieu. The text was overtly marked and framed for reception as a strictly sociological work; the translation was intentionally strategic, as Passeron (1996, 1) himself acknowledged. Grignon, a former student of Bourdieu, moved along this same line when he edited the French translation of Hoggart's autobiography in 1991.<sup>40</sup> From his collaboration with Passeron would emerge a seminal book, *Le Savant et le Populaire. Misérabilisme et populisme en sociologie et en littérature* (1989), a text not immediately devoted to CS but resonant with their reevaluation of popular cultures.

Still, thanks to Bourdieu, who had read and cited Williams since the 1960s and who invited both Williams and Thompson to his seminar, between 1976 and 1978 a series of fragments by Williams,<sup>41</sup> Willis, and Thompson were translated in the journal *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*. He was preceded by *Annales*, which in 1972 had published an article by Thompson in translation. After this early reception among historians, the first book by Thompson appeared. Interestingly, it was not a

scholarly work but rather a political one, *Exterminism and Cold War* (1982), translated as *L'exterminisme: armement nucléaire et pacifisme* in 1983 by the prestigious academic publisher PUF.<sup>42</sup> Only in 1988 (20 years after the Italian edition) was Thompson's magnum opus, *The Making of the English Working Class*, translated as *La Formation de la classe ouvrière anglaise* for Gallimard's "Hautes Études" EHESS/Gallimard/Seuil series, edited not by a historian but by the political philosopher Miguel Abensour (renowned as an importer of Frankfurt School texts to France; see Chap. 5 in this volume).

Much less attention was devoted to Williams, of whom there is available only a short text on George Orwell from the small publisher Seghers (mainly active in literature and poetry). *Culture and Society* is not yet available in French, its wide circulation among English-reading scholars notwithstanding. In 1994, the first translation of a Hall text, his seminal article on encoding/decoding, was made available to French-speaking readers as "Codage/Décodage," published in the journal *Réseaux* in a special issue dedicated to reception theory that also included texts by Eco and British scholar Paddy Scannell.<sup>43</sup>

Explicit paradigmatic reception (1996–2005). In 1996, Armand Mattelart (an internationally renowned Belgian scholar of communication and media studies) and Erik Neveu (a French political scientist) made the first attempt to introduce CS, including BCS, in French, with a strong emphasis on its resonance with Bourdieu's social theory, proposing a special issue of *Réseaux*, the journal that had first translated texts by Stanley Cohen, Williams, and Hebdige. In 2003, the same authors published an *Introduction aux Cultural Studies* for La Découverte (a very well-distributed, left-oriented publishing house) in the book series "Repères," a series consisting of concise introductions to more or less specialized topics in the social and human sciences (Mattelart and Neveu 2003). The aim of the book was to critically introduce the reader to this tradition, showing its potential for integration with Bourdieu's critical sociology as well as underlining the methodological and conceptual limits of CS, especially as it had been received and reworked in the USA under the aegis of poststructuralism and so-called "French Theory."

Looking at the figures, it is possible to notice how, between 1996 and 2005, the publications of classical texts by BCS authors decreased. The

only text translated in this period was Thompson's 1967 article "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism" as *Temps, discipline du travail et capitalisme industriel*, published in 2004 by La Fabrique (a radical left and militant publisher). This decrease runs parallel to an increase in critical introductions to CS, which also contributed to the circulation and reception of BCS in France (we counted seven).

Established reception (after 2005). This was the most receptive stage, statistically (with nine classic and 15 introductory texts) and was marked by the presence of anti-Bourdieuian instances. The most prominently involved scholars were Éric Maigret (PhD with Danièle Hervieu-Léger), Éric Macé (PhD with Touraine), and Maxime Cervulle (PhD with Bernard Darras). Reacting to the approach set forth by Mattelart and Neveu, Maigret and Macé began to introduce the neologism "*médiacultures*" after 2000,<sup>44</sup> through which they attempted to promote in France a sociology of culture directly informed by CS (the main outcome of this effort was the book *Penser les médiacultures* (Macé and Maigret 2005)).<sup>45</sup> In 2007, Cervulle edited a special issue of the journal *MEI, Médiation et information*, entitled "Études culturelles & Cultural Studies," that contributed greatly to the circulation of BCS in France. At the same time, Bernard Darras attempted to introduce CS into the academy by founding a Master's program on CS in arts and aesthetics at the University of Paris 1 (Darras 2007). The emergence of this new group of scholars also produced effects on the very definition of CS: while Mattelart and Neveu introduced BCS by moving through the canonical triad of Thompson–Hoggart–Williams, the *nouvelle vague* started directly from Hall (Glévarec et al. 2008; Maigret 2009, 16).

Thanks to publisher Armand Colin and the INA, in 2008 Glévarec, Macé, and Maigret had the opportunity to publish the first broad anthology of CS in French, with the first translations of texts by Hall, Phil Cohen, McRobbie, Jenny Garber, Willis, Hebdige, Gary Clarke, Morley, Janice Radway, John Fiske, Henry Jenkins, Joke Hermes, David Muggleton, Ien Ang, David Hesmondhalgh, John Frow, Paul Gilroy, and Henry Jenkins—collecting various generations of CS practitioners from the UK and the USA (as well as Australia) in a single, unique volume (Glévarec et al. 2008). The real reception of Hall

began, indeed, in 2007, when Éditions Amsterdam published the first French collection of his most important essays, as *Identités et culture: politiques des cultural studies* under the editorship of Cervulle, followed by *Le populisme autoritaire: puissance de la droite et impuissance de la gauche au temps du thatchérisme et du blairisme*, and, last but not least, the first book-long monograph, *Stuart Hall*, devoted to this author in French, co-authored by Mark Alizart, Macé, and Maigret. A second volume of *Identités et culture 2. Politiques des différences*, again edited by Cervulle, followed in 2013. It is worth noting that Éditions Amsterdam also published Gilroy's *Black Atlantic*, together with other seminal texts in postcolonial studies (by Dipesh Chakrabarty, Partha Chatterjee, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak; on the latter's French reception, see Chap. 14 in this volume) and queer studies (Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick).

This broader reception at the level of the whole CS paradigm did not stop the flow of selected translations of individual works. The most recent French reception of BCS has been primarily a business of small publishers firmly established on the left, as witnessed by the publication of Hebdige's *Subculture* as *Sous-culture: le sens du style* in 2008 (Zones) and Williams's *Culture and Materialism* as *Culture & matérialisme* in 2009 (Les prairies ordinaires). In 2011, the independent publisher Agone issued Willis's classic text *Learning to Labour* as *L'école des ouvriers: comment les enfants d'ouvriers obtiennent des boulots d'ouvriers*, edited by political sociologists Sylvain Laurens and Julian Misch. In this revival, Thompson also gained new attention with the further publication of three works (making him the most translated BCS author in France): *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* as *La guerre des forêts: luttes sociales dans l'Angleterre du XVIIIe siècle* was translated by La Découverte in 2014; the small, anarchy-oriented publisher L'Échappée translated *The Poverty of Theory, or an Orrery of Errors* as *Misère de la théorie: contre Althusser et le marxisme anti-humaniste* in 2015; finally, in 2015, Gallimard/Le Seuil/EHESS (in the canonic "Hautes études" series) translated *Customs in Common* as *Les usages de la coutume: traditions et résistances populaires en Angleterre: XVIIe–XIXe siècle*.

## A Comparative (Field) Analysis

As we have seen, the timing and circulation channels for texts and ideas from BCS to Italy, France, and Germany/Austria have been very different (see Fig. 6.3). Different disciplines have been involved, at different times and with different outcomes. How can we make sense of these data and stories?

As we have documented, BCS, especially at the time of its founding at the CCCS, was very sensitive to stimuli coming from other countries, especially France, where, in the 1950s, people such as Roland Barthes were already investigating how apparently minor cultural forms, such as wrestling or magazine images, encoded structures of power and worked

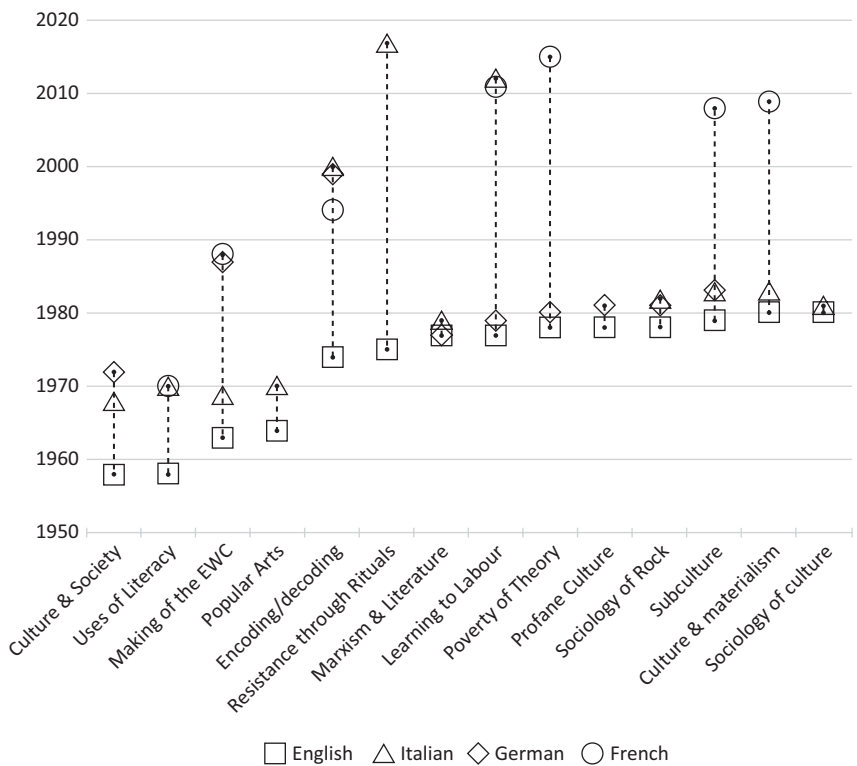


Fig. 6.3 Time gaps in translations, by title and language

like veritable popular “mythologies.” A truly French tradition of CS, though, has never really coalesced, except in the burgeoning field of (new) media studies. However, poststructuralist thinking has, in a certain way, both fostered CS elsewhere and offered a sort of local surrogate, especially thanks to such scholars as the philosopher and sociologist Jean Baudrillard, one of the earliest scholars of consumer society and virtual reality (e.g., Kellner 1994), the philosopher and historian Michel Foucault, possibly the most influential theorist of the link between knowledge and power, and the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who drew on both anthropology and sociology (two disciplines that have been intermeshed in French academic culture at least since Durkheim) to analyze how culture, and legitimated “high” culture in particular, impact both social stratification and socialization (i.e., “habitus formation”).

In Italy, as in France, a real tradition of CS has emerged only slowly and with some resistance; however, the seeds that produced CS in Britain were already well represented by indigenous traditions of cultural research, including not only Gramsci and his heritage (stronger in the political sphere than in the academy) but also such scholars as the ethnologist Ernesto De Martino, the philosopher/semiotician Eco, and a local tradition of radical thought, so-called *operaismo*, established in the 1970s and still in existence, well represented by internationally reputed scholars such as Paolo Virno, Toni Negri, and in some ways the media theorist and activist Franco Berardi (Bifo) (see Neilson 2005).

While the CCCS was developing as a “school” in Britain, in Germany the philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas was drawing on the Frankfurt tradition of critical social theory in order to make sense of what he famously called the “public sphere”—conceiving it as a third “domain” between the marketplace and the state that was not reducible to family and private life. With his insistence that communication was an aspect of social reality irreducible to economic interests, Habermas was indeed developing a cultural interpretation of political life destined to gain much traction in the Anglo-American world, especially in the USA, where Habermas’s highly theoretical work has inspired more empirical, usually historical, analyses of the effects of newspapers and other media on civil society (Calhoun 1992). For the German case, the importation of the British tradition has been carried out through a dialogue—sometime an

almost silent dialogue, to be sure—with the indigenous tradition of *Geisteswissenschaften* and their natural contemporary protraction as *Kulturwissenschaften*. As is well known, in the German tradition, interest in *Kultur* is central and has found many important ways to be cultivated, from the Frankfurt School tradition to the Constance School of literary reception.

As in Italy, in Germany and Austria the political connotations of BCS have been relevant since the beginning (in the 1970s), and have prepared a landscape where selected processes of reception could occur. Certainly, *Kultur* has more elitist connotations than the English *culture*, and the Frankfurt School was not exactly prone to celebrating popular culture. However, Adorno's critical studies of popular music as well as Horkheimer and Adorno's invention of the concept of the "culture industry" cannot be easily dismissed as simply "attacks": as a wide literature has shown, they could make room for a more tolerant, inclusive, even transgressive approach to the study of contemporary culture (e.g., Witkin 2003; Steinert 2003; Lash and Lury 2007).

In the French case, we are dealing with a paradoxical reluctance to receive BCS *as such*—paradoxical considering the foundational role of so-called French theory for this tradition—combined with dispersed attempts to use it as a tool for renewing older traditions of cultural analysis grounded in Marxism (e.g., Althusser, Lefebvre), semiotics (Baudrillard, Barthes), ethnology or sociology (Lévi-Strauss, Bourdieu, Passeron, etc.). The pivotal role of Bourdieu in its early circulation has emerged very well, together with its selective appropriation of authors and ideas—excluding, for instance, Hall and all the Althusser-influenced production of the 1970s—as individual scholars and never as representatives of any wider tradition or school. In fact, Bourdieu, with his seminars and journal, imported individual scholars such as Williams, Thompson, and others, but not something like BCS or the Birmingham tradition.<sup>46</sup> It is only with a new generation of scholars who are very active in media and communication studies, and who never engaged in Paris-based debates about Marxism and Communism, along with the establishment of new publishing endeavors (such as Éditions Amsterdam with its focus on postcolonial and queer studies), that the early reception

of the “founding fathers” of BCS, such as Hoggart, Williams, and Thompson (which had already occurred in venues such as Bourdieu’s “Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales” and “Le sens commun” book series), could be supplemented and completed with Hall and the CCCS students of the 1970s.

In the Italian case, an early reception of the BCS founding fathers was facilitated by the influence of the New Left beginning in the 1960s, as well by the personal relationships established between scholars from Birmingham and Naples at the very beginning of the CCCS, with the subsequent formation of a self-proclaimed “*Scuola napoletana di studi culturali*” (led by Curti and Chambers). A special, albeit far from direct and linear, contribution to this reception was made by Eco’s work on cultural theory and semiotics, as well as the well-established presence of Gramsci, a major source for BCS but also, in Italy, a heavily compromised name in the political arena. Only with the new millennium did these early steps coalesce into a recognizable, though circumscribed, field of *studi culturali* through the founding of journals specially devoted to CS, such as *Agalma*, *Comunicazioni sociali* (since 2001), and *Studi culturali*, the latter founded with the precise objective of creating and fostering an Italian field of CS.

## Conclusion

We could make a further step in our analysis by introducing the concept of field as a theoretically generative dispositive (Bourdieu 1984, 1992). As is well known, a field is a portion of social space where agents are differentially located according to their resources (forms of capital) and trajectory. What the previous narratives show is that BCS experienced different trajectories in the three national cases according to the location of early importers and to the ways in which the study of cultural matters and related topics (e.g., media and arts) had already been organized and positioned with respect to other research fields. The French case is clearly one of selective appropriation in terms of an originally local (and only subsequently international) intellectual project,



that of Bourdieu. This may account for the recent reception phase, which has been driven by a strong anti-Bourdieuian perspective—making CS a case of foreign reception directly engaged with dynamics in the local academic field (as had also happened with Weber in his French reception; see Pollak 1988).

Italy is a different case. BCS entered primarily through Naples-based personal networks but also took advantage of a well-established local tradition of (post)Marxist thinking focused on Gramsci, which provided both an opportunity and an obstacle because of the strong political accent of this legacy and the troubles Marxism in general suffered as a paradigm in the 1980s and 1990s. This gave a local basis to the Italian appropriation of CS, originally grounded in Naples or having Naples as its reference point. The growth of sociology and the sociology of culture, in particular, in the 1980s offered new opportunities for reception beyond the scholars of English language and (popular) musicology circles who were involved in this early reception. Only in the new millennium was a new generation of scholars able to overcome these restricted disciplinary horizons and find a way to engage with CS as such; that is, as an attempt to transcend disciplinary boundaries and achieve a different perspective on culture. The attempt was relatively successful—indeed, it contributed to moving CS toward the legitimated pole of the field (certified institutionally by the high ranking given to the journal *Studi culturali* by ANVUR, the newly formed national agency for research evaluation). At the same time, CS is still a marginal and, for many observers, heterodox category in the Italian academy.

## Notes

1. Respectively: Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Norwegian, Finnish, Albanian, and French. To be sure, this is just a sample of terms we could have referred to. Equivalent labels can be found in other languages as well, including Catalan, Polish, Estonian, Turkish, and even Indonesian. Currently, Wikipedia lists 23 webpages in as many languages as corresponding to the English “Cultural studies” entry. The correspondence is not always appropriate, as in the case of the German *Wissenschaften*,

which cannot be considered strictly equivalent to CS owing to its genealogy and content. On the Albanian label (not immediately retrievable on Wikipedia), see Boni and Perleka (2017).

2. This heading is a homage to Johnson (1986). The plural in the verb is intentional.
3. See the conference website, [http://www.cultstud.org/wordpress/?page\\_id=1040](http://www.cultstud.org/wordpress/?page_id=1040).
4. For reasons that deserve more attention than we can give here, Finland has been at the forefront of this internationalization movement, mainly thanks to the academic entrepreneurship of Pertti Alasuutari, a Finnish sociologist based in Tampere. On the Finnish reception of CS, see: Alasuutari (2010).
5. An unsigned editorial in the first issue (presumably by the founding editor, Mike Featherstone), after emphasizing the journal's aim to "encourage the substantive description and analysis of everyday life and popular culture," and insisting on the value of popular fiction as a useful source in which to study them, stated that: "The latter point has been central to the development of cultural studies in Britain and is emphasized in varying ways in the work of Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart and E. P. Thompson, who all stress the need to come to grips with culture conceived as the 'whole way of life' of a people [...]. While *Theory, Culture & Society* is therefore pleased to endorse the contribution of Marxist and neo-Marxist analysis of popular culture, a prime example being the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies which has made a massive contribution, the journal actively encourages critiques of this tradition and features alternative perspectives" (Anon 1982, 2).
6. As we can read in the CCCS Annual Report for 1972–1974, just after Hoggart resigned his Chair in the English Department and his Directorship of the Centre: "The initial conception of "cultural studies" as field of study, and the formation of the Centre [...] was entirely due to him." His lecture *Schools of English and Contemporary Society* is here described as "not only the Centre's founding document", but also "a significant departure in the development of 'inter-disciplinary studies' in the Humanities" (CCCS 1974, 1).
7. Richard Nice was a student at the CCCS when he began translating Bourdieu's texts, such as *The Cultural Field and the Economic Field* (1973), in the "Occasional Papers" of the Centre, the same series that

had issued an English translation of Barthes's *Introduction to the Structural Analysis of the Narrative* (1966). Nice would become the "standard" English translator of Bourdieu's books in the 1980s and 1990s.

8. It is worth noting that visiting scholars at the CCCS in the 1970s included Howard Becker, one of the most influential representatives of symbolic interactionism and labeling theory in American sociology, and Aaron Cicourel, exponent of ethnomethodology and proponent of a radical sociology of language that was equally critical of Parsons's functionalism (CCCS Annual Reports).
9. The original text has been slightly revised for style.
10. From a methodological point of view, we cannot hide that there is an inevitable degree of arbitrariness in locating an intellectual endeavor within a fuzzy category such as CS. We have tried to reduce this arbitrariness by paying careful attention to: (1) the exact words used to identify these works by their producers, and (2) their contents, through an inspection of texts and, in some cases, direct contact/correspondence with those involved.
11. A warning is due at this point. The first author is personally involved in the reception of BCS in Italy as, among other things, a founding editor (and editor-in-chief at the time of the research and writing of this chapter) of the journal *Studi culturali* (published in Bologna since 2004). This gives this section a somewhat different flavor than the others. We have tried to balance this potential source of bias (which is also, of course, a source of insider knowledge) with wide-ranging bibliographical research and an effort toward what, since Weber, has been known as "avalutativity," as well as an engagement in what Bourdieu called "reflexivity." We have especially relied upon interviews with other pioneers and practitioners, not especially collected for this work but published in other sources and thus available to anyone able to read in Italian.
12. German sources for the quantitative analysis were the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB) and Ebscohost research databases. The analysis is also based on interviews with experts and mediators of BCS in German-speaking countries: sociologists Rolf Lindner and Lothar Mikos, journalism studies scholar Margreth Lünenborg; (ex-GDR) film studies scholar Dieter Wiedermann; historians Alf Lüdtke and Thomas Lindenberger, and musicologist Peter Wicke. The interviews were carried out between September 2016 and April 2017.
13. Interview with Rolf Lindner (September 2016).

14. Rolf Lindner, Chief Editor of *Ästhetik & Kommunikation*, was a student of Wolfgang Iepenies; Axel Honneth worked with the Marxist sociologist Urs Jaeggi; Michael Vester, who had participated in the student protests in Frankfurt, had been a professor of political science and sociology since 1971.
15. Interview with Lindner (September 2016).
16. Interviews with Lindner (September 2016) and Beate Krais (August 2015). See also the interview with Vester in the online journal *Soziologiemagazin*, 9 January 2016. <https://soziologieblog.hypotheses.org/9087> (last accessed 14 February 2017).
17. For example, *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, *Forum kritische Psychologie*, and *Zeitschrift für Sozialisationsforschung und Erziehungssoziologie*.
18. Englisch-Deutsche Konferenz für Jugendforschung.
19. The conference was organized by the Nordelbien Evangelical Academy in Bad Segeberg.
20. Interview with Alf Lüdtkke (April 2017).
21. Werner Conze, one of the most important German historians of the twentieth century, began his career during the Nazi regime. In the post-war period, he was one of the founders, together with Hans Freyer and Otto Brunner, of “social historical research,” based on the idea of a co-operation between sociology and history. However, according to Conze himself, it did not constitute a new beginning, but confirmed and enhanced an orientation in the historical discipline that had begun before 1945 (Conze 1983; cf. Schulze 1989). During the student protests, the scientific authority of Conze was strongly contested. The period of the student protests also marked a clear separation of the new generation of social historians (among them, Kocka and Wehler) from Conze (cf. Dunkhase 2010).
22. See interview with Thomas Lindenberger (April 2017) and Lüdtkke (April 2017).
23. Interview with the cultural theorist Irene Dölling (October 2015).
24. Interviews with Wiedermann (September 2016) and Wicke (March 2017). A good example is Wicke’s *Rockmusik. Zur Ästhetik und Soziologie eines Massenmediums*, published by Reclam in 1987 and translated into English in 1990 (Wicke 1987).
25. Interviews with Wiedermann (September 2016) and the Germanist Brigitte Burmeister (March 2007).

26. For example, Hall's seminal essay "Encoding and Decoding" was first included in an anthology of key CS texts (Bromley and Göttlich 1999).
27. Interview with Lünenborg (September 2016).
28. Interview with Lothar Mikos (September 2016).
29. This theory is not supported by the first generation of BCS mediators, coming from the milieu of the Frankfurt School.
30. See interview with Margreth Lünenborg (September 2016).
31. The main source for this section is participant observation as well as bibliographical research through the *Catalogo del Sistema Bibliotecario Nazionale* and some web pages dedicated to CS in Italy (e.g., <http://www.studiculturali.it/dizionario/dizionario.html>). For two very different interpretations of this same reception that are not grounded in empirical research, see Cometa (2004); and De Blasio and Sorice (2009). For an interesting witness from inside the field of Anglistics, see Curti (2017). A collection of interviews with scholars variously engaged with CS from different disciplines (e.g., English Studies, Comparative Literature, Philosophy of Language, Political Theory, Sociology) in Italy is available in Guarracino, Monegato, and Scarabelli (2017).
32. The *New Left May Day Manifesto* (1967), edited by Williams, Thompson, and Hall, was immediately translated in Italy by a small radical publisher in the Mezzogiorno, just a few months after its first publication in England: see *Manifesto di maggio* (1967). A second, revised English edition was published in 1968, edited by Williams alone, for Penguin. This edition has never been made available in Italian.
33. The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* had been translated into Italian just four years earlier, in 1966, by the prestigious and nationally important publisher Einaudi, which in the following years committed itself to the importation of the Frankfurt School into Italy, together with Laterza, another highly respected publishing house in Italy. This was not without consequences, of course, for the importation of BCS into Italy, which, for many years, remained a blend of critical theory and research circumscribed in small, local and not-so-mainstream circles of scholars and publishers.
34. The reception of BCS in Italy has been tangential to the rise of the historical school of "microhistory" (Carlo Ginzburg, Giovanni Levi, etc.), whose intellectual roots are to be found in French historiography and literature (e.g., Queneau) as well as in Italian intellectual writers and scholars (including Italo Calvino, Primo Levi, and Gramsci). See Ginzburg (1993).

35. Willis's work was commonly presented in sociological textbooks widely used in Italian academia since the 1990s, such as Anthony Giddens's *Sociology* (Giddens 1989).
36. Another academic couple, Giovanni Bechelloni and Milly Buonanno, were based in Florence. Bechelloni spent some years as a professor at the *L'Orientale*, making contact with Curti and Chambers, and making the transfer of CCCS ideas possible from English literature to sociology, and from Naples to "Northern" intellectual circles.
37. The first two were created in 2009 at two smaller universities in Ferrara and Siena, as developments of existing courses in literature and foreign languages, and ended in 2012; the third was founded in 2014 in a Milan-based private university specializing in languages and media studies, and finished in 2016. A section in "Studi Culturali" was created at the University of Milan in 2009, inside the Department of Languages and Foreign Literatures. The section launched a journal (*Altre Modernità. Rivista di studi letterari e culturali*) in that same year, which still exists. No specialized degree course has been created, however.
38. Sources for this research were the SEDUC catalog and various bibliographies and texts. We also conducted interviews with some protagonists of this reception, such as Éric Maigret, Éric Macé, Érik Neveu, and Maxime Cervulle. We also thank Jean-Louis Fabiani for giving us an interview relating to the relationship between (B)CS and Bourdieu's sociology. Just for the sake of reducing misunderstandings, a journal such as *French Cultural Studies* (and similar ones) was not included among our sources as it is a UK-based journal founded and edited by British scholars.
39. In this chapter, we have not considered the reception of intellectual formations such as gender studies and post-colonial studies whose stories partially overlap or cross with those of CS, but which are fundamentally different.
40. The French translation of this text is the only one in our case studies.
41. Recall also that, in 1976, Bourdieu invited Williams to participate in his seminar at ENS in Paris on *Sociologie de la culture et des modes de la domination* (Mattelart and Neveu 1996).
42. The English work, a collection that includes Thompson's essay "Notes on Extremism: The Last Stage of Civilization" (originally published in *New Left Review* 121, 1980) alongside responses by authors such as Noam Chomsky and Raymond Williams, clearly appealed to a more general audience than an academic one.

43. The article would be published again in a special issue of the same journal in 1997, this time devoted to the *sociologie de la communication*—an interesting form of disciplinary reframing.
44. Both authors underline the absence of a “sociology of media” in France, especially after the strong criticism addressed to Morin’s mediology in 1964 by Bourdieu and Passeron in *Les temps modernes*. According to Macé, part of the delay in the reception of BCS can be connected to this absence. Morin’s early essay was republished in France in 2008, thanks to the same Macé. Maigret has recently proposed the category of “*postlégitimité Culturelle*” (Maigret 2012a, b).
45. Maigret also started a book series entitled “médiaculture” thanks to the joint action of the (private) publisher Armand Colin with the (public) INA.
46. The establishment of CS as an identifiable “school” dates back to the end of 1960s, at least in the UK, more or less the same time at which Bourdieu was acting as the “importer” of Hoggart, Williams, and Thompson. Of course, we can imagine that these authors belong to a wide and compact intellectual tradition that was not as strong at the time as it was later. We can therefore concede that Bourdieu’s early reception made plausible a selective appropriation of authors/works instead of a more general and organic reception of a whole “school.” Incidentally, this is something from which the circulation of Bourdieu’s *oeuvre* has also suffered, in the sense of a very early reception that prevented a deep understanding of the general meaning of his whole intellectual project (see Santoro 2009).

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# 7

## The Transnational Making of a Subdiscipline: The Biarritz Conference and the Institutionalization of “Public Economics”

Mathieu Hauchecorne

### Introduction

At the beginning of the 1990s, when Richard Arnott, Kenneth Arrow, Anthony Atkinson, and Jacques Drèze decided to edit a collection of articles by the economist William Vickrey, they chose to range Vickrey’s various contributions to economic science between 1939 and 1987 under the heading of *Public Economics*:

The title, and organization, of the book recognize the recent emergence of “public economics” as a well-defined field, with its place in graduate curricula, its specialist journals and textbooks, its meetings and societies. The work of William Vickrey is intimately associated with that development, for which in several important respects he provided seminal inspiration. In comparison with the more traditional, more institutional, and narrower

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field of “public finance,” the new field encompasses all aspects of the “economics of the public sector” and of “government’s effect on the economy.” (Drèze and Arnott 1997, 4)

“Meant as a tribute to William Vickrey on his eightieth birthday,” (Arnott et al. 1997, ix) the volume evidences the emergence of a new subfield within economic science during the last decades of the twentieth century. As made clear by the above quotation, in 1994, economists were familiar enough with the label of “public economics” to allow the editor to use it as a title. Taught in “graduate curricula,” endowed with “its specialist journals and textbooks, its meetings and societies,” (Drèze and Arnott 1997, 4) public economics was, however, still in need of founding fathers, and Vickrey might be one of them. Although Vickrey did not see himself as a public economist when he wrote his first articles fifty years earlier—because the category did not exist at that time—his main contributions to economic science could be retrospectively classified along the divisions of a field he had unintentionally inspired: from social choice to macroeconomic policy, including taxation or the pricing of public goods.<sup>1</sup>

The diffusion and stabilization of the public economics label is on a par with the emergence and institutionalization, from the 1960s onwards, of a new subfield within economic science concerned with the state, its nature, its interventions, and their justification. When they address questions relating to collective choice, taxation, redistribution, or the production of collective infrastructures (whether roads, hospitals, schools, or means of transport), contemporary economists can indeed rely on a shared language and a common toolbox. This subfield is commonly known as public economics, although alternative labels such as public finance, welfare economics, public choice, or normative economics might sometimes be used to refer to more or less equivalent bodies of work.<sup>2</sup> Public economics today appears as a well-institutionalized subfield in economics, beside other established subfields such as microeconomics, international trade, and development economics, for example. Scholars in this field can rely on handbooks, academic journals (such as the *Journal of Public Economics* founded in 1972 or *Social Choice and Welfare* founded in 1984), and research centers. Public economics thus appears within economic curricula, as well as in the form of topics in competitive exams or entries in dictionaries and encyclopedias.<sup>3</sup>



Public economics is commonly defined as “the positive and normative study of government’s effect on the economy” (Feldstein and Auerbach 1985, xv). The core of the discipline equates with a specific lexicon (with typical concepts such as “public goods,” “welfare,” and “externality”) and a canon of great authors or founders, from Paul Samuelson to Amartya Sen, including Kenneth Arrow or Maurice Allais.<sup>4</sup> Public economics also relates to a set of common methods (such as cost-benefit analysis), canonical axioms or theorems (such as Arrow’s impossibility theorem and the fundamental theorems of welfare economics) as well as a range of classical policy instruments, from environmental taxation to emissions trading, including basic income or negative income tax.<sup>5</sup> On this basis, the jurisdiction or settlement of public economics covers a large set of questions ranging from the analysis of taxation to the correction of market failures, including the correction of inequalities or the production of public goods.

This chapter aims to investigate the emergence and institutionalization of public economics by focusing on a conference organized in Biarritz in 1966 and its legacy. Several considerations might justify a special interest in this event. First, the Biarritz Conference was the first international conference to be held under the heading of “public economics” and it gathered a significant number of the central economists working on state intervention in the mid-1960s. Second, considering the diversity of the participants, the Biarritz Conference offers a vantage point from which to grasp the different approaches of state intervention that coexisted among economists in 1966, to analyze their intertwining with national, social, and intellectual oppositions, and to consider their reconfigurations. Third, the Biarritz Conference matters for its reception and its alleged impact on the founding of public economics as a subfield in economics.

The proceedings of the Biarritz Conference were published both in French and in English (Margolis and Guitton 1968, 1969). The English edition includes, in addition to a vibrant introduction and to the papers presented in Biarritz, verbatim reports of the ensuing discussions, which makes it possible to analyze transnational relations and circulations at the level of face-to-face interactions.<sup>6</sup> In order to contextualize these discussions and to study their reception, this chapter also draws on an analysis of a corpus of books and articles pertaining to the domain of public economics, as well as some interviews. Particular attention is paid to the

interactions between American (US), British, and French economists in order to provide more thorough documentation on how the institutionalization of public economics was articulated, with the shifting of the definers of scientific legitimacy in economics from continental Europe to English-speaking (especially US) universities.<sup>7</sup>

The emergence of “public economics” as a subdiscipline resulted from the interlacing and recompositions of earlier lineages in economics concerned with analysis of the state or collective decisions. The first part of this chapter gives an account of these lineages, which intersected in Biarritz in 1966. The second and third parts offer an outline of the topography of the participants at the conference in order to analyze to what extent their positions and relations of opposition informed the course of the discussions. The last part investigates the reception of the Biarritz Conference from 1966 onwards, and how it was articulated with the broader process of the institutionalization of public economics.

## The State of Public Economics in 1966

The Biarritz Conference on public economics took place in the Hotel Regina in Biarritz from September 2 to 9, 1966. It was jointly held by the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and the International Economic Association. The French organizers, Henri Guitton and Luc Fauvel, were in charge of supervising the sessions devoted to the public sector, whereas their US counterparts, Julius Margolis and Michael Posner, were responsible for the sessions devoted to the relations between the state and the market.<sup>8</sup>

Contributions to the conference covered a large range of topics. In the French proceedings of the conference, four categories of papers were distinguished. The first set of papers involved general theoretical issues, from the theory of taxation to social choice, and the definition of a just distribution. A second set of papers dealt with decision-making in the public sector, from the pricing policy of state enterprises to the provision of public goods or the allocation of public investment. A third set of papers addressed the question of relations between the economy of the public sector and the market economy. A last set of contributions worked on the

compared efficiency of market and planned economies, from socialist to indicative public planning.

Gathering these different topics in the same conference under the heading of public economics might have been seen as unusual in 1966. According to Henry Tulkens, who attended the Biarritz Conference as a young economist and a rapporteur of the discussions, the label had begun to appear in the early 1960s among European economists in opposition to the traditional study of public finance (Tulkens 2004). The French economist Serge-Christophe Kolm claims to have coined it during these years in the course of a discussion with his former professor at the École des Ponts-et-Chaussée, René Roy, and published a book entitled *Les Fondements de l'économie publique* in 1963 (Kolm 1963). In contrast, the label was unfamiliar to US economists at that time. In an interview, Kolm remembers that Paul Samuelson, when he first met him, “did not understand the phrase ‘public economics’” although “he understood the idea.”<sup>9</sup> The contrasting *mises en livre* of the French and English proceedings of the conference also show that English-speaking readers were unfamiliar with this category at the time of the conference.<sup>10</sup> Whereas the French edition was entitled *L'Économie publique*, a more explicit subtitle had been added to the English one, namely “An analysis of public production and consumption and their relations to the private sectors.” Moreover, whereas the French edition of the proceedings was preceded by only a two-page foreword, the US editor Julius Margolis felt the need to open the English edition with an extensive introduction aiming to delineate the scope of public economics as a sub-field in economic science.

Although public economics did not exist as such before the second half of the 1960s, there were already scholars working on state intervention, but with different (and sometimes competing) perspectives and concerns.<sup>11</sup> Several intellectual lineages might thus be identified before 1966 among Western economists dealing with analysis of the state. Most of the time, these intellectual lineages are identified with defined communities of scholars, as well as with the different labels used to refer to them.

In the mid-1960s, Keynesian macroeconomics might have been the most prominent of these lineages. Its core ideas had gradually emerged and been systematized during the first half of the 1930s, partly in the

course of discussions with Keynes's younger scholars of the "Cambridge Circus."<sup>12</sup> They had been expounded in *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* in 1936 (Keynes 1936; Lawlor 2006). Keynes's insights had circulated widely across Western countries in the postwar decades and had contributed to legitimate macroeconomic government intervention (Clarke 1998) and thus to reshape budget and monetary policies (Hall 1989). On the scientific level, although Keynes had conceived his work as an attack on what he called "classical economics," his main insights had been later reappropriated as a particular case within the neo-classical framework. Best embodied by the work of Keynes's colleague John Richard Hicks (1937) and Paul Samuelson (1947)—the leading figure of US economics after the war—this neoclassical synthesis was under attack from heterodox economists, especially some of Keynes's former students, who favored a more radical reading of their master (Pasinetti 2007).

A second (and long-standing) tradition equates with the domain of public finance, that is, the study of taxation and public expenditure. In the early 1960s, economists had not secured jurisdiction in that field, and many handbooks favored an institutional and descriptive standpoint. This was the case in France, where economics was still confined within the faculty of law (Fourcade 2009), which might explain why many textbooks endorsed a legal approach and were sometimes written by political scientists.<sup>13</sup> In the early 1960s, the subdiscipline of public finance was experiencing major transformations. The writings of Richard Musgrave (whose first articles had appeared at the end of the 1930s) best encapsulate this move.<sup>14</sup> Drawing on earlier work, Musgrave's major book, *The Theory of Public Finance*, had appeared in 1959 and ascribed three functions to the state: stabilization of economic activity, allocation of resources, and (re)distribution of wealth. Born in Germany in 1910, he had first been trained at the Universities of Munich and Heidelberg before leaving for the United States (USA) in 1933 thanks to "a fellowship from the International Institute for Education" (Musgrave 1959, vii). His innovative approach to public finance, the microeconomic stand of which contrasted with Keynesianism, can partly be explained by his trajectory and, as he himself suggested, the experience of migration. Musgrave indeed emphasized the "comparative advantage (and what an advantage it was)"

he had derived as a PhD student at Harvard University from his “acquaintance with the continental literature—Austrian, Italian, and Swedish—which, in the 1880s and 1890s had attempted to apply marginal utility theory to the public sector” (Musgrave 1959, viii).

A third lineage within economic science involved in the study of state intervention at the time of the Biarritz Conference was welfare economics. Although its birth is often linked to A. C. Pigou’s *The Economics of Welfare*, there is no evidence that Pigou’s intention might have been to find a new domain of inquiry for economists, which would be welfare economics.<sup>15</sup> The framework of welfare economics gradually emerged during the 1930s in articles by US economists such as Kenneth Arrow, Abram Bergson, Jacob Viner, and Paul Samuelson, aiming to reintegrate, within the utilitarian framework of neoclassical economic considerations of welfare, distribution and the normative analysis of the goals of government (Backhouse 1985). These converging insights were fully integrated within Samuelson’s *Foundations of Economic Analysis* (1947), in which a whole chapter was devoted to welfare economics.<sup>16</sup>

Economic analysis of the public sector appeared as a more applied set of studies devoted to state intervention. Economists working as experts within state agencies or public enterprises had sometimes pioneered these studies. In the early 1960s, this fourth lineage dealt mainly with the study of public planning and analysis of the pricing policies of public firms. These latter questions had notably been at the core of extensive debates among French engineer-economists such as Maurice Allais or Marcel Boiteux (Yon 2014), which echoed similar concerns among British and US economists after the war (Furner and Supple 2002).

Lastly, in reaction to welfare economics, some economists were promoting a more positive analysis of the state, preferring to study how the state actually behaved rather than how it must or should behave. This last set of works favored the application of rational action theory to the study of the behavior of voters, politicians, and civil servants in order to explain the production of public policies. Strongly influenced by the Italian school in public finance (Da Empoli 2004), this last lineage was associated in 1966 with the study of “public choice” by a group of economists at the University of Virginia.

## Prosopography of the Participants

For a historical sociology of economic discourse on the state, what makes the Biarritz Conference singular is that all the different above-mentioned lineages were represented in the list of participants, which included Keynesian macroeconomists such as Austin Robinson, a former member of the “Cambridge Circus” and husband of Joan Robinson.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, the central figure of modern public finance, Richard Musgrave, took part in the event, and debates specific to welfare economics were visible in Samuelson’s, Sen’s, and Kolm’s papers. A majority of presentations addressed issues relating to public planning or the pricing of public goods. Lastly, the positive standpoint of public-choice analysis was partly endorsed by Robert Dorfman in his “descriptive model of decision making concerning public goods” (Margolis and Guitton 1969, 251).

How are these scientific oppositions articulated with the positions occupied by these agents in the national fields and the transnational field of economics? Three structuring oppositions can be identified among the participants. A first opposition is related to the nationalities of the participants and the power relations among national scientific fields. Sixteen countries were represented among the forty-five participants. Eight of them were from the USA, fourteen from France, five from the United Kingdom, nine from other Western European countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland), six from the Soviet Union (USSR) or Eastern European countries (Poland and Hungary), one from Australia, one from India, and one from Argentina. This unequal distribution bore the mark of the hierarchies prevailing within the transnational space of economic science in the mid-1960s. The overrepresentation of US and British economists partly reflected the growing domination of English-speaking—and especially US—economic science during the postwar decades (Fourcade 2006). The site of the conference obviously explains the predominance of French economists among the participants. It also reflected, however, the high prestige accumulated by French economists in analysis of state intervention, as well as the relative political attractiveness of the French mixed-economy

model at that time. Hence, in his introduction to the English version of the proceedings of the conference, Julius Margolis praised the lead of French economists in that field of inquiry, which he related to the success of the French economic model:

It was fitting that the Conference on the Analysis of the Public Sector be held in France where there existed a tradition of economic analysis for public works planning and a remarkable renaissance of analysis in many branches of the public services. The French experiences are being duplicated in many nations of the world as increasing recognition has been given to the value of economic concepts and models to guide the operations of government. (Margolis and Guitton 1969, xi)

An integral part of Soviet cultural diplomacy, the participation of economists from the USSR also demonstrates the interest raised by the Soviet model at that time, as well as the central concern for the comparative efficiency of planned and market economies that inspired public economics at its beginnings.<sup>18</sup>

Another structuring relation among the participants was the opposition between academic economists and economists working within state agencies. This opposition is especially relevant when describing the French economists taking part in the conference as six of them were university professors while seven had other occupations. This reflects the two poles identified by Marion Fourcade (2009) within the postwar French economic field: a first pole dominated by academic economists, who used to be trained at the faculty of law; and a second pole dominated by the so-called “engineer-economists,” senior civil servants who had been trained in French scientific *grandes écoles* and were trying to apply high-level mathematics to the concrete problems they faced in their daily work. Alain Barrère and Henri Guitton were typical of the first pole. Born in 1944, Alain Barrère had received a PhD in law in 1938 and become a professor of economics at the Faculty of Law of Toulouse in 1946 and then at the Faculty of Law and Economic Science of Paris starting in 1957 (Beaud and Dostaler 1993, 232–234). In 1966, he was primarily known as one of the major introducers of Keynesianism in France (Rosanvallon 1989), and as an

analyst of finance. He also chaired the *Semaines sociales de France*, a Catholic organization whose function had been to develop and promote the social doctrine of the Church. Henri Guitton followed a similar trajectory (Vitry 2017). The son of a factory owner from Saint-Étienne, he received his PhD in law from the University of Paris in 1928 and taught economics in the faculties of law of Nancy, Dijon, and Paris. Brother of the French theologian Jean Guitton, he was a contributor to the social doctrine of the Church but was also known for his work on economic cycles. In contrast, the trajectories of Edmond Malinvaud, Serge-Christophe Kolm, and Lionel Stoléru exemplify the engineer-economist profile. In 1966, Edmond Malinvaud was the director of the *École Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Économique* (ENSAE), which had been founded to train an elite of statisticians among French senior public servants.<sup>19</sup> Born in 1923, he studied at the *École Polytechnique* and the ENSAE, and then joined the *Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques* (INSEE), which had just been instituted to produce key statistics on the French economy and society. He began his career as a civil servant and researcher there in 1948 (Tavernier 2015). After the war, the INSEE was strongly associated with the development of French public planning, which embodied the positivist ideal of science-based public policies, especially mathematical economics (Fourquet 1980; Dulong 1998). In this context, Malinvaud devoted his first works to econometrics and microeconomic theory. As a former fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation at the Cowles Commission for Research in Economics, he also benefited in 1966 from strong ties with foreign and especially American economists.<sup>20</sup> Lionel Stoléru was born in 1937 and was trained at the *École Polytechnique* and the *École des Mines*. Like most engineer-economists, Lionel Stoléru had to advance his career as an economist and as a senior civil servant simultaneously. In 1966, he was working at the *Commissariat Général du Plan*. Born in 1932, Serge-Christophe Kolm was also an alumnus of the *École Polytechnique*. He was the director of the Senegal Development mission from 1957 to 1960 and then taught economics at the ENSAE. In 1963, he left for a position at Harvard University.<sup>21</sup> In contrast with the more literary bent of mind of their academic colleagues, engineer-economists



traditionally favored mathematical economics and were actively involved in transnational scientific networks. During the 1960s, however, economics was undergoing rapid and decisive changes within French universities, and some of the French academic economists who took part in the Biarritz Conference were also those who had pioneered the introduction of mathematics into their discipline. This opposition between academic economists and economists working within state agencies is particularly visible in the case of the French delegation. Non-academics can also be found, however, among the other participants, such as Ralph Turvey, who was working at the Electricity Council in London, or Z. H. Van de Pas, who was working at the Netherlands Central Planning Bureau in Holland in 1966.

These structuring oppositions intersect with a third dimension, which is the volume of symbolic capital accumulated by the participants in their national scientific fields and, to some extent, at transnational level. This last highlights the unequal capacity of scientists to convert to transnational level the prestige they had accumulated in the national field of economic science to which they belonged. It was primarily among US participants that economists accumulated a considerable prestige at both national and transnational level. This was especially the case for Paul Samuelson, who appeared in 1966 as the leading figure in the neoclassical school of economic science. Beyond the scope of welfare economics, he pioneered the mathematization of economics after the war and promoted the synthesis of marginalism and Keynesianism, while his *Economics: An Introductory Analysis* (1945) was the most widely translated and acclaimed handbook of economic science during the two previous decades.<sup>22</sup> In 1966, Samuelson was also known as a former advisor of US President John Fitzgerald Kennedy on economic questions, which illustrates his capacity to convert scientific capital at the political level. This opposition between dominant and dominated economists was partly correlated with an age gap. Hence, a number of young incomers in economics also participated to the conference alongside experienced scholars. This was the case, for instance, of the Indian economist Amartya Sen, born in 1933, who in 1966 was Professor of Economics at the University of Delhi, where he worked on social choice.

## From Generalization to Particularization and Vice Versa

How do these objective relations of opposition and proximity inform the interactions and discussions during the Biarritz Conference? Their impact can be traced in the participants' self-definitions and in their perceptions of each other. The opposition between academics and economists working within state agencies is thus noticeable in the way Julius Margolis, Professor in Economics at Stanford University, introduced Ralph Turvey as "an economic adviser who is seeking to influence policy" and in the way he commented on this task, claiming that "Mr. Turvey had not had a uniformly sympathetic audience among his colleagues in the public enterprises and unfortunately his task had been greatly complicated by his colleagues from the universities who had developed arguments about the 'second best'" (Margolis and Guitton 1969, 547). Likewise, the discussion following the presentation of David Henderson's paper addressed the issue of economic expertise and of the "contrasting roles of (so-called) theorists and practical economists" (Margolis and Guitton 1969, 531).

Likewise, the power relations among national scientific fields can be observed at the level of these agents' categories of perception. It is noticeable that the economists who took part in the conference tended to perceive each other and to define themselves through the lens of national differences. Following the presentation of Samuelson's and Musgrave's papers, Henri Guitton stressed that "he, together with many other Frenchmen, was concerned with the relationship between public planning and the private sector" (503). Serge-Christophe Kolm introduced himself "as a Frenchman and an economist" (535) and evoked the "French schools of economists" (543).<sup>23</sup> National stereotypes are also visible in the way Mossé, as he discussed the paper of one of his British colleagues, was able to consider that "at a first reading, Professor Peston's paper was very difficult for comprehension by any Frenchman," since "it seemed to have no central theme or conclusion" (533). Conversely, in reaction to Lionel Stoléru's presentation, David Henderson, a chief economist at the Ministry of Aviation at that time, stated that "with great regret, [he had] to acknowledge that French practice was worse than English practice in

investment decisions, although French theory was more elegant than English theory” (531).

Although the participants shared a common resolve to build a general economic theory of the “behavior of governments” and of “the public sector,” their analyses were informed by diverging national experiences. The comparative analysis of the efficiency of central planning and market mechanisms developed by Alain Barrère bore the mark of the French mixed-economy model and the French doctrine of indicative public planning. Likewise, the Polish scholar Zielinski, as well as the Soviet economist Glushkov, focused on the case of the “Socialist firm” and of “economic management” in Socialist countries. Hence, during the discussions, the participants were often led to depart from theoretical reasoning in order to refer to concrete institutional patterns that exemplified their argument.

This was for instance the case in the controversy following the presentation of Dorfman’s paper on public decision-making. Julius Margolis praised the author for contributing to a “positive theory of government behavior” (529) and suggested that common representations of the state in economics were still too naive since they ignored the fact that “much of the time of civil servants was spent in preoccupation with their own careers and interests.” Robinson opposed this view, insisting that “some sort of public good was the aim of the executive branch of government” (530). In the course of the argument, they were led to describe the proper functioning of the US and British governments to make their case, and ultimately concluded that “there seem[ed] to be a difference of experience on the two sides of the Atlantic” (*ibid.*).

This recontextualization and particularization process in the course of the discussion did not always contradict the quest for a general economic theory of the state. On the contrary, it was sometimes through their confrontation of different viewpoints that the participants managed to overcome contradictions that were rooted in competing intellectual lineages and contrasting national experiences. Although the participants did not always succeed to overcome initial opposition, they were often able to make their arguments explicit and more systematic through the totalization of viewpoints.

This is best exemplified by the joint discussion of Samuelson's and Musgrave's papers. Most of the discussion indeed focused on the concept of "public good," which would become a central concept of public economics.<sup>24</sup> Earlier papers by Musgrave and Samuelson had laid the foundations of the theory of public goods during the 1950s and attracted a lot of attention. In 1966, their definition was nevertheless not yet stabilized and the theory was still under debate.<sup>25</sup> The discussion that followed the presentation of the two papers shows that neither the name of "public good" nor its definition or actual scope were consensual. Instead of "public goods," some participants preferred to speak of "social" or "collective" goods. Competing definitions were articulated. While some of them feared that any good might be a public good, others worried that most of the traditional sectors of public intervention could be left out of the scope of the state under such definitions. Moreover, these disagreements were intertwined with competing conceptions of state intervention and public economics. Alain Barrère thus reproached his US counterparts for endorsing a definition of public goods that restrained the scope of state intervention to those goods that could not be produced efficiently through market mechanisms, whereas, in his view, private economy and public economy should be conceived as two separate realms with their own laws.

In his introduction to the proceedings of the Biarritz Conference, Julius Margolis felt it was necessary to acknowledge that "the authors and discussants came from many countries, with widely differing traditions of government" and lamented that "there was no unanimity about appropriate concepts and solutions." He nevertheless considered that "the common scientific language of economics permitted a meaningful discussion of the problems of public services" and that "there were advances in our understanding of the problems at the level of theory and of practice" (Margolis and Guitton 1969, xi). As we have seen, speaking of a "common language" to characterize the discussions at Biarritz might have been exaggerated. It is nevertheless true that these discussions had contributed to the intertwining of preexisting traditions in the analysis of state intervention. The gradual sedimentation of this common language was deeply informed by the power relations within and among national scientific fields. It continued during the following decades and made the institutionalization of public economics as a subdiscipline possible. This process

can be analyzed at the level of references to the Biarritz Conference from 1966 to today.

## The “Legacy” of the Biarritz Conference Facing the Institutionalization of Public Economics

The legacy of the Biarritz Conference cannot be separated from the broader process of the institutionalization of public economics during the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>26</sup> Three sequences can therefore be identified in the reception of the Biarritz Conference.

The organization of the Biarritz Conference in 1966 was part of a nexus of events that contributed to put public economics on the agenda of international economic science. As we have seen, Serge-Christophe Kolm published his *Fondements de l'économie publique* in 1963. The two volumes of his “lectures on public economics” were published in 1971, five years after the Biarritz Conference (Kolm 1971a, b). In 1965, a series of essays from the economist Leif Johansen were translated from Norwegian to English and edited in a single book under the title *Public Economics* (Johansen 1965). A French edition (translated from the English translation) was released in 1975 and was intended to provide the French audience with a classical handbook. In the meantime, the original papers had also been collated in a Norwegian edition. Other, more usual textbooks were also edited during this period, such as Xavier Greffe’s reader in public economics, which included most of the authors who would later become part of the canon of this subdiscipline (Arrow, Samuelson, Musgrave, and Buchanan, for example) but also diverging approaches, which would ultimately not be kept in public economics, notably approaches inspired by Marxian economics (Greffe 1975). In Italy, the *Bolletino dell'economia pubblica* was launched in 1967. This first sequence, which lasted until the end of the 1970s, is thus characterized by a series of events that contributed to delineate the exact scope of this new field of inquiry.

The early reception of the Biarritz Conference was part of this process. When the English proceedings appeared in 1969, several drafts of the communications had already circulated on an informal basis (Peacock

1971), testifying to the interest raised by the event. Likewise, the decision to record and transcribe the discussions indicates the organizers' belief that the discussions at Biarritz might have a special interest. Two kinds of uses of the conference can thus be distinguished during this period. First, the scientific lineages that intersected at Biarritz remained alive after 1966, and some papers presented at the conference were thus cited in the course of these preexisting discussions. In such cases, the different communications delivered at Biarritz were cited independently of the other communications and discussions. References to the Biarritz Conference as a whole can also be found, however, for instance in book reviews. This second kind of use was usually part of the boundary work on the definition of public economics as a field of study.<sup>27</sup> Thus, in his review of the symposium for *The Economic Journal*, Alan Peacock discussed the delimitation of "public economics," from a narrow definition (equating with analysis of the public sector) to a more extensive definition (covering "public finance in the wide sense which embraces fiscal policy, together with the study of pricing and investment policies of public enterprise" [1971]). He eventually noticed that more than half of the contributions were outside these accepted definitions, ranging "from highly abstract analyses of planning objectives and techniques (Sen, Kolm, Marglin, Malinvaud, Chenery, and Westphal) through descriptions of economic management in Socialist economies (Glushkov, Zielinski, and Pokrovski) to the more philosophical speculations on the role of the public and private sectors in planning by the Romance economists (Papi, Barrère, Bauchet, and Houssiaux)" (Peacock 1971).

Lasting from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s, a second sequence in the career of public economics was characterized by a process of homogenization and transnationalization. Whereas the different lineages that had intersected at Biarritz in 1966 were still rooted within national schools of thought, this was no longer the case of the theoretical consensus that gradually emerged among mainstream economists in North America and Western Europe. This move was articulated with the broader process of transnationalizing the profession of economist (Fourcade 2006) but bore the mark of transnational domination relations. It was indeed a microeconomic conception of public economics, centered on the concepts of "public goods" and "market failures," and favored by US

economists, which increasingly prevailed over the dual perspective promoted by a number of French economists at Biarritz. Keynesian macroeconomics was also set outside public economics, and interest for the study of planned economies declined, while public planning was gradually abandoned at the political level. This process of stabilization was reinforced by a few major publications such as the *Handbook of Public Economics*, edited by Alan Auerbach and Martin Feldstein between 1985 and 2002, which offered a comprehensive viewpoint on the state of the field two or three decades after the Biarritz Conference (Feldstein and Auerbach 1985, 1987, 2002a, b).<sup>28</sup> Ten different countries were represented among the twenty-seven contributors, though two-thirds of them were working in the USA.<sup>29</sup> In this new context, references to the proceedings of the Biarritz Conference were primarily references to individual chapters. The citations were usually made during specific arguments relating to the newly constituted field. They were also selective, since most of the papers were hardly ever cited while certain theoretical papers (notably those by Samuelson, Sen, and Kolm) were mentioned regularly.

From the mid-1990s onwards, with public economics having become a legitimate and stable domain of economic science, events have been organized to build a memory of the field. These narratives, which often tend to canonize “great founders” as well as “seminal” or “paradigmatic” works, can be found in survey articles but also in tributes being paid to the identified pioneers for anniversaries, deaths, editions of collected works, and so on. The Biarritz Conference is often mentioned in these narratives as one of the founding steps of public economics, although many of the questions addressed at Biarritz have disappeared from contemporary public economics. Building this memory of the field is not solely motivated by a mere concern for history. By identifying the founders and central figures in the history of the field and their scientific achievements, some economists are credited with decisive scientific advances to the detriment of others. The process through which construction of this memory might (re)distribute symbolic capital among the first generation of public economists might be illustrated by the conference jointly organized by Cornell University and the London School of Economics in 2009 entitled “Inequality: New Directions.” “Four decades [after] the seminal publications of the modern theory of inequality

measurement,” the aim of the conference was “to take stock and to look to the challenges and research avenues that lie ahead.”<sup>30</sup> The “seminal publications” evoked by the organizers were separate contributions from Serge-Christophe Kolm, Anthony Atkinson, and Amartya Sen to the formalization of a new index of measurement of inequalities that had appeared at the turn of the 1970s. Given that the conference was intended as an anniversary, the choice of the year was not trivial, since it would recognize the primacy of one of the three economists over the others. Indeed, the year 2009 was probably chosen in reference to Kolm’s paper published in 1969 in the English edition of the proceedings of the Biarritz Conference, when Atkinson’s and Sen’s contributions had respectively appeared in 1970 and 1973.

## Conclusion

The emergence of a subdiscipline usually entails memory work, the function of which is to support autonomization of the field and enhance its integration. Searching for founding events and canonizing pioneers are part of this work. Therefore, the fact that the narratives relative to the beginnings of public economics feature the Biarritz Conference does not mean that this event was actually decisive in autonomizing this subfield. In 1966, most of the core concepts and analytical tools of public economics had already been elaborated and other contemporary events might have played a crucial role as well. Whatever the scientific impact of the conference, however, it was remarkable for bringing together in a single venue 45 economists from 16 countries, most of whom were leading representatives of preexisting lineages in the economic analysis of state intervention. This unity of time and place offers an illuminating standpoint from which to observe the interactions between these (most often national) lineages as well as the power relations and strategies underlying the emergence of this transnational subfield.

In 1966, these scientific and national lineages still had to be rearranged into a coherent framework, and this process was under way in the face-to-face interactions that took place at Biarritz. They show that the transnationalization of these lineages and the making of public economics



were intrinsically linked. International scientific associations (such as the International Economic Association, which co-organized the Biarritz Conference) fostered the hybridization of these traditions. This was also made possible by the migrations and exiles of scholars, such as Musgrave, who imported to the USA continental developments in the study of public finance. But the decisive factor might have been the circulation of students and scholars among universities, which to a certain extent is driven by the power relations among national scientific fields.<sup>31</sup> Thus, the case of Amartya Sen, who studied at the University of Calcutta before moving to Cambridge for his PhD, shows the persistence of academic linkages between Great Britain and India after India's independence. Likewise, the fact that studying in (or visiting) the USA was increasingly perceived by French engineer-economists as an imperative reflected the growing domination of US universities on the transnational space of economic science. Public economics was a result of this hybridization process and thus emerged directly as a transnational field; but these traditions were not competing on equal terms.

## Notes

1. The different parts of the book were named according to these categories.
2. The frequency of these labels might also vary between national scientific fields. For instance, whereas the label of "public economics" is commonly used in the French context, "public finance" might still prevail in the USA. For the sake of readability, "public economics" will mostly be used in this chapter.
3. For instance, from 2013 until 2016, public economics was one of the topics of the *agrégation de sciences économiques et sociales*, the national competitive exam one needs to pass to be hired as a high school teacher of economics in France.
4. The concepts of "core" and "jurisdiction" or "settlement" of a (sub)discipline are taken from Andrew Abbott (2001). The core of a discipline refers to its basic definition, whereas its settlement equates with the range of questions or objects on which the discipline can successfully claim a monopoly.

5. These concepts, authors, theorems, and policy instruments appear in most of the classical handbooks devoted to this subdiscipline.
6. On the perspective of a transnational history of social sciences, see Heilbron, Guilhot, and Jeanpierre (2008). For other sociological attempts to analyze intellectual interactions in seminars or conferences, see Abbott (1999, Chap. 2), Denord (2007, Chap. 3), Keck (2009), and Hauchecorne (2010). See also the special issue of *Raisons politiques* on seminar practices as a source for intellectual history (Caré and Châton 2018).
7. Other continental traditions in the study of public finance and state intervention might have been considered such as the Swedish, Austrian, or Italian ones. However, some elements from these earlier traditions had already been borrowed by US and British economists before the 1960s. In contrast, the developments of French public economics took place mainly after the war, and comparison with US developments on these questions was still under way in the 1960s. Moreover, it is more relevant here to focus on French economists, considering their overrepresentation in Biarritz. On the Italian and Swedish traditions, see Sandelin (1998) and McLure (2007).
8. See Margolis and Guitton (1969, vii).
9. Interview with Serge-Christophe Kolm, July 8, 2008.
10. The concept of “*mise en livre*” (which refers to the making of a book and the way its form and organization might impact the act of reading) is taken from Roger Chartier (1997).
11. The label of “public economics” (or “*économie publique*” or “*economia pubblica*”) was used sometimes in the nineteenth century, especially by French and Italian writers, but usually as an equivalent of “political economy.”
12. On the Cambridge Circus, see the testimony of Richard Kahn (1984). See also Skidelsky (1992, 447–452).
13. For a legal approach, see for instance Gaudemet (1965). For a textbook written by a political scientist, see Duverger (1950), the fifth edition of which appeared in 1965.
14. See the autobiographical sketch included in his collected papers (Musgrave 1986). I am drawing on this text to account for Musgrave’s trajectory.
15. On use of the label welfare economics before 1966, see Hauchecorne (2018).

16. On the making of Samuelson's *Foundations*, see Backhouse (2015).
17. A central figure of heterodoxy in economic theory after the war, Joan Robinson was also the first woman to be recognized as a legitimate interlocutor by top-tier economists. She challenged Walras's theory of perfect competition, was the first to reconcile Marxian and Keynesian economics, and was the leading postwar figure in the "Cambridge–Cambridge" controversy in the theory of capital, which opposed her to Samuelson. See Aslanbeigui and Oakes (2009).
18. On Soviet cultural diplomacy, see notably Gouarné (2013). On the circulation of economic knowledge between France and Eastern Europe, see Gouarné (2018). According to a report of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the task of the Soviet economists at Biarritz was to take part in the debates relative to state monopoly capitalism and "to expound and defend the new tendencies in the development of Soviet economy in relation to the reforms enacted in the U.S.S.R." The report emphasizes the "in-depth discussion and the numerous questions" entailed by the presentations of the Soviet economists, which would testify to the "enormous interest" of the "representatives of Western economic science" for the Soviet economy (Records of the association of the soviet institutes on economic research [1956–1972], Series 698; Report from the members of the association at missions abroad [1966] op. 1, D 29; Report on the Biarritz Conference [1966]). I am extremely grateful to Isabelle Gouarné, who found these documents in the course of her own research and kindly translated them into French and shared them with me.
19. On Malinvaud's trajectory, see Lebaron (2000, 67–71).
20. On the Cowles commission, see Christ (1994); as well as Malinvaud's testimony (1988).
21. See Fleurbaey et al. (2011).
22. On the making of *Economics*, see Giraud (2014).
23. The "nationalism" of the French engineer-economists also shows the contextual dimension of transnationalization strategies because, at the same time, French engineer-economists were also prone, in the French context, to highlighting their international connections in order to undermine their university colleagues. On the contrary, featuring their Frenchness became, in the transnational context of the Biarritz Conference, a resource for resisting the domination of US economists. On transnationalization strategies, see Sapiro (2018).

24. In contemporary economic science, public goods—such as the light of a lighthouse—are usually characterized by their non-excludability (you cannot prevent anybody from consuming them) and their non-rivalrousness (individuals can consume them without reducing the share of other individuals). Public economists usually consider that public goods might not be produced in sufficient quantities because of free riding. According to most public economists, these market failures might legitimate state intervention.
25. On the making of the concept of public good from 1937 to 1973, see Desmarais-Tremblay (2017). The author argues that the common mathematical definition of public goods found in contemporary textbooks derives from Samuelson but that the qualitative definition based on the concepts of non-excludability and non-rivalrousness reproduces stems from Musgrave and was first coined at the Biarritz Conference.
26. For more details on the institutionalization of public economics, see Hauchecorne (2018).
27. On the concept of boundary work, see Lamont and Molnar (2002).
28. Among other examples of such major publications, see Atkinson and Stiglitz (1980) and Laffont (1988).
29. What was taken into consideration at publication date was the country in which the authors were working, rather than their nationalities.
30. [http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/\\_new/news/year.asp?yyyy=2009#215](http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/_new/news/year.asp?yyyy=2009#215).
31. These three transnationalization factors (the role of international organizations, migrations and exiles, power relations among national scientific fields) are those identified by Gisèle Sapiro (2018).

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# Part II

## The International Reception of Key Thinkers



# 8

## Globalizing Gramsci: The Resuscitation of a Repressed Intellectual

Marco Santoro, Andrea Gallelli, and Matteo Gerli

### Introduction

In the last four decades, the name of Antonio Gramsci has spread well beyond the boundaries of (mainly Italian) political theory and Marxist thought where it was at first confined, reaching disciplinary fields as diverse as literary criticism, sociology, communication studies, anthropology, international relations, history, and linguistics, in countries as far from Italy as Korea, Brazil, India, Japan, and South Africa. From (British) cultural studies to (Asian) subaltern studies, from (American) race theory to (international) gender studies, Gramsci has become a fashionable resource for any brand of critical (social) theory and an intellectual icon for progressive movements all over the world (e.g. Righi 1995; Filippini

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2011). Indeed, there are indications that Gramsci's thought, albeit rooted in Marxist theory, has even spread into conservative and right-wing circles—a circulation capacity that he shares with only a few other authors and systems of ideas (e.g. Carl Schmitt, see Booth and Baert 2018).

Why has his work experienced such success, and even more fundamentally, how has this success been possible? What social conditions had to be fulfilled for Gramsci to be recognized as such a key author in so many intellectual fields and regions of the world? This chapter does not directly answer these big questions. Indeed, many studies already exist that offer interpretations of local trajectories in the circulation of Gramsci's works and ideas.<sup>1</sup> Our aim here is, more modestly, to propose an approach for advancing empirical and comparative research in this field of studies, focusing on two specific dimensions of the circulation of ideas: the translation of texts from their original language into different languages, and the extent to which these texts become objects or sources of inspiration for other texts.

Making use of an exceptional data set, the *Gramscian Bibliography* (*GB*) created and managed by the Istituto Gramsci [Gramsci Institute] in Rome, which currently includes more than 20,000 items (books, journal articles, conference proceedings about Gramsci, as well as the whole Gramscian production, including translations and editions),<sup>2</sup> our research aims at tracing the global diffusion of Gramsci's works out of Italy, identifying patterns, trajectories, timing, agents, and modes of reception in different national contexts and languages.<sup>3</sup> Clearly, this source does not exhaust the circulation of Gramsci's ideas or writings that may follow other channels, such as oral publications, journal citations, and dictionary entries, which are impossible to cover in a bibliography.<sup>4</sup> However, the main assumption behind the *GB* is that whatever has been published by, on, and about Gramsci, and in whatever language, should in principle be covered, making the *GB* the most promising *single* source to be used in a reception study on this author. Focusing on both translations of Gramscian texts and critical writings on and about Gramsci, the chapter will provide empirical evidence regarding the global circulation of a way of thinking whose international success has been certainly favored by Marxist internationalism as well as the Italian geopolitical situation after the Second World War, but also hampered by the original language and the textual genres (private letters and personal notebooks written while in

prison) in which it was embedded. In addition, the strong national focus—Gramsci wrote primarily on Italian history and society—and the fragmentation of its contents cannot be considered at face value as favorable conditions. However, we suggest that all these seemingly negative conditions indeed exerted a positive effect on the reception process, allowing for highly selective (even idiosyncratic) local appropriations, flexibility in publishing strategies, and the building of context-specific interpretive strategies.

## A Repressed Intellectual

Born in 1891 in a small village in Sardinia,<sup>5</sup> an island in the Mediterranean that has formally been part of Italy since unification in 1861, Antonio Gramsci was far from a natural candidate to pursue an intellectual career. As a backward island, Sardinia was not exactly the most promising place to start an intellectual career, even if some chance existed to enter graduate studies at one of the two existing universities, Cagliari and Sassari. Gramsci's father was a low-level public official, a common occupation in the family background of intellectuals in Italy, as elsewhere. Less common is that he was jailed when Antonio was a child (1898–1904) because of his presumed involvement in an episode of corruption. The young Gramsci suffered a very impoverished childhood, with economic constraints and poor health conditions (Forgacs 2016). However, his school marks were good enough to make it possible for him win a scholarship to attend university. As a former part of the Piedmontese state, Sardinia had historical links with Turin, including privileged paths for attending the local university. Gramsci, therefore, moved to Turin, on the continent, to study at the faculty of letters with a special interest in linguistics and philology.

At the beginning of the century, Turin was the capital of the car industry (with Fiat) and one of the three strategic places for industrialization in Italy. In Turin, Gramsci joined the Socialist Party, following his elder brother. His successful student career notwithstanding, in 1913 he left university to work as a journalist for the Socialist press, often devoting his coverage to cultural news (especially about theatre). In 1919, he founded a new magazine, *L'Ordine Nuovo*, with other colleagues, and it was soon considered the most cultivated political magazine of the time. In

1919–1920, he became one of the leaders of the so-called *Bienno rosso*, the great “revolutionary” movement that in Turin saw the foundation of workers’ councils as organisms for workers’ self-government inside the factories. After the defeat of the workers’ movement, in 1921 he was among the founders of the *Partito Comunista d’Italia* (PCI), becoming its leader in 1924. In 1922, he was in Russia as a representative of the new party in the Comintern. In the meantime, Mussolini rose to power. In 1926, even though he was a deputy for the PCI and therefore protected by parliamentary immunity, Gramsci was arrested for subversive conduct, instigation of civil war, and incitement of class hatred. He spent the rest of his life in prison, dying in 1937 after his health, which had never been that strong, worsened (Kapferer 1988; Forgacs 2016).

As this brief sketch of his life suggests, Gramsci was a party journalist and political leader, soon to be repressed by the new regime. He was a brilliant journalist and a charismatic leader, his small stature and defective body notwithstanding (as a judge famously said during his trial, Gramsci’s brain was too bright to be left free). And yet today Gramsci’s name is known well beyond Italy less as a politician or journalist and more as a thinker, scholar, intellectual, and author—indeed, he is one of the most renowned and quoted among contemporary Italian authors according to a survey by the influential Institute for Scientific Information (see Garfield 1986; Hobsbawm 1987). Gramsci was indeed a true intellectual: he is identified as a writer, a philosopher, a political theorist, a linguist, a historian, even a sociologist (though he had a very poor opinion of sociology as a positivist enterprise), and obviously a Marxist theorist.<sup>6</sup> However, even though he wrote and published a mass of newspaper articles, often unsigned, during his lifetime, Gramsci did not publish any books before he was tried and imprisoned as a political enemy of the Fascist state; the longest essay he ever wrote (on Southern Italy’s social question) was left unfinished at the time of his arrest. Moreover, Gramsci never had an academic position. Indeed, he never even graduated from university, dropping out just before he completed his studies.

Given these conditions, how can we account for the international circulation of his ideas and his consecration as one the key thinkers of the twentieth century? And, more importantly, what can we say about the extent and the nature of this circulation and consecration,

without assuming the facts to be evident until they have actually been established (Merton 1987)? These are the questions driving our analysis in this chapter.

## The Process and Structure of Gramsci's Works

Indeed, Gramsci is a major case of intellectual consecration in our times. There are many factors contributing to this consecration, but one is apparent: the circulation of Gramscian ideas (e.g. hegemony, Americanism, Fordism, historical bloc, war of position, national-popular, etc.), as well as the name of Gramsci itself, all over the world, as witnessed, for instance, by the fact that the Wikipedia entry "Antonio Gramsci" is available in more than 70 languages. Of course, to study the circulation of a work you need to know first how that work looks, that is, how it "works." A first element of distinction is that, as a recognized and recognizable author, Gramsci existed only after his death in 1937. Gramsci's is a veritable case of post-mortem intellectual consecration.<sup>7</sup> The major steps in the process of his recognition as an intellectual in his home country, indeed as one of the most accomplished and respected Italian intellectuals, are the following:

- a. In 1947, Einaudi published *Lettere dal carcere* [*Letters from Prison*], a selection of Gramsci's letters to his wife Giulia Schucht, his sons Delio and Giuliano, and his sister-in-law Tatiana Schucht (a small selection of the many letters he wrote while in jail);
- b. In 1948, the first book drawn from the many "notebooks" he wrote while in prison was published (*Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce*). Four other books followed in the next two years, and, in 1951, the sixth and last book from the "Prison Notebooks" appeared (*Passato e presente*);
- c. In 1975, a critical edition of the Notebooks was issued; this is still the standard reference edition (edited by the Italian philosopher Valentino Gerratana, published by Einaudi);
- d. In 1996, the National Edition of Gramsci's writings was established by the Italian government (planned in 19 volumes, publication in progress).

**Table 8.1** The structure of Gramsci's work, in Italian

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A. <i>Pre-prison writings</i>	
• Newspaper articles and political interventions (1913–1926)	
– Collections (in five books: 1958–1971; in four books: 1980–1987)	
• Essays (only one definitive: “Alcuni temi della questione meridionale” [“The Southern Question”], written in 1926, first published in 1935 in a communist magazine printed in Paris)	
• Letters 1908–1926 (first published as a unique collection in 1992)	
B. <i>Prison writings</i>	
• Notebooks, 1929–1935 (32 “Quaderni dal carcere”)	
– Thematic edition in six volumes (1948–1951)	
– Critical edition in four volumes (three of Notebooks + one of Critical Notes in 1975)	
• Letters 1926–1937 ( <i>Lettere dal carcere</i> , various published editions since 1947)	

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During this process, Gramsci's writings have been variously published in many different versions and collections, as individual texts in book format, as articles, as chapters in anthologies or readers, and so on (e.g. there exist various collections of *Letters*, more or less complete, since the first edition in 1947). In order to make sense (or order) of this array of texts, the classification in Table 8.1 may prove useful.

Clearly, Gramsci's body of work is fragmented, multilayered, temporally stratified, and with an undefined core—an “open work” (*opera aperta*) available to readers and critics' interpretations and rearrangements (Eco 1989). This openness, we argue, has been a major factor in the circulation of Gramsci's work and ideas. Here we will try to show why.

## The Gramscian Bibliography

As we have already noted, the *GB* is the main source for our analyses of the international circulation of Gramsci's work. The bibliography, first published in 1991 (Cammatt 1991; see also Fubini 1970; Giasi and

Righi 2008), went through a process of data collection and updating that started in the 1960s. The archive, currently managed by Francesco Giasi and Maria Luisa Righi, comprises 19,608 titles from 1922 to 2012 (*terminus ad quem* of our study), and it is considered the broadest and most complete bibliography concerning a single author.<sup>8</sup>

The texts listed in the bibliography, which includes documents authored by Gramsci himself, translations of his writings, and a large quantity of works on and about Gramsci, have been published in more than forty countries and languages. For almost all the titles, information about the author(s), document type, language, and year of publication is available. For some of the titles, information about editors and publishers is also available. Furthermore, for many documents not authored by Gramsci, the database provides keywords that identify subjects related to each document. All these variables make this bibliography a powerful research tool for Gramsci scholars as well as, in our case, for researchers interested in the social conditions of the circulation and reception of an author.

As a general overview of the composition of the database, Table 8.2 shows the distribution of the titles by document type and author. The largest category is “articles in periodicals,” with more than 7000 documents, followed by “newspaper articles” and “essays in books mainly on AG.” Compared with other world-renowned authors, especially thinkers and writers more directly related to the academic field, the intellectual circulation of Gramsci’s writings has been partially driven by their

**Table 8.2** Gramscian literature by type of document and author

Type	By AG	Percent	By others	Percent	Total	Percent
Books mainly on AG	461	68.2	944	5.0	1405	7.2
Books partly on AG	0	0.0	1193	6.3	1193	6.1
Articles in periodicals	133	19.7	7124	37.6	7257	37.0
Essays in books mainly on AG	21	3.1	3223	17.0	3244	16.5
Essays in books partly on AG	42	6.2	1166	6.2	1208	6.2
Other	19	2.8	5282	27.9	5301	27.0
Total	676	100.0	18,932	100.0	19,608	100.0

Source: Elaboration on GB file

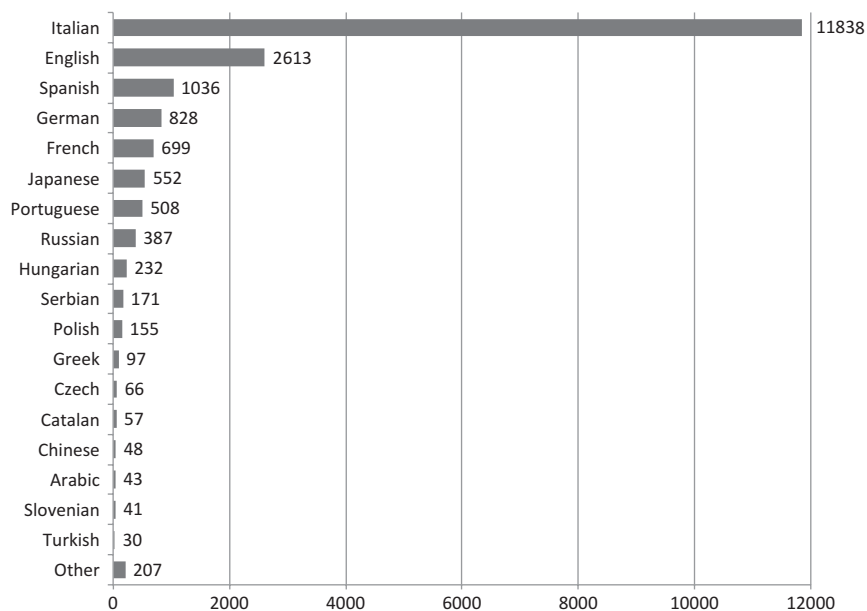


political contents (and implications) and still more by the political appropriations of both his name and legacy, which explains the presence of a relevant amount of “grey literature” and publications in newspapers (these documents are collapsed into the category “other” in Table 8.2).

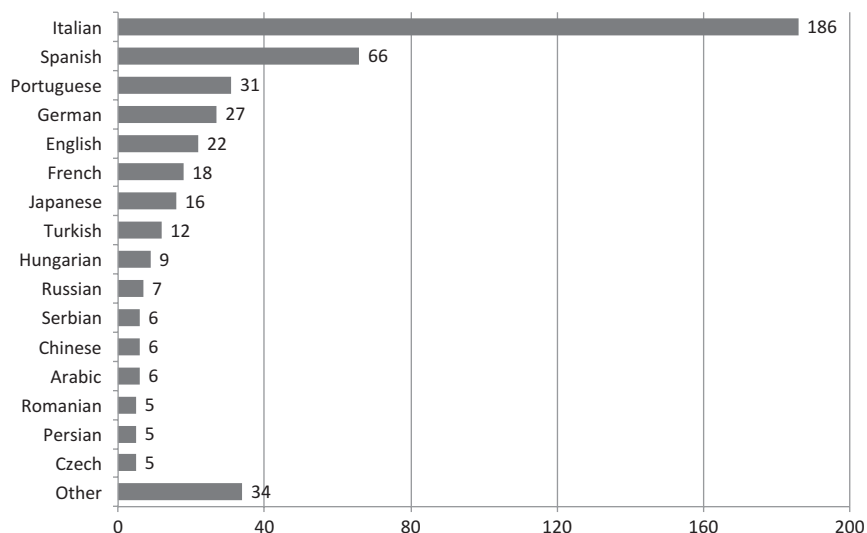
Up to 2012, the *GB* database counted 676 documents authored by Antonio Gramsci, including translations of texts originally written in Italian. Above all, Gramsci is the source of inspiration for and subject of a large quantity of texts written “by others.” Among these writings, the numerically most important document type is “articles in periodicals,” with 7124 texts (37.6 percent of the column total), followed by “essays in books mainly on AG” (17 percent), “books partly on AG” (6.3 percent), “essays in books partly on AG” (6.1 percent), and “books mainly on AG” (4.9 percent). The “other” category, which counts 5282 texts (27.9 percent), consists of several different minor types of documents, such as newspaper articles, book reviews, essays in encyclopedias or reference texts, doctoral dissertations and non-printed works (DVD, VHS, digital documents, etc.). The data reflect the heterogeneous nature of the production on and about Gramsci; far from being concentrated only in the academic field, the intellectual circulation of Gramsci’s thought spreads through a wide range of channels that reflect different scientific, cultural, and political purposes.

Figure 8.1 shows the distribution of texts (either authored by Gramsci or about him) by language. As expected, Italian is the first language, with 11,838 documents, followed by English (2613), Spanish (1036), German (828), and French (699). Interestingly, though, Japanese holds the sixth position in the ranking with 552 documents, followed by Portuguese (508) and four languages belonging to Eastern European countries—Russian (387), Hungarian (232), Serbian (171), and Polish (155)—where the influence of communism was clearly deep. Besides Japanese, three other languages from outside Europe stand out in the list: Chinese (48), Arabic (43), and Turkish (30).

As for the languages of production/translation of Gramsci’s works, Italian confirms its top position with 186 books (Fig. 8.2), followed by the same six languages that dominate, in purely quantitative terms, world production of Gramscian literature (Fig. 8.2), although with different rankings. In particular, Spanish is the main language for the translation



**Fig. 8.1** Gramscian literature by language ( $n = 19,608$ ). (Source: Elaboration on *GB* file; Note: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 30$  documents)

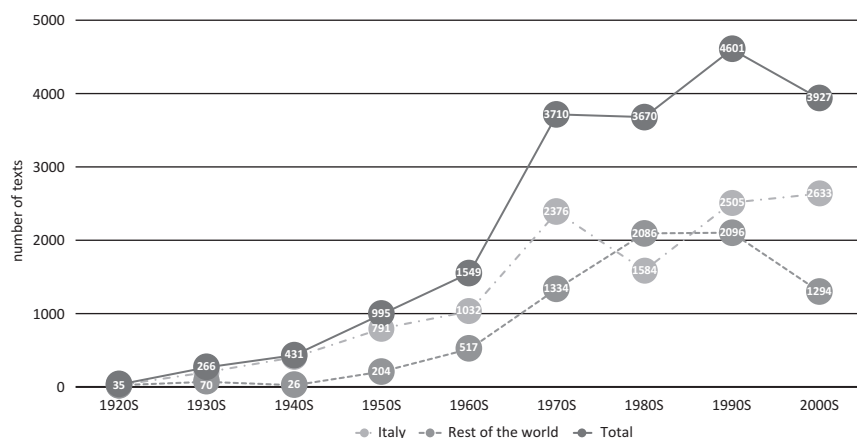


**Fig. 8.2** Antonio Gramsci's books by language ( $n = 676$ ). (Source: Elaboration on *GB* file; Note: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 5$  documents)

of Gramsci's books with 66 texts, followed by Portuguese (31), German (27), English (22), French (18), and Japanese (16). As for the rest, Turkish (12) moves from the eighteenth position (Fig. 8.1) to the eighth position (Fig. 8.2), while Hungarian (9), Russian (7), and Serbian (6) are confirmed to be among the most important languages for Gramsci's reception. Finally, it is worth noticing that, in addition to Turkish, three other languages with a non-European origin are prominent in the list: Chinese (6), Arabic (6), and Persian (5).

## The Times and Places of Gramscian Textual Circulation

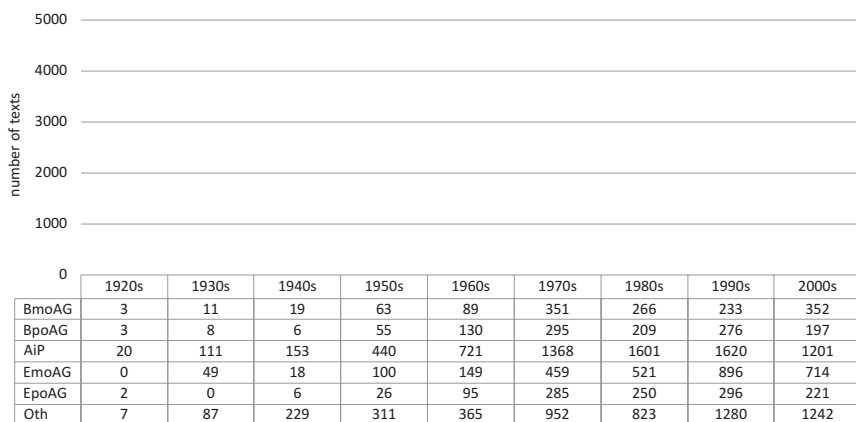
As Fig. 8.3 shows, the publication of texts by and on Gramsci was, above all, an Italian business up to the 1950s. By the 1960s, however, the production of Gramscian literature began to expand well beyond Italy and to increase considerably, decade by decade, reaching its peak in the 1990s with 4601 texts (equal to 23.5 percent of the overall production). Indeed, the number of documents written in languages other than Italian grows from 517 (2.6 percent of the overall production) in the 1960s to 2096



**Fig. 8.3** The production of Gramscian literature by decade ( $n = 19,184$ ). (Source: Elaboration on GB file; Note: 424 missing data)

(10.7 percent) in the 1990s, exceeding the Italian literature on the topic (by 31.7 percent, i.e. 502 documents) in the 1980s. During this period, which roughly comes to the present day, the international consecration of Gramsci took place.

Looking at the distribution of Gramscian literature by decade and document type (Fig. 8.4), we can observe the following: first, the production of “Articles in periodicals” is the most prominent (in absolute terms) in each decade, except for the 1940s and the 2000s, when the “Other” type is slightly more numerous (229 against 153 texts, in the 1940s, and 1242 against 1201, in the 2000s). In particular, it increases consistently from the 1960s, describing a trend that closely follows the global trend (Fig. 8.3). Something very similar can also be observed for the other document types: all of them grow in quantity from the 1960s and reach their peak in the 1990s, except for “Books partly on AG,” which is a little bit more numerous in the 1970s. In percentage terms, the number of texts belonging to “Articles in periodicals” and “Books partly on AG” undergoes an average decrease of  $-3.3$  (SD = 7.9) and  $-0.4$  (SD = 2.8) percentage points, respectively, between the 1920s and the 2000s. On the

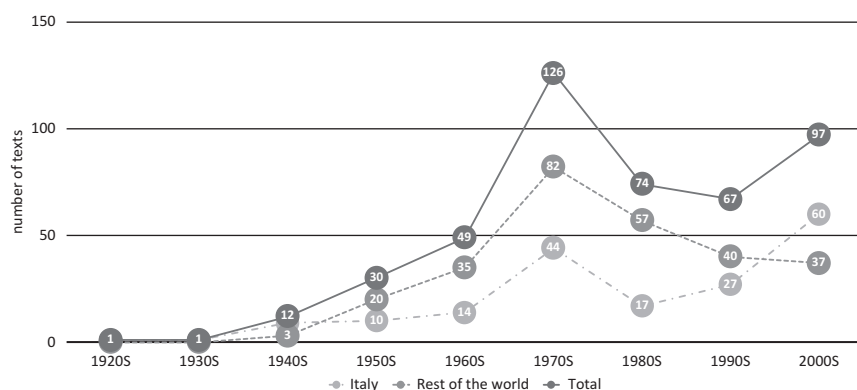


**Fig. 8.4** The production of Gramscian literature by decade and document type. *BmoAG* Books mainly on AG; *BpoAG* Books partly on AG; *AiP* Articles in periodicals; *EmoAG* Essays in books mainly on AG; *EpoAG* Essays in books partly on AG; *Oth* Other. (Source: Elaboration on *GB* file; Note: 19,608 documents; 424 missing data)

contrary, “Essays in books mainly on AG” and the “Other” category grow, on average, 2.3 (SD = 8.5) and 1.5 (SD = 12) percentage points in the same period. The average growth of “Books mainly on AG” and “Essays in books partly on AG” is zero between the 1920s and the 2000s, with Standard Deviation (SD) of 2.8 and 2.6, respectively.

Focusing on what, in Table 8.1, we classify as “Books mainly on AG” and “by AG,” a few patterns are clearly identifiable (Fig. 8.5). By the 1950s, translations start to grow significantly until the 1970s, when they reach a peak of 126 items, then begin to decline with the same regularity in the following decades. Comparing the “Rest of the world” line with the “Italy” line, we can also observe that they only partially follow the same trend: both reach a peak in the 1970s, but the “Italy” line reverses its trend in the 1990s and reaches a second peak, higher than the first one, in the last decade under investigation.

In fact, the international circulation of Gramsci’s ideas started very early, when Gramsci was still a militant young socialist journalist. Two articles previously published in *L’Ordine Nuovo*—a weekly newspaper established on May 1, 1919 in Turin by Gramsci and his comrades Angelo Tasca and Palmiro Togliatti, at the time members of the Italian Socialist Party, before founding the PCI in 1921—were translated in the former Soviet Union. While in prison, Gramsci’s personal and political situation



**Fig. 8.5** Antonio Gramsci’s books by decade. (Source: Elaboration on GB file; Note: 461 documents)

was the object of a book by the writer and pacifist Romain Rolland (1934). It was, however, only after Gramsci's death in 1937 and, above all, the fall of Fascism and the end of the Second World War that his writings started to be published in a systematic way, and his ideas began to be seriously known beyond a small circle of communist militants.

Indeed, we can divide the process of the diffusion of Gramscian writings into four periods, characterized by different patterns and channels of circulation. In the first period (1920–1945, see Fig. 8.6), there are only texts from Italy and Russia. They were mainly articles published in *Lo Stato operaio*, *L'Ordine Nuovo*, and (after 1944) *Rinascita*, transcriptions of parliamentary speeches, and articles published in the *Kommunisticheskii International*.

It is evident that the first period has mainly to do with the political meaning of Gramsci's writings—remember that the first editions of both the *Letters* and the *Notebooks*, fundamental vehicles for the diffusion of Gramsci's ideas, would be published in Italy after the Second World War, ten years after his death in 1937.

In the second period (1946–1959; see Fig. 8.7 for a cumulative rendering), the role of Italy and Russia was still dominant, but some other countries began to receive Gramsci's work as well. This is the case for Argentina, France, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, the United



Fig. 8.6 Diffusion of Gramsci's texts, 1920–1945



Fig. 8.7 Diffusion of Gramsci's texts 1920–1959

States (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), and a few other countries, not only in Europe, in which translations of Gramsci's most famous writings started to be made available, usually in collections and as "selected writings." Even though Gramsci was about to become a key thinker in social and cultural thought, in this period his international circulation still remained tied to the political situations of the various national contexts; this aspect is particularly clear if we look at the first countries in which wide selections from the *Letters* and *Notebooks* were available, translated from the original Italian editions published by Einaudi: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Romania, all countries in which the influence of communism was strong by the late 1950s. Early selections were also published, however, in non-communist countries, such as Argentina (a country strongly linked to Italy through migratory flows),<sup>9</sup> Israel, the USA, and the UK: not surprisingly, we find in the latter group works such as "Benedetto Croce and His Concept of Liberty" and "Letters on the Jewish Question."

During the third period (1960–1970, see Fig. 8.8 for cumulative map rendering), Gramsci's writings reached over 25 countries. Translations of both the *Letters* and *Notebooks* spread in Latin America as well as in Asia. Indeed, non-European countries seem to have received Gramsci's texts



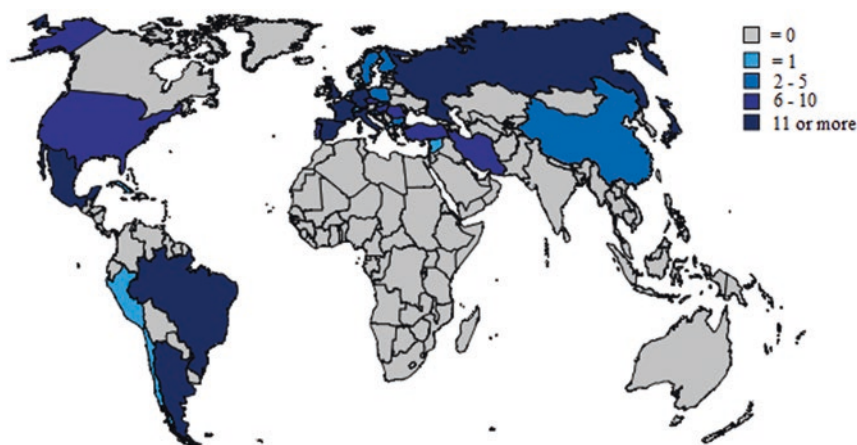
**Fig. 8.8** Diffusion of Gramsci's texts 1920–1970

more than European ones: suffice it to say that the first three countries after Italy and Russia in the ranking of book editions were Japan, Argentina, and Brazil, respectively with nine, seven, and six volumes. This third period saw the beginning of the extra-European diffusion of the author, in addition to European consolidation.

During what we can consider the fourth period (Fig. 8.9), roughly between the 1970s and the early 1990s but still in process nowadays, the international consecration of Gramsci took place. Gramsci's books, mainly as selections from the *Letters* and the *Notebooks*, were published in countries such as Cuba, Switzerland, Syria, and Indonesia. Moreover, in this period, Gramsci comes to be recognized as a key thinker of the century and not just a reference figure for communist thought (see Hobsbawm 1987). This is also shown by the fact that the (ex-)communist countries—which formally collapsed after 1989—no longer occupied the top positions in the international distribution of Gramscian translations, and the once strong correspondence between the presence of Gramsci's texts and national political orientation almost disappears.

Up to 2012, the *GB* database, as mentioned, includes 676 documents authored by Antonio Gramsci, published in more than 40 countries. The only continent that is not represented in the bibliography is Africa, even though, besides English and French, texts in Arabic are available from





**Fig. 8.9** Diffusion of Gramsci's texts 1920–1990

Lebanon and Syria. A further remark about the relations among countries and languages is opportune. Paradoxically, the international circulation of Gramscian ideas has been facilitated by the existence of post-colonial routes. In India, for example, during the 1990s, a Bengali translation of a few Gramsci texts about education and intellectuals was published. However, major English editions of Gramsci's texts have been available among Indian scholars since the early 1970s—even becoming a major source of inspiration for a whole tradition of scholarship, so-called subaltern studies (e.g. Guha and Spivak 1988).

Another issue worth emphasizing is the distribution of the same translations in different national markets under different publishers (see Lussana 2000). Once again, the most significant case is English. Lawrence and Wishart, a publishing house based in London and closely linked to the British Communist Party, published seven important Gramsci collections: *The Modern Prince* (1957), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (1971), *Selections from Political and Cultural Writings* (1977, 1978, 1985), *An Antonio Gramsci Reader* (1988), and *Further Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (1995). Except for the *Modern Prince*, all of these Lawrence and Wishart books have been published in association with other publishers from the USA: International Publishers (New York), Harvard University Press, Schocken Books (New York), and University of

Minnesota Press. As a result, even though the UK and the USA have different and autonomous channels of publication and distribution, these often interact and connect with one another, making it more appropriate to talk about an English language circulation of Gramsci, rather than an “English” or “American” reception.<sup>10</sup> More complex is the case of Spanish, where a common language spanning from Spain to Latin America (including Mexico) has permitted different reception histories in different countries and even continents (Burgos 2004; Pala 2017).

## Publishers, Journals, Editors, and Authors

One cannot account for any process of intellectual circulation unless the social agents, individual and collective, who make up the intellectual field are brought into the picture (Pollak 1988; Ringer 1990; Clemens et al. 1995; Collins 1998; Bourdieu 1999). Ideas do not circulate alone but through living human bearers (such as authors, book or journal editors, translators, even speakers, be it in a conference or a lesson), bringing with them their field position and their institutional base. Paraphrasing Bourdieu, we could say that a scientific appraisal of the international circulation of Gramscian ideas should take as its object “the whole series of social operations” involved in the process of circulation and, in particular, the operation of selection (what is published, how it is arranged) and of marking (through the identity and symbolic capital of the various publishing house, book series, editors, etc.).

In this section, we focus on four key categories of agents that have been actively involved in the intellectual circulation of Gramsci’s ideas across countries and languages: publishing houses, journals, book editors, and the authors of books on Gramsci.<sup>11</sup> As Tables 8.3 and 8.4 show, the four publishing houses most involved in the publication (and first circulation) of Gramscian books are Italian. Editori Riuniti is the historical publishing house of the PCI and its political heirs (today’s Partito Democratico, or Democratic Party). Einaudi is one of the most prestigious publishers in Italy, whose career started after the fall of Fascism and also with the publication of Gramsci’s unpublished writings from prison: the *Lettere* (in 1947) and the *Quaderni* (since 1948). It was Einaudi that published

**Table 8.3** Gramsci's books by publishing house

Publishing house	City	n.
Editori Riuniti	Rome	61
Einaudi	Turin	31
Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana	Rome-Cagliari	24
L'Unione Sarda	Cagliari	20
Argument-Verlag	Berlin-Hamburg	14
Civilização Brasileira	Rio de Janeiro	14
Gallimard	Paris	11
Ediciones Era	Mexico City	7
Lautaro	Buenos Aires	7
Lawrence and Wishart	London-New York	7
Gôdô Shuppan	Tokyo	7
Ôtsuki Shoten	Tokyo	5
Columbia University Press	New York	5
Ediciones Roca	Mexico City	5
Other	–	237
Missing	–	6
Total	–	461

Source: Elaboration on *GB* fileNote: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 5$  texts**Table 8.4** Antonio Gramsci's books by publishing house and decade

Publishing House	City	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	Missing	Total
<i>Editori Riuniti</i>	Rome	0	0	0	4	8	23	7	15	4	0	61
<i>Einaudi</i>	Turin	0	0	6	4	3	6	5	3	4	0	31
<i>Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana</i>	Rome-Cagliari	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	1	24
<i>L'Unione sarda</i>	Cagliari	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	20
<i>Argument-Verlag</i>	Berlin-Hamburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	4	0	15
<i>Civilização Brasileira</i>	Rio de Janeiro	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	9	0	15
<i>Gallimard</i>	Paris	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	3	0	0	11
<i>Ediciones Era</i>	México City	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	2	0	8
<i>Lautaro</i>	Buenos Aires	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	7
<i>Lawrence and Wishart</i>	London-New York	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	1	0	0	7
<i>Gôdô shuppan</i>	Tokyo	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
<i>Ôtsuki Shoten</i>	Tokyo	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	5
<i>Columbia University Press</i>	New York	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	5
<i>Ediciones Roca</i>	México City	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
Other	--	1	1	6	17	31	75	48	28	30	3	240
Total	--	1	1	12	30	49	126	74	67	97	4	461

Source: Elaboration on *GB* fileNote: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 5$  texts

the critical edition of the *Quaderni* in 1975, destined to become the reference edition for all the following translations. While Einaudi was addressed to an intellectual audience, Editori Riuniti's public was more popular (its prices being, accordingly, much cheaper than Einaudi's).

We find this same distinction in the next two publishers, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana and L'Unione Sarda. The former is the institutional, national publisher of the main Italian encyclopedia (the so-called Treccani), which is currently in charge of the "national edition" of Gramsci's complete works, while the latter is the publisher of a regional, Sardinian newspaper, which published a further edition of Gramsci's texts for its readership. Interestingly, other publishers in the list reproduce the same pattern in different countries and languages: Gallimard is a sort of French equivalent of Einaudi, while publishers such as Lautaro and Lawrence & Wishart are publishing branches of the Argentinean and the British Communist Parties, respectively. Although it is not an official channel of the local communist party, even *Civilização Brasileira* belonged to the same political and cultural world.<sup>12</sup> Closer to the Communist Party, but independent from it, was Argument-Verlag, the publishing house founded by the Marxist philosopher Wolfgang Fritz Haug to publish a journal (*Das Argument*) and later book series on Marxist theory and other topics related to history and politics (see *infra*).

Like Spain, Mexico is present in the list with two publishers. Established in 1966, the Ediciones Roca were managed by Manuel Martínez Roca (1920–?), a Spanish refugee who, after the civil war, emigrated to Mexico where he was a publishing manager for more than two decades before founding the Barcelona-based Ediciones Martínez Roca with his brother, Francisco Martínez Roca.<sup>13</sup> Ediciones Era is an independent publisher founded in 1960 by three exiled Spanish co-workers from a printing press, and specializes in the publication of new authors with original ideas in both content and form, including among its authors Carlos Fuentes and Gabriel García Márquez (Pereira 2004, 148).<sup>14</sup> While Gramscian works were being published in Latin America, his reception in Spain was clearly more difficult owing to Franco's dictatorship. However, it did not have to wait until Franco's death to begin, as a few anthologies had already been published in the 1960s by the newly founded Ediciones Peninsula in Barcelona (see Pala 2017).<sup>15</sup>

A great boost to the circulation of Gramsci across the Atlantic was given by the existence of publishing enterprises extending across more than one country. This was the case for Siglo XXI, a Spanish-language book publisher with branches in Spain, Argentina, and Mexico (Sorá 2017). Siglo XXI was established in 1965 by an Argentinean scholar who was acting at the time as director of Fondo de Cultura Económica, a non-profit Spanish language publishing group founded in 1934 and partly funded by the Mexican government, with subsidiaries throughout the Spanish-speaking world. It was for this publisher that in 1970 a Spanish anthology of Gramscian writings was published, edited by the philosopher Manuel Sacristán (1925–1985), considered the first rigorous Spanish edition of Gramscian writings and possibly the publication that most affected Gramsci's reception in the Spanish-speaking world (Pala 2017).<sup>16</sup>

Finally, as we have seen, the Japanese interest in Gramsci can be traced back several decades, and a quick search in the *GB* reveals that a large number of editions of Gramsci's writings have been published in Japanese over the years, almost all by just two publishers, Gôdô Shuppan (since 1961) and Ôtsuki Shoten (since 1981). Interestingly, the first Japanese translations were made from French as it was a more viable language for Japanese translators.<sup>17</sup>

Looking at periodicals (see Table 8.5 for a list of those with at least ten texts), the emerging pattern is one of dispersion across different sources, including academic journals (e.g. *Studi Storici*, *Capital and Class*, *Das Argument*, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*) and magazines: militant ones (such as *Rinascita*, *Rinascita sarda*, *Vie nuove*, *Mondoperaio*, *Il Calendario del Popolo*),<sup>18</sup> general ones (such as *Espresso* and *Sette*) and intellectual ones (*Belfagor*, *L'Indice dei Libri*, *Il Ponte*, *Nuova Antologia*). The lion's share of periodicals are Italian, starting with *Critica marxista* and following with *Rinascita* (an Italian political and cultural magazine published between 1944 and 1991 as an official organ of the PCI) and *Studi storici* (founded in 1959 as a quarterly historical review with an explicit materialist approach and published by Gramsci Institute; see more *infra*).

Interestingly, after the Newsletter published by the International Gramsci Society (see *infra*), we find a German-speaking academic journal,

**Table 8.5** Periodicals by number of publications on Gramsci

Periodical	n.	Periodical	n.
<i>Critica marxista</i>	101	<i>Capital and Class</i>	15
<i>International Gramsci</i>	97	<i>Il Corriere dell'Isola</i>	15
<i>Society Newsletter</i>			
<i>Rinascita</i>	77	<i>Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy</i>	14
<i>Das Argument</i>	38	<i>Journal of Modern Italian Studies</i>	14
<i>Rinascita sarda</i>	32	<i>Lo Stato operaio</i>	14
<i>Studi storici</i>	32	<i>Vie Nuove</i>	14
<i>Il Calendario del popolo</i>	30	<i>L'Espresso</i>	13
<i>Queer (Liberazione supplement)</i>	24	<i>Cominform</i>	12
<i>Mondoperaio</i>	21	<i>Educational Philosophy and Theory</i>	12
<i>Belfagor</i>	20	<i>Il Ponte</i>	12
<i>L'indice dei libri del mese</i>	20	<i>La Insignia</i>	11
<i>Nae</i>	20	<i>Nuova Antologia</i>	11
<i>Rethinking Marxism</i>	20	<i>Sardegna Autonomia</i>	11
<i>La Rinascita della sinistra</i>	17	<i>L'impegno</i>	10
<i>Herramienta: revista de debate y crítica marxista</i>	16	<i>Sette (Corriere della Sera supplement)</i>	10
<i>Utopías. Nuestra Bandera</i>	16	–	

Source: Elaboration on GB file

Note: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 10$  texts

*Das Argument*, whose subtitle reads: *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Sozialwissenschaften* [Journal for Philosophy and Social Sciences]. Established in 1959 as an independent West German journal of predominantly Marxist orientation (it emerged from the protests against West German remilitarization), it has been edited since its inception by the Marxist philosopher Wolfgang Fritz Haug (based at the Free University of Berlin); it is currently published by the Berlin Institute of Critical Theory (InkriT). Not surprisingly, the list includes other Marxist journals, such as *Rethinking Marxism* and *Herramienta*.

Founded in 1995 and edited by a team of (non-Marxist) American scholars of Italian culture and politics, the *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* testifies to the relevance of Gramsci's legacy for contemporary scholarship on Italy, independent of political leanings.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, perhaps more interesting than the present titles are those that are absent: among those missing from this list are influential Leftish journals such as the

*New Left Review*, as well as journals engaged in Cultural Studies.<sup>20</sup> No French journal on culture and politics exceeded the threshold of ten publications.

Ideas don't circulate alone, we have said, and people are personally involved in their travelling, acting as intermediaries (e.g. publishers, journal editors) and also as authors and book editors. Tables 8.6 and 8.7 give a picture of the latter, providing for names of scholars who have devoted themselves to the study of Gramscian work not occasionally. A few names have already been made, because of their links with publishers or book translations: this is the case for Haug, Buttigieg, Yamazaki, and Forgacs.

Of the 25 authors who have contributed at least five books (including translations) to the *GB*, 15 (or 60 percent) are Italian. These include the leader of the post-war PCI and ghost editor of the first edition of the *Quaderni*, Palmiro Togliatti, whose reading of Gramsci's work in the early post-war period was highly influential in Italy and, through translations of his writings, abroad; Gramsci biographers Giuseppe Fiori (a writer-journalist) and Michele Pistillo (a politician and historian); academic historians of the Communist movement and party, Paolo Spriano and Massimo L. Salvadori; Marxist political philosophers Luciano Gruppi, Antonio A. Santucci, Giorgio Baratta, Domenico Losurdo, and Giuseppe

**Table 8.6** Editors of Gramsci's books by number of edited books and decade

Editor	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	Total
Bochmann, Klaus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	1	10
Paris, Robert	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	3	0	10
Santucci, Antonio A.	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	2	10
Haug, Wolfgang Fritz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	9
Caprioglio, Sergio	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	0	0	7
Fubini, Elsa	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	6
Jehle, Peter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	6
Spinella, Mario	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	6
Yamazaki, Isao	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	6
Buttigieg, Joseph A.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5
Forgacs, David	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	5
Paulesu Quercioli, Mimma	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Other	0	0	2	3	14	40	15	8	37	119
Subtotal	0	0	2	5	26	51	33	42	45	204
No editor	1	1	10	25	23	75	41	25	52	257
Total	1	1	12	30	49	126	74	67	97	461

Source: Elaboration on *GB* file

Note: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 5$  texts

**Table 8.7** Authors of books (mainly) on Gramsci by authored books and decade

Author	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	Missing	Total
Togliatti, Palmiro	0	2	2	5	2	3	1	0	1	1	17
Fiori, Giuseppe	0	0	0	0	2	7	3	2	1	1	16
Portelli, Hugues	0	0	0	0	0	8	2	0	0	0	10
Spriano, Paolo	0	0	0	0	2	6	1	0	0	1	10
Buci-Glucksmann, Christine	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	0	0	0	9
Gruppi, Luciano	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	0	8
Santucci, Antonio A.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	0	8
Vacca, Giuseppe	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2	0	8
Anderson, Perry	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	1	7
Cammatt, John M.	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	0	0	7
Coutinho, Carlos Nelson	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	2	0	7
Joll, James	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	0	7
Mayo, Peter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	0	7
Baratta, Giorgio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
Bobbio, Norberto	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	6
Lombardo Radice, Lucio	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
Piotte, Jean-Marc	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	6
Prestipino, Giuseppe	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	6
Leonetti, Alfonso	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	5
Losurdo, Domenico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	5
Manacorda, Mario Alighiero	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	5
Pistillo, Michele	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	5
Rolland, Romain	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Salvadori, Massimo L.	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	5
Texier, Jacques	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	5
Other	2	3	5	24	31	159	164	146	217	7	758
Total	2	10	7	33	40	225	192	166	255	14	944

Source: Elaboration on *GB* fileNote: Threshold for inclusion:  $\geq 5$  texts

Prestipino; historian of political thought, Giuseppe Vacca (Director and then President of the Gramsci Institute in Rome after 1988); the militant journalist Alfonso Leonetti; the militant pedagogists Lucio Lombardo Radice and Mario Alighiero Manacorda; and the highly respected, non-Marxist, political and legal thinker Norberto Bobbio.

Among the foreign authors, we find historians John Cammett (the creator and first editor of the *GB*) and James Joll, Marxist social and political theorists Perry Anderson, Jacques Texier, Hugues Portelli, and Christine Buci-Glucksmann (all authors of influential books on Gramsci in the 1970s), and the active Brazilian “Gramscianist,” Carlos Nelson Coutinho. A specialist in sociology and education, Peter Mayo is possibly



the only representative of the social sciences in this list. A case apart (included in the list because of his reputation and early occurrence) is that of Romain Rolland, the French novelist, dramatist, and essayist, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915, who was deeply involved with pacifism and the fight against fascism; in 1934, he launched a plea published in booklet format for Gramsci's liberation, translated into various languages (see Rolland 1934; Fisher 1988).

Lists are noteworthy not only for what they present but also, and even more, for what they do not. Among the missing names, probably the most noticeable are those of the British historian Eric J. Hobsbawm, the French philosopher Louis Althusser, and the Jamaican-born British cultural theorist Stuart Hall—influential contributors to the Gramscian literature and scholarship whose pertinent texts, however, belong to the genre of the article (e.g. Hall 1986). The same could be said of two highly influential names in the circulation of Gramsci in Latin America, Juan Carlos Portantiero and José Arico, whose production on Gramsci greatly contributed to the reception of the Italian author in Argentina as in other Spanish-speaking countries (see Portantiero 1983; Arico 1988).

## Gramscism as a Global Field

Far from being exhaustive, the data collected in this chapter clearly suggest the suitability of their interpretation in terms of field theory, meaning an organized space of intellectual production, exchange, circulation, reproduction, and innovation. The growing reputation of Gramsci as both an author and a thinker after his premature death in 1937 did not happen by coincidence or thanks to some mysterious entity such as the “*esprit du temps*” or some presumed resonance of Gramscian ideas with the post-fascist era. Indeed, one cannot understand the circulation of Gramsci's writings and ideas without considering the foundation and operation of an array of organizations and collective agencies engaged in the promotion and diffusion of his texts. Chief among these organizations has been the aforementioned Gramsci Institute, the cultural organization created especially for the conservation and promotion of Gramsci's legacy, including his writings (Lussana and Vittoria 2000; Vittoria 2014).

Founded in 1950 in Rome, the Gramsci Institute has long been the major cultural branch of the PCI, in its different shapes and official identities, up to the present one as the Democratic Party (Partito Democratico), even though it is more a “dialectical” relationship (claims to autonomy have been common in its history) than a simple party extension. However, the Institute’s Director and President have always been nominated by the Party, and this cannot be undervalued.

The Gramsci Institute is a small institute, with very few permanent employees and a host of volunteer collaborators, mainly from the academic system. Especially active in organizing congresses and seminars, including, but not exclusively, those on Gramsci, it has acted as the managing body for operations in the publishing field, such as book series (e.g. the recently created *Gramsci nel mondo*: see Vacca and Schirru 2007; Vacca et al. 2009, 2010) and academic journals (*Studi storici*). Since its foundation, it has been articulated as a library and an archive. It was and still is mainly active in disciplines such as history (of communism, work, capitalism, fascism, globalization), philosophy, and economics. It has never really opened its doors to the social sciences, and in particular to sociology, which is looked at with suspicion following a long tradition in Marxist thought—even though some attempts in the 1960s and 1970s were made, albeit without lasting effects.<sup>21</sup>

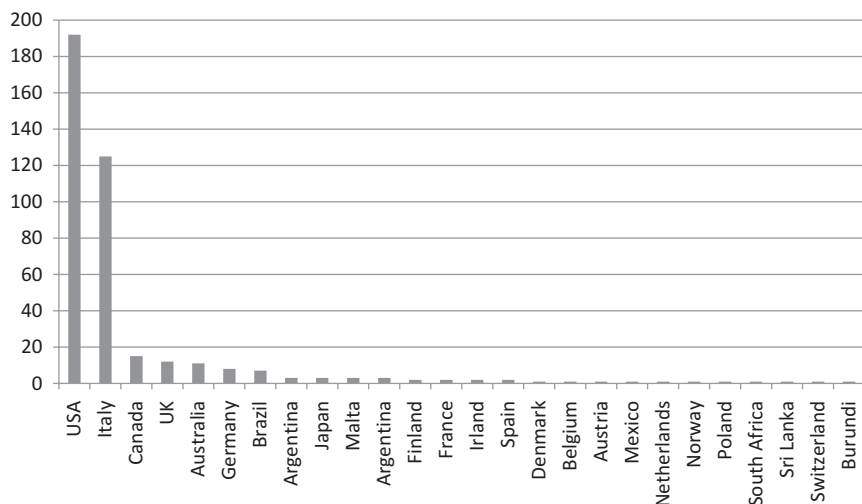
In a field with porous boundaries and a relatively weak structure, the Gramsci Institute may be considered the main individual actor in the circulation of Gramsci’s work, both in Italy and globally, as the owner and manager of Gramsci’s copyrights—of his original texts (at least until 2007, when his copyrights expired according to Italian law), but especially of the critical edition it promoted in the 1970s and which is still the standard reference for Gramscian scholarship. However, as the historical work conducted in the Institute’s archives testifies, the relationships between the Institute and the many publishing houses involved over the years in the translation and publication of Gramsci’s writings have been far from easy and linear, and account for the many different solutions available in the global market, which have not always been made with the consent of the Institute (see Lussana and Vittoria 2000).

In more recent years, the role of the scholarly promotion of Gramsci and his work on a global scale has moved to a new organization, the

International Gramsci Society (IGS), founded in 1989 after a congress in Italy organized by the Gramsci Institute precisely on the topic “Gramsci in the World” (see Righi 1995). The mission of the association is clearly stated on its website: “The aim ... is to facilitate communication and the exchange of information among the very large number of individuals from all over the world who are interested in Antonio Gramsci’s life and work and in the presence of his thought in contemporary culture.” The fact that its first President was Valentino Gerratana (i.e. the editor of the standard critical edition of *The Prison Notebooks*, originally promoted, sponsored, and financed by the Institute) is witness to the closeness of this new organization to the Italian institution. However, the very existence of an international organization cannot be without effects on the equilibrium of the “Gramscian subfield.” Suffice it to say that the first Vice President was a Brazilian scholar, the already-mentioned Carlos Nelson Coutinho, and that the presidency passed, after the death of Gerratana, to Joseph A. Buttigieg, a literary scholar based at the (Catholic) University of Notre Dame (Indiana, USA), who is the editor of the first English edition of the critical edition of the *Notebooks* (still in progress).

Looking at IGS boards, there are people from the USA, Italy, Mexico, Japan, Australia, the UK, Spain, Brazil—that is, the countries where Gramsci’s writings and ideas had their greatest impact. The activities of the IGS consist not only in the maintenance of a website and a bulletin, as well as in the collection of bibliographic information useful for updating the *GB*, but also in the organization of international conferences (1997, 2001, and 2007, respectively held in Naples, Rio de Janeiro, and Sardinia). In 2016, the IGS had about 400 members, representing 26 countries, strongly concentrated in Italy and the USA (see Fig. 8.10).

The IGS may also work locally through, and as, “national sections.” The first and largest is IGS-Italy (since 1996, located at the University of Calabria). Other IGS sections in the world are Asociación Argentina Antonio Gramsci, the Gramsci Society Asia-Pacific hosted at the University of Wallongong in Australia, and the Brazilian Gramscian Society (founded in 2014). There are other “foreign” associations especially devoted to the study of Gramsci, which pre-date the foundation of the IGS, even though they may work today as loose articulations of it: in Japan, there are the Tokyo Gramsci Society and the Kyoto Gramsci



**Fig. 8.10** IGS membership, by country (2016). (Source: Data from IGS)

Society (both since the 1980s)<sup>22</sup>; in Latin America, there is the Sociedad Colombiana Antonio Gramsci (1991–?). These associations and institutions are just the tip of the iceberg, the more visible elements of a larger and deeper social organization that has been driving the circulation of Gramscian ideas across countries, languages, generations, and even political divides. The recent attempt by right-wing think-tanks and intellectuals in France and in the USA to appropriate Gramscian ideas (see Filippini 2011) testifies to the potentialities inscribed in texts well beyond the intentions of their authors and even editors.

## Conclusion

What lessons can we draw from this exercise in intellectual mapping? Let us begin from Bourdieu's argument that "texts circulate without their context"—a proposition he drew from a passing observation by Marx about how German thinkers read French ones, that is, "seeing texts that were the result of a particular political juncture as *pure* texts, and transforming the political agitators at the heart of such texts into a sort of

transcendental subject.” In the same manner, Bourdieu notes, “many misunderstandings in international communication are a result of the fact that texts do not bring their context with them” (Bourdieu 1999, 221). In other words, texts do not carry with them “the field of production of which they are a product” and the receivers, themselves located in a different field of production, “re-interpret the texts in accordance with the structure of the field of reception” (ibid.).

The case of Gramsci partly confirms this argument, but partly suggests some caution. That Gramscian textual receivers have reinterpreted the texts according to the field of reception they were located in could be proven with an array of examples, starting from the very first editors of the Italian edition (PCI leaders Togliatti and Platone, clearly located in the political-intellectual field of both post-fascist Italy and Soviet-centered international communism [Chiarotto 2011; Capuzzo and Mezzadra 2012]) through the uses of Gramsci in Argentina (see Burgos 2004) to the contemporary revisitation of Gramscian ideas in post-colonial thought by scholars variously located in the global South (Baldussi and Manduchi 2010; Srivastava and Bhattacharya 2012; see also Browsers 2004).

At the same time, it seems that texts do circulate with at least some elements of their contexts of original production. You cannot translate whatever you want: texts exert some degree of resistance to their appropriation, and it takes time to decouple a text from its original context of production—especially when the field of first production is presided over by influential organizations (e.g. the PCI’s Gramsci Institute) and assisted by legal instruments such as copyright transfers. Still, each reception is context-grounded, and any successful reception operation adds something to the original text, producing a further “context of reception” that impinges upon any following reception operation. It took decades—and the growing demise of the Communist Party—in Italy to liberate the Gramscian heritage from the interpretation originally imposed on it by Togliatti. But it will also take time to liberate the Gramscian legacy from the contexts (and contents) of the subsequent reception in the 1960s and 1970s in countries far from Italy, such as the USA and the UK, where Gramsci’s ideas have been creatively used to articulate new perspectives in cultural analysis and cultural theory functional to the symbolic struggles being fought in the Anglo-American academy (see e.g. Chap. 6 in this volume; Shalbak 2018).

## Notes

1. An incomplete list of references should mention at least the following: Rossi (1970); Eley (1984); Hobsbawm (1995); Righi (1995); Burgos (2004); Lussana and Pissarello (2008); Pala (2009); Baldussi and Manduchi (2010); Kanoussi et al. (2012); Boothman et al. (2016). Most of these writings are in Italian.
2. The *GB* is available for inquiry online at the Gramsci Institute website. However, our research has been conducted on the original dataset the Institute made available to us. Thanks to Maria Luisa Righi of the Institute for her support and Paolo Capuzzo for his help. Thanks also to Marcus E. Green for data on the IGS membership.
3. For essential references to our intellectual sources for this endeavor, see McKenzie (1986), Clemens et al. (1995), Bourdieu (1999), and Moretti (2013). Moretti's formula—*distant reading*—is possibly the best description of what we do here.
4. For a wider study of Gramsci's reception, other sources should indeed be consulted, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, and citational databases such as *Scopus* or *Web of Science*. Just to give an idea, while in the 1968 edition of the *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* Gramsci is mentioned only once (in the entry on Marxist sociology), in Bottomore and Nisbet's *History of sociological analysis* (1979), Gramsci is cited ten times. Three decades later, Ritzer's *Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Sociology* (2007) refers to him as a major thinker (an entry is entirely devoted to him), with specific references to an array of conceptual items as civil society, hegemony, subaltern, and common sense. The same is true for other reference books, such as the *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* (Turner 2006). A close analysis of sources like these is beyond the limits of this chapter, but will be the object of another paper we are working on.
5. There are many biographies of Gramsci; the most famous (and available in more languages) is Fiori (1966). See, more recently, Vacca (2017). For a useful, recent introduction to Gramsci(sm) in English see Hoare and Sperber (2015), originally published in French (in France). See also Santucci (2010) and Liguori and Voza (2009) for further references.
6. All these categories may be found, differently combined, in the dozens of entries devoted to Gramsci in Wikipedia, the multilingual online encyclopedia.
7. The circumstances of Gramsci's death—while in prison under a dictatorship and with a chronically suffering body—presumably are not without

consequence for this consecration process. For an attempt to sociologically treat the issue of post-mortem consecration, see Santoro (2010) on the case of a singer-songwriter with Communist sympathies whose trajectory has been interpreted as a failed attempt to build a new (Gramscian-style) hegemony in the field of popular music. On the circumstances of Gramsci's imprisonment, his time as a prisoner and his death, see Spriano (1977).

8. We acquired the data set directly from the Gramsci Institute in the autumn of 2014 and started our research at the beginning of 2015. As it takes time to include all the published references in the archive, we estimated that 2012 was the last complete year covered. At the time of writing, the *GB* comprises 20,721 items (accessed 14 June 2019). For previous publications from this same data source, but with different foci and questions, see Santoro and Gallelli (2016) and Gerli and Santoro (2018).
9. On this connection, see Schneider (2000). This connection is also visible in the field of sociology, where an Italian scholar, Gino Germani, greatly contributed to the founding of the discipline in Argentina after his emigration from fascist Italy, before coming back to Italy in his sixties.
10. Another organization active in the field, the International Gramsci Society (IGS), established in 1989 (see *infra*), periodically publishes lists of "recent works" on Gramsci in English, regardless of the country of publication. See, for instance, Hawksley (2011).
11. See the Appendix for a ranked (and shortened) list of article and book chapter authors that will be discussed in a forthcoming publication.
12. Its long-term editor was Ênio Silveira (1925–1996), a militant of the Partido Comunista Brasileiro. For more on him and this publishing house, see Hallewell (1982, esp. Chapter 18).
13. For related information, see the *Portal de Archivos Espanoles-Pares*: <http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/autoridad/123559>.
14. It may be of some interest to recall here that, in 2011, the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana of Mexico City granted one of the founders, Neus Espresate, an honorary PhD for his contribution to the diffusion of knowledge in the social sciences throughout Mexico and Latin America.
15. A recent analysis of the Spanish reception (Pala 2017) strongly insists on the "impossibility of publishing or approaching Marxist texts during a large part of the dictatorship by General Francisco Franco" (authors'

translation). Even into the 1950s, the only chance to directly read Marxist authors passed through the knowledge of a foreign language. In 1967, the Communist party magazine *Nous Horizons* was able to host two essays on Gramsci: one by Josep Fontana and the other by the Spanish philosopher Manuel Sacristán. After 1966, however, an anthology of excerpts from the *Quaderni dal carcere* was available to Spanish readers, edited and translated by Jordi Solé Tura, with the title *Cultura i literatura*. Pala also recalls the renowned Hispanist Giulia Adinolfi, who arrived in Barcelona from Italy (and the PCI) in the mid-1950s. She was the person who brought Gramsci to Sacristán's attention. In 1968, Solé Tura edited a Catalan version of Gramsci's *Noterelle sulla politica del Machiavelli*, followed two years later by a new anthology from the *Quaderni*, with a more philosophical orientation. According to Pala, the real turning point in the Spanish reception of Gramsci was the massive *Antología*, edited by Sacristán in Spanish and published in Mexico in 1970. Afterwards, publications and translations became increasingly frequent as well as chaotic, in part owing to the inability of the Gramsci Institute, owner of Gramsci's copyright, "to articulate an intelligent publishing policy for Spain" (authors' translation; Pala is here referring to, and even quoting, Lussana's work on Gramscian translations, see Lussana 2000). It is debatable, however, just how much better publishing policies would have done when orchestrated by a single subject, especially an institutional one.

16. This has not prevented publications from other publishers, however—as testified by the presence of the Universidade da Coruña Press in the list of active Spanish publishers on Gramsci.
17. This was the case of the first three volumes of the *Guramushi Senshû* [*Selected Works of Gramsci*], directed by Isao Yamazaki and edited by Seiji Honkawa, with comments by Kiyotomo Ishidô (1961–1962). These translations were drawn from the French edition of the *Quaderni*, published by the Éditions Sociales in 1959. Only after the fourth volume (1963) were the translations made from the *Opere di Antonio Gramsci* as published by Einaudi. The first Japanese edition of the *Letters* (1963) has also been translated from this Italian edition.
18. *Il Calendario del Popolo* is one the most long-lived cultural magazines published in Italy. It was founded in 1945 on behalf of the PCI and issued monthly until 2010, when it became a quarterly publication. The editors-in-chief have been prominent personalities in Italian culture,



examples being Carlo Salinari—a literary critic and partisan in Rome—and Franco Della Peruta, a historian. Supported by very active subscribers, the magazine had as its main aim the “acculturation” of the working class in post-war Italian society.

19. As we can read on its official homepage, the *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* is “one of the leading English language forums for debate and discussion on modern Italy.” See: <https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=rms20>.
20. Among the notable missing titles, we suggest *Theory Culture & Society*, *Boundary 2*, and *Cultural Studies*.
21. See, e.g., Pizzorno (1970); Gallino (1970); and more recently Rosati and Filippini (2013).
22. “In Japan there exist now mainly two organizations, namely the Kyoto Gramsci Society (KGS) and the Tokyo Gramsci Society (TGS), respectively associated with a number of scholars and researchers in Kyoto, the ancient Capital, and in Tokyo. For over ten years the former has been engaged in organizing a series of workshops and in regularly publishing the KGS Newsletters ... TGS was organized, as a forum of cultural exchange, in April 1998, and has been engaged in organizing various talks and discussions and in publishing its own bi-monthly bulletin *La Città Futura* [from the title of a failed but renowned Gramscian publishing initiative in 1917] for the exchange of opinions and information on Gramsci [...] Both of them have continued to carry out their study works, in maintaining relationship of exchange and cooperation between them. Thus I can tell you now that we are arriving at the stage of formally establishing an IGS-Japan” (Hoara and Matsuda 2002, 136–137).

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# 9

## On the Edge of Disciplines: Reception of Karl Polanyi in France (1974–2014)

Jean-Michel Chahsiche

### Introduction

The international circulation of authors, especially when they are deceased, sets a scene where the “support personnel” (Becker 1982), namely the importers, are the main architects of the interpretive frame through which an author’s work is received. The international circulation of ideas should not, however, be reduced to gatekeeping practices; in Becker’s *Art Worlds*, the general proposition is that any work of art bears the marks of the collective process of which it is the outcome. When transferred to the sociology and the history of ideas (Matonti 2012), this proposition incites us to look at how the “support personnel” contribute to the way an idea, an author, or a theory are shaped and understood in a given context.

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In this sense, the importation of Karl Polanyi's writing in France can be seen as an everlasting work of interpretation, constantly adapted to struggles and issues at stake at different times, which shape the way the author is received. This study is an attempt to highlight the role of the academic support personnel of Karl Polanyi's reception in France.

The sources used are mainly texts about Polanyi written by French scholars since the 1970s; the social and academic characteristics of these scholars are also brought to light. This study of the writings of the "support personnel" was completed with two interviews with scholars who contributed to the reception of Karl Polanyi at different times (in the 1970s and in the 2000s). Other types of support personnel, especially publishers and journalists, are mostly left out. In the last part, however, we also consider the specific effects of the publishing and the media fields on Karl Polanyi's late reception. We do not mean to ignore, in a somewhat sterile one-sided "external" history of ideas (Camic and Gross 2001; Guilhot 2011; Keim 2016), Polanyi's writing as irrelevant to explaining his introduction to France. Nevertheless, when dealing with the importation of an author, the imported writings must be looked at as resources that specific actors invest in, for specific reasons, in a given context. The success of the importation will then depend on these actors' strategies, how they narrow the possible understandings of the author's texts, and how they locate these texts in the specific features of the (evolving) context of reception.

The international circulation of ideas is quite revealing of national intellectual traditions and their history because it works as a composite of intellectual, institutional, and political filters that can be described as "selective and labeling operations" (Bourdieu 2002). An analysis of the importation must thus lead to apprehending national contexts—structured in relatively autonomous fields—as explicative elements of the framework and processes of the importation, as well as enable a better understanding of the sociology and the history of these contexts (Santoro 2009). Polanyi's thought was first imported in a period of intense intellectual, political, and disciplinary crisis in the French academic field, which can be roughly summed up as the rapid decline of Marxism and structuralism, and Polanyi's work was taken hold of by young scholars directly involved in the struggles that would ultimately remodel the academic field.

The first goal of this study is to see how Karl Polanyi's writings navigated the "selective filters" of the mid-1970s, that is, to stress which factors might have played a role in their importation and who were the actors of this importation. As in other cases such as John Rawls's theory of justice (Hauchecorne 2019) or analytical philosophy in the United States (USA) (Pudal 2004), we will see that Karl Polanyi's work came to be known in France quite late when compared with its academic recognition in the USA and the United Kingdom. To explain this time gap between the English-speaking and French-speaking world in the career of Karl Polanyi's work, we will argue that one must look into the specific features of the academic and intellectual field that make it suitable for a given context. In this respect, we will see that Karl Polanyi's first importation into France was part of an attempt led by young scholars to renew the link between the structural anthropology and economic history that theoretically dominated the French academic field at this time.

The second objective is to detect the "labeling filters" through which Polanyi's disciplinary, scientific, and ideological identity has developed and changed through the years. We will see that referring to Karl Polanyi first served as a means to save the Marxist paradigm from its rapid decline in the French social sciences, before being used as a way to overcome Marxism as the sole framework to critique capitalistic societies. We will also see that references to Polanyi shifted from anthropology and history to heterodox economics, following the transforming division of labor among social science disciplines in 1970–2000. To finish, we will see how Karl Polanyi came to be an up-to-date reference in the public debate that followed the 2007 financial crisis, beyond the boundaries of the academic field.

## **A Tectonics of Disciplines: Locating Karl Polanyi in Academic Journals**

The shift from history and anthropology to economics is visible in citations of Polanyi in academic journals between the 1970s and the 2000s. Citations of Polanyi in the French scientific literature were still quite rare

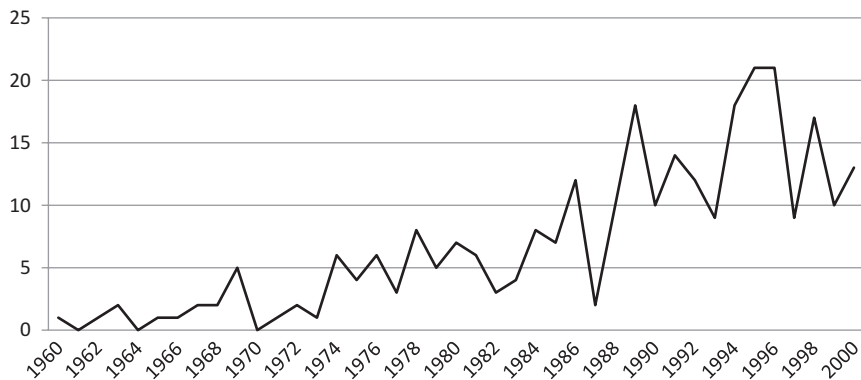


in the mid-1970s. With the exception of an issue of *Annales ESC*, where a first attempt to use Polanyi as a central theoretical reference can be found, reference to the Austrian-born thinker was generally absent from scientific journals. The few citations of his work are by anthropologists and historians, mainly in *Annales ESC* and *L'Homme* (see Table 9.1), and mostly in short footnotes. In the 1980s and 1990s, reception accelerated slightly, with Karl Polanyi being quoted twice as much as in the former decades. In the early 1980s, the newly born *Revue du MAUSS* became very active in promoting Karl Polanyi. However, references to Polanyi really took off in the 1990s. According to our count in the Persée and

**Table 9.1** Most frequent journals by period

	Number of citations	Disciplines
<b>1960–1980</b>		
<i>L'Homme</i>	13	Anthropology
<i>Annales ESC</i>	13	History
<i>Cahiers d'études africaines</i>	11	Area Studies
<i>Revue française de sociologie</i>	7	Sociology
<i>L'Homme et la société</i>	5	Interdisciplinary.
<i>Dialogues d'histoire ancienne</i>	4	History
<i>Revue économique</i>	3	Economics
<i>Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales</i>	2	Sociology
<b>1981–1990</b>		
<i>Annales ESC</i>	13	History
<i>Espace Temps</i>	8	Geography, history
<i>Revue française de science politique</i>	7	Political science
<i>Publications de l'École française de Rome</i>	7	History
<i>Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales</i>	6	Sociology
<i>Revue française d'économie</i>	5	Economics
<i>Cahiers d'économie politique</i>	4	Economics
<i>Dialogues d'histoire ancienne</i>	4	History
<b>1991–2000</b>		
<i>Revue économique</i>	14	Economics
<i>Revue des Annales</i>	13	History
<i>Tiers Monde</i>	13	Anthropology
<i>Topoi</i>	9	Area Studies
<i>Publications de l'École française de Rome</i>	8	History
<i>Genèses</i>	7	Sociology
<i>Revue d'économie financière</i>	6	Economics

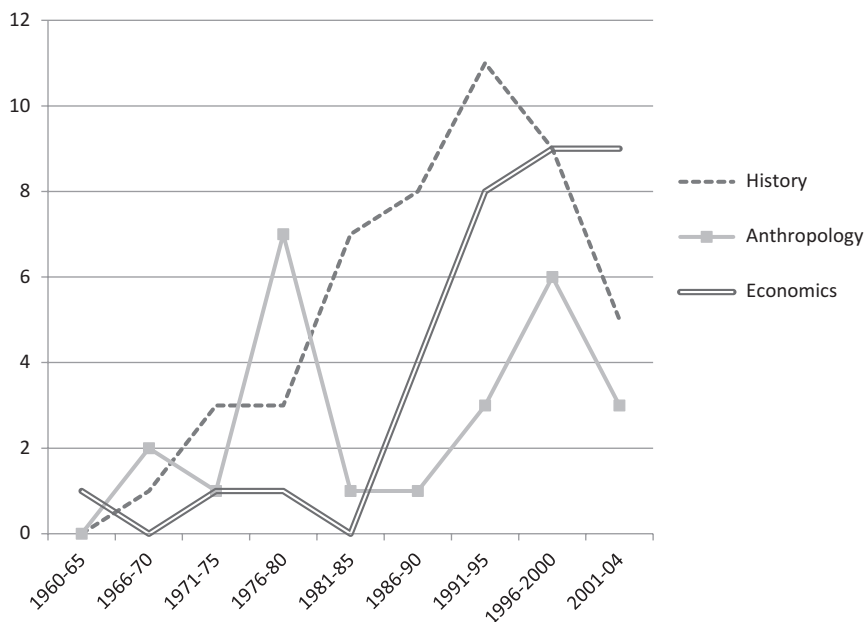
Source: Persée



**Fig. 9.1** Citations of Polanyi in French academic journals. The *Revue du MAUSS* is not included as only the issues published after 2004 are available even though the journal was founded in 1982. (Source: Persée)

Cairn databases (see Fig. 9.1), Polanyi was cited in 138 papers in 1960–1990 and in 144 papers in 1990–2000 (source: Persée).<sup>1</sup> The same research for the more recent period (2004–2014) shows stability, with Karl Polanyi appearing in 145 articles (source: Cairn). Even though such figures cannot be completely accurate (because not all journals are featured in the databases or because the number of journals has tended to increase with time), this confirms a growing interest in Polanyi's thought over time.

The most supportive journal is by far the *Revue du MAUSS* (see Sect. 3). But most importantly, one must underline the constant rise of citations of Polanyi in economic journals starting in the 1980s. For the 2005–2014 period, economic journals appear in third place, just behind journals of sociology and political science, for citations of Karl Polanyi (source: Cairn). However, the journals that cite him are marginal in the discipline, whether because of their heterodox orientation (*Revue française de socio-économie*, *Finance et bien commun*, *Cahiers d'économie politique*), their focus on a marginal, dominated subfield of the discipline such as international economic law (*Revue internationale de droit économique*), or their editorial choice to target a non-academic learned readership (*L'économie politique*).



**Fig. 9.2** Citations of Karl Polanyi in three disciplines. (Source: Persée)

Karl Polanyi arguably becomes a central reference in heterodox economics in the 2000s, even though Polanyi citations are quite widespread in various disciplines of the social sciences (see Fig. 9.2).

The difficulty of locating Karl Polanyi among the social science disciplines is partly related to his geographical and intellectual trajectory, as well as to the original tenets of his thought. For most of his life, Polanyi did not hold any academic position, therefore making it harder to locate him among the social science disciplines. Born in 1886 in Vienna, he was raised in Budapest in a Jewish upper-class family. As part of the Magyarization process, Karl's father changed his last name, and the family converted to Protestantism. Both Karl and his brother Michael were part of the intellectual elite of the country in the interwar period. As Karl became an economic journalist in Vienna, he grew close to the Austro-Marxist theoreticians. Politically, he kept his distance from the Soviet revolution while engaging in the controversy with the Austrian School of Economics and its most famous member, Ludwig Von Mises. His brother, on the other hand, became

an epistemologist and a member of the neoliberal Mount Pelerin Society. After Hitler's coming to power in 1933, both brothers left Austria for England. Karl wrote his most famous text, *The Great Transformation*, while working as an evening class teacher. The book develops the idea that fascism—as well as the New Deal in the United States—was society's reaction against the spread of the self-regulated market as the only form of social organization. Thanks to this work, Karl Polanyi became connected with American institutional economics, and after World War II, John Maurice Clark invited him as visiting professor to Columbia University. In 1958, he was appointed director of the *Columbia Interdisciplinary Research Project* funded by the Ford Foundation (Polanyi-Levitt 1990; Maucourant 2011).

## Karl Polanyi and “Historical Anthropology”: First Importation

As stated earlier, the first importation can be identified in a 1974 issue of *Annales ESC*. The issue notably features the first article explicitly devoted to Karl Polanyi's theoretical framework and its possible use in history (Valensi 1974). This issue of *Annales ESC* is the written legacy of a seminar initiated by historian W. G. L. Randles at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in 1972–1973 (Valensi and Wachtel 1996). The seminar was named “Historical anthropology,” but its participants ironically nicknamed it the “*Tricontinentale*,” in reference to the geographical areas that were studied (Asia, Africa, and Latin America) as well as to the Conference of the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, that was held in Cuba in 1966.

The participants in the seminar all belonged to the same generation; they were young historians about to finish their PhD dissertation who had entered their academic career in the post-May 1968 years, in those institutions that were home at the time to the scientific avant-garde, such as the Centre Universitaire de Vincennes and the EHESS. As newcomers in the field, they benefited from the reforms of the former rigid academic hierarchies (“*mandarinat*”) and—paradoxically—from a dominated position through which they could focus on an avant-garde importation work. Lucette Valensi retrospectively describes the “*Tricontinentale*” as an enchanted space of intellectual exchanges made possible, precisely, by their relative invisibility in the institution:

It might not even have been on the information board. We had no students or PhD candidates at the seminar, due to our inferior rank. So it was only researchers and we did exactly what we wanted. It was wonderful. We had great freedom and there was no educational concern, only the preoccupation of discussing models, exchanging ideas, so we influenced each other a lot. (Interview with Lucette Valensi, March 2013)<sup>2</sup>

As newcomers in the academic career, but also because of their academic orientation (they all worked on “exotic” societies), the participants of the “*Tricontinentale*” were well placed to question the disciplinary division between anthropology and history, and the dichotomy between “historical” societies (namely European societies) and the “ethnological” or “exotic” societies that had been constituted as subjects of anthropology. The explicit goal of the *Annales ESC* issue was to knock down these intellectual barriers. As stated in the introduction of the issue: “In the midst of these difficulties, the—already old—work of Karl Polanyi emerges; it addresses the same issues, tries to build a bridge between ‘ethnological’ and ‘historical’ societies, and puts forward a set of concepts that can be used by both historians and anthropologists” (*Annales ESC* 1974/6). In this respect, the first importation of Polanyi serves the intention of overcoming the theoretical framework of “European” economic history, which amounts to escaping the established corpus of historians. Lucette Valensi describes history, as it was practiced at the Sorbonne—where she was finishing her PhD—as ignoring other social science disciplines: “We had heard of Lévi-Strauss’s *Tristes Tropiques* because we lived in Paris, but we did not know that anthropology could feed historical thinking” (interview).

The complex power relations that structured the academic field in the 1970s, however, made the reconciliation of history and anthropology more difficult, as structuralism came under attack for its lack of a historical dimension (Dosse 1991). Invited with the other participants of the “*Tricontinentale*” to talk at Lévi-Strauss’s seminar, Lucette Valensi recalls the intellectual, disciplinary, and gender hierarchies that shaped the position of importers in the academic field. Given their dominated position, the young historians hesitated between two possible attitudes to Lévi-Strauss’s more prestigious seminar: *exit* or *loyalty*, to use Albert Hirschmann’s categories.

Then [Maurice] Godelier found that our work deserved some attention [*ironic tone*], and he asked us to speak at Lévi-Strauss's seminar, of which he was in charge at that time. ... I was quite upset and I thought: "here are historians being the gas station of anthropology." Those gentlemen—since they were only men then—were discussing theory, and we were supposed to provide the empirical material. I was so furious that I declined the offer. But I think my colleagues modestly accepted to go along.

Lucette Valensi got around these difficulties by investing in foreign references such as Polanyi, but also British anthropologist Ernst Gellner and American historians S. C. Humphreys and Moses Finley. In this sense, the use of non-French references was justified by the representation of a somewhat fossilized French scientific literature ("It never bothered me to read in English. It allowed me to escape out of my French *cave*").

The position of the first importers explains the logic of the initial framing of Karl Polanyi's thought in France; dominated as newcomers, with regard to their discipline (history versus anthropology) and with regard to their research topic (historical study of "non-European" societies), the members of the *Tricontinentale* found themselves in the position of avant-garde importers. Polanyi was brought up as a means to a "peace treaty" between historians and anthropologists at a moment when structural anthropology functioned as a theoretical "magnetic field" (Valensi and Wachtel 1996) for other social science disciplines. The Polanyian concept of "reciprocity" was most notably taken up as it opened up new research avenues for the economic history of non-Western societies. In Polanyi's work, the concept of "reciprocity" defines a kind of economic organization based on symmetrical relations—as opposed to "redistribution," which is based on hierarchical relations—and exchanges relying on "price-making markets." In Valensi's view, the Polanyian concept of reciprocity sounds "familiar" to French historians and anthropologists as it echoes Marcel Mauss's analyses of the gift as a form of economic exchange (Valensi 1974, 1312).

The importation of Polanyi, materialized in the *Annales ESC* issue, can be seen as an intellectual endeavor to overcome disciplinary barriers between history and anthropology. This initiative was made possible in an avant-garde academic institution such as the EHESS, since

its founding project was precisely to develop interdisciplinarity (Revel and Wachtel 1996).

A year after the *Annales ESC* issue, *Trade and Markets in Early Empires* (Polanyi et al. 1975) was published in French. The book was released in the Larousse “Anthropologie” series, confirming Polanyi’s temporary disciplinary identity.<sup>3</sup> But most importantly, the preface of the text was written by Claude Lévi-Strauss’s assistant, Maurice Godelier, who was then the main figure of economic anthropology, a label that was almost non-existent in France at the end of the 1960s. In 1974, Godelier was on the verge of being elected *directeur d’études*—the equivalent of full professor—at the EHESS and he transferred his own scientific legitimacy to the text. Maurice Godelier was indeed an “economic anthropologist.” After his *agrégation de philosophie* in 1959, he had turned to economics because of his Marxist political activism (he was a member of the Communist Party until 1968). As an economist, he had published a critical discussion of the rational-choice theory in economics in 1964. The book, *Rationalité et irrationalité en économie* (Godelier 1964), had considerable impact—it was reprinted seven times in the following years.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the 1960s, however, Maurice Godelier had become an anthropologist after a field trip to Mali. After he returned to France, he met Claude Lévi-Strauss, who recruited him as an assistant to study infrastructures, as he would himself study superstructures in the forms of kinship relations (Bert 2007). Thanks to his relationship with Lévi-Strauss, Maurice Godelier’s position as an economic anthropologist was solidified at the EHESS and in the field of French social sciences: “I walked out of Levi-Strauss’s office with this label of economic anthropologist.”<sup>5</sup>

This initial framing is important for what it does to Polanyi’s reception, but also for what it does not do. In this case, Polanyi is not used as a means to criticize contemporary capitalistic societies. As Lucette Valensi puts it, “the topic of the *Annales* issue was the concept of reciprocity. What we didn’t talk about is *The Great Transformation*! No, that wasn’t for us.” The next stage of the importation work, undertaken by different actors, would then be an opportunity to expand the initial framing; from historical anthropologist of non-European societies, Polanyi would swiftly be understood as a critic of the market economy. Of course, this wider understanding of Karl Polanyi’s thought owes a great deal to the

first French publication of *The Great Transformation* in 1983. The publication is also related, however, to the transformation of social science disciplines in France, especially economics, as well as to the birth of a new journal of critical theory, the *Revue du MAUSS* (which stands for “Anti-utilitarian movement in the social sciences”).

## Expansion of the Initial Framing: The Transformation of Economics and the *Revue du MAUSS*

At the beginning of the 1980s, the intellectual orientation of the *Revue du MAUSS* was related to the transformations of economics at the time. In the 1970s, owing to the growing place of engineer-economists within academic institutions, the discipline had changed accordingly to embrace American (US) scientific standards of economics. This provoked a growing isolation of economics from its social science counterparts (Lebaron 2000; Fourcade 2009) as physics came to be the new reference for building the scientific legitimacy of “pure economics.” At the same time, neoclassical economics gained a dominant position within the discipline (Godechot 2010). In this context, reopening economics to other social science disciplines soon became one of the central tenets of French heterodox economists.

The 1970s are also characterized by the failure—or diagnosed as such—of both Marxist and Keynesian theory to design efficient economic policies both in Western and Third World countries. The transformations of economics then followed the economic and political agenda of the time; though development economics was a stronghold of French Marxist economics in France in the wake of the independence movements, by the end of the 1970s, the overall failure of Socialist development planning in non-aligned countries undermined the credit of Marxist development economics.

At the same time, Keynesian policies proved to be inefficient to solve the 1973–1974 stagflation crises, therefore giving the upper hand to the monetarist theory that inspired the austerity policy of French Prime Minister Raymond Barre’s conservative government (1978–1981). The



changing economic and political landscape then drove left-leaning and heterodox economists to new theoretical challenges.

In this respect, the regulation theory was an attempt to escape the flaws of the available theories in explaining the mid-1970s crises by emphasizing the institutional and historical dimension of capitalism. It therefore opposed both the neoclassical theory and the then dominant structuralist reading of Marx.<sup>6</sup> To some extent, the rise of Polanyi as a central figure in the critique of orthodox (or mainstream) economics must also be understood in this way, even if it was undertaken by different actors. The interdisciplinary perspective Polanyi's work offered empirical and theoretical resources to an alternative research program in economics.<sup>7</sup>

Starting in the 1980s, the *Revue du MAUSS* takes a central place in the diffusion of Polanyi's thought in France as a critical means to "utilitarian social sciences," especially in economics. Publication of *The Great Transformation* in 1983 offered needed resources to new investment in Polanyi's thought as critical reference to contemporary capitalist societies.

Along with the *Annales ESC* and *L'Homme*, the *Revue du MAUSS* (first called *Bulletin du MAUSS*) soon came to be prominent in the diffusion of Polanyi's thought. The journal—which clearly states its intellectual allegiance to Émile Durkheim's nephew, anthropologist Marcel Mauss, in its name—was founded in 1982 by the sociologist Alain Caillé and the anthropologist Gérald Berthoud. *MAUSS*'s contributors claimed to put forward human behavior that could not fit the *homo economicus* concept as seen in the rational-choice theory, and in doing so, to criticize the actual scientific significance of such a concept. According to one of the first contributors to the journal, the foundation of *MAUSS* followed up on the late "Association pour la critique des sciences économiques et sociales," which was founded by a group of economists in the early 1970s, and in which *MAUSS*'s creator Alain Caillé had taken part (Latouche 2009). Consequently, the first texts of the journal mainly targeted economics as the discipline where the "utilitarian axiomatic" had reached its deepest implications (*MAUSS* 1 1982, 6). As a critic of the belief held by liberal economists regarding the "universal" and "natural" dimension of the market economy in all human societies, Karl Polanyi holds a central place in *MAUSS*'s theoretical framework. Thus, the first issue explicitly put the journal under the intellectual tutelage of Karl Polanyi, along with Marcel

Mauss and Bronislaw Malinowski (ibid., 9). The second issue confirmed the journal's Polanyian color with an article written by George Dalton, US economist and former student of Polanyi, and two other papers dealing with central schemes of Polanyi's work such as the "embedded economy" concept and the historical conditions of the rise of economic markets (MAUSS 2 1982). In the following decades, scholars who took part in the translation and presentation of Polanyi's work in France all contributed to the *Revue du MAUSS*, which confirmed its role as a central intellectual platform in the reception of Karl Polanyi in France (see Table 9.2).

**Table 9.2** Karl Polanyi's main commentators

	Discipline	Main writings about Polanyi	Articles in MAUSS
Lucette Valensi	History	"Anthropologie économique et histoire. (L'œuvre de K. Polanyi)," <i>Annales ESC</i> , 1974	0
Maurice Godelier	Anthropology	Preface to K. Polanyi et al., <i>Les systèmes économiques dans l'histoire et dans la théorie</i> , Paris, Larousse, 1975	0
Louis Dumont	Anthropology	Preface to K. Polanyi, <i>La Grande Transformation</i> , Paris, Gallimard, 1983	0
André Tiran	Economics	A. Tiran, J.-M. Servet, J. Maucourant (eds.), <i>La modernité de Karl Polanyi</i> , Paris, L'Harmattan, 1998	0
Jean-Michel Servet	Economics	A. Tiran, J.-M. Servet, J. Maucourant (eds.), <i>La modernité de Karl Polanyi</i> , Paris, L'Harmattan, 1998	2
Jérôme Maucourant	Economics	<i>Avez-vous lu Polanyi?</i> La Dipuste, 2005, Flammarion, 2011 <i>Karl Polanyi, essais</i> , Paris, Seuil, 2008	5
Alain Caillé Several Founder, director	Sociology	Preface to <i>Avez-vous lu Polanyi?</i>	
Michele Cangiani	Economics	<i>Karl Polanyi, essais</i> , Paris, Seuil, 2008	1
Bernard Chavance	Economics	Translation and introduction to <i>La subsistance de l'homme</i> , Paris, Flammarion, 2011.	2

Polanyi's work arguably offers resources to the critique of mainstream economics, especially in the analysis of money and its understanding of the market as a universal dimension of human societies. It was, however, the transformations of social science disciplines that set up the conditions for such a use of Polanyi as a critic of mainstream economics. One year after the first issue of the *Bulletin du MAUSS*, Karl Polanyi's masterpiece, *The Great Transformation*, was published in Gallimard's prestigious "Bibliothèque des sciences humaines" series, nearly 40 years after its original publication in the USA.

## The Two Karls: From Marx to Polanyi

Polanyi's dynamic intellectual lineage to Karl Marx constitutes the other feature of Polanyi's reception in France. First assimilated—though not without discussion—to Karl Marx, Polanyi then became the antidote to Marxism, replacing it as the central reference of the critique of neoliberal economy.<sup>8</sup>

The relationship between Polanyi and Marxism was partly built on the ambiguity and plurality of the use of Marxist theory in Polanyi's writings, as well as on the evolution of the Marxist reference in the French intellectual field. Reference to Marx then works as an ever-moving beacon by which Polanyi's thought is labeled and understood. Our goal here is not to outline the Marxist elements in Polanyi's thought but rather to highlight the historically situated usage of the Marxist reference in the commentaries on Polanyi's writings in France. From theoretical deepening of Marxism, Polanyi soon became the possibility for moving past it. As Bernard Chavance (economist, translator of *The Livelihood of Man*) puts it, "interest in Polanyi is an increasing function of disinterest in Marx" (interview with Bernard Chavance, March 2013).

In the mid-1970s, the symbolic value of the Marxist reference began to wane in the intellectual field; relations between intellectuals and the French Communist Party deteriorated (Matonti 2005), while leftist movements, which had reached a peak in the years following May 1968, started to decline. Meanwhile, the "New Philosophers" had

entered the intellectual debate by taking an anti-totalitarian stance. French intellectuals discovered that “they could be left oriented and critics of Marxism” (Judt 1986). As a consequence, a new set of references progressively replaced critique of capitalism and the revolution as the core themes of left-leaning intellectuals. In the political field, despite the Socialist François Mitterrand’s victory in the 1981 presidential election, an “austerity turn” was taken in 1983 by the Socialist government, thereby rallying the French Socialist Party to market-based economic policies.

To “save Marx,” as Lucette Valensi puts it (interview), new intellectual voices needed to be found, among which was Karl Polanyi’s. In this sense, Karl Polanyi was not only a means to build bridges between history and anthropology, but was also understood by his importers as a way to reestablish the shaky Marxist reference. Lucette Valensi ends her paper in the *Annales ESC* issue in quite an eloquent way. After quoting Polanyi, she asks: “Can one say if this sentence is from Karl Polanyi or Karl Marx?” (Valensi 1974).<sup>9</sup>

In the 1970s, Lucette Valensi had already left the French Communist Party, of which she had been a member in the 1960s, but the intellectual attraction of Marxism remained strong in the post-May 1968 years despite the considerable effects among intellectuals of the crises of the Soviet model:

The Soviet Union was certainly no longer attractive. Neither was China or Cuba. It was over, all over. But Marxism and the ideal of revolution were still current. It was a time when leftism flourished under its Trotskyist, Maoist, Albanese forms... After May 68, I was part of those still trying to save Marxism. ... We were still looking for inspiration in Marx, or the possibility of reconciling him with other thinkers. Polanyi worked rather well in this respect. There was this desperate attempt to save Marx from sinking even though everything else was collapsing. (Lucette Valensi, interview, 2013)

While trying to “save Marx” (at least in the case of Lucette Valensi), young historians of the “*Tricontinentale*” were wishing to escape the

quantitative Marxist history of the *Annales* school, which was led by Ernest Labrousse (who was Lucette Valensi's PhD advisor). For the first importers, use of Karl Polanyi followed the interest in "precapitalist societies" being studied by Marxist historians in Great Britain, especially Eric Hobsbawm (1967). In this renovated Marxism, which had distanced itself from the Communist Party, Karl Polanyi became one of the possible theoretical references.

Eight years later, when anthropologist Louis Dumont wrote the preface to the first publication of *La Grande Transformation*, there had been a drastic change in the intellectual atmosphere. Louis Dumont was one of the prominent authors of Gallimard's series, "Bibliothèque des sciences humaines." In this series, he had published a famous essay on the caste system in India (Dumont 1967), of which he was one of the renowned specialists. Unlike the first importers, Louis Dumont had never been related either to structuralism or to Marxism, of which he was regularly a critic (Toffin 1999). In his preface, there are several attacks against the influence of Marx in French social sciences:

We applaud Polanyi's effort to place social classes back in the global society. Was it a matter of common sense? Perhaps, but common sense has suffered a lot since Marx and Engels, with obliteration of the global society for the sole interests in social classes. (Dumont 1983, XIII)

In the same way, Louis Dumont accepts the possibility of moving past the "unilineal evolutionism" that, according to him, characterized representation of industrial capitalism, and which he almost explicitly assimilates to Marxist historical materialism:

Moving past this unilineal evolutionism that strongly influenced the early years of social sciences: here's a feature that might keep away the non-specialist reader, more or less imbued with the notion of linear progress of the human species through the succession of social forms. [...] Nevertheless, the transformation has yet to be achieved: as we know, there are still Marxist sociologists. (Dumont, 1983, VIII)

There is quite an obvious difference from Lucette Valensi's paper, which ends with an explicit attempt to place Polanyi in Marx's footsteps. Louis Dumont sees Polanyi on the contrary as the possibility to put an obsolete Marxist paradigm in the past.

Like Lucette Valensi, *Revue du MAUSS* contributors were also trained as Marxists researchers. For instance, Alain Caillé, a co-founder of the journal, had read "all of Marx as well as everything that was written in French about him" when he was an undergraduate student in sociology and economics in the mid-1960s (Caillé 2009, 315). He had also attended the seminar of the Marxist economist Charles Bettelheim at the École Pratique des Hautes Études 6th section, which would become the EHESS in 1975. Serge Latouche, another prominent contributor to the *Revue du MAUSS*, also recalls the influence of Charles Bettelheim in his teaching of development economics (Latouche 2009, 307). Both Caillé and Latouche mention Polanyi (among other thinkers) as a solution for replacing Marxist economics. After May 1968, Serge Latouche became aware of the "ethnocentric hallmark of development, even in its Marxist, that is to say, socialist form" (Latouche 2009, 308).

For both of them, their interest in Polanyi also coincided with their disengagement from economics in favor of anthropology (Latouche) and sociology (Caillé). Even if many prominent Polanyi commentators would later be formally recognized as (heterodox) economists, the Hungarian thinker cuts across economics and other social sciences.

The decline of the Marxist reference was confirmed in the 1990s and 2000s, especially among heterodox economists (see for example Maris 2010), who adopted Karl Polanyi as a recurring reference. Marxist economics only survives outside academic circles (Pouch 2001), which means that it is impossible to build a theoretical tradition in the discipline. In the introduction of his book on Polanyi's thought, Jérôme Maucourant states that the memory of the Soviet Union's failure "stands in the way of a complete return of Marx" (Maucourant 2005).

## A “Second Polanyian Cycle”?<sup>10</sup>

So far, we have seen that Polanyi’s reception in France depended on a twofold dynamic: on the one hand the evolving relationship of Polanyi’s work to Marxist theory; and on the other, the disciplinary shift from anthropology and history to heterodox economics. In this respect, earlier “support personnel” such as Lucette Valensi and other “*Tricontinentale*” contributors, [as well as] (current phrasing suggests that Godelier and Dumont were part of the *Tricontinentale*, but they were not—they were “early importers” though) Maurice Godelier or Louis Dumont, were recruited as historians and anthropologists, as opposed to the more recent commentators, who are heterodox economists, such as Jérôme Maucourant, the author of a short essay on Karl Polanyi, and Bernard Chavance, the translator of *The Livelihood of Man*, who are of special importance in the reception of Polanyi in recent years. As heterodox economists, Bernard Chavance and Jérôme Maucourant are relatively marginalized in their discipline; they do not publish in the top-rated journals, and their research interests are dominated subfields, such as the history of economic thought and economic history (Jérôme Maucourant) or the economy of Eastern European countries (Bernard Chavance). They also share a common interest in institutional economics and economic history. For example, Jérôme Maucourant, an assistant professor in economics at Saint-Étienne University is a member of the French association *Les amis de Veblen* [Veblen’s friends], an academic association “devoted to multidisciplinary research in humanities and economics, with an emphasis on the institutional and historic dimension of social facts” (website). In 2012, Bernard Chavance published a small reader on institutional economics (Chavance 2012).

The latest episode of Karl Polanyi’s reception in France took place in 2007 in the context of the subprime crisis and its effect on the French intellectual debate, in that it also induced a crisis in the belief in economics (Lebaron 2010). In the book market, several texts dealing with the financial crisis reached exceptional sales whether criticizing the austerity policy and the failure of economic thought (Cohen 2010; Askenazy et al. 2010; Mauduit 2012) or adopting a didactic style in order to explain the crisis mechanism, for example in the form of a popular novel (Pastré and

Sylvestre 2009). Polanyi had died 40 years earlier and had been ignored by publishers since the translation of *The Great Transformation* by Gallimard. The financial crisis favored the translation or reprinting of several of Polanyi's texts. Along with these texts, commentators—both scholars and journalists—have been largely insisting on the topicality of Polanyi's thought in the context of the financial crisis striking North America and Europe.

Indeed, compared with the previous stages of the reception, the novelty is the support that academic commentators of Polanyi have found in prestigious mainstream publishing houses such as Flammarion and Le Seuil, as well as in news magazines and daily newspapers, which in France play a crucial role in the legitimation of cultural goods for extra-academic readership (Lamont 1987).

Karl Polanyi's reception in France has thus stepped over the walls of academia in recent years; the subprime crises set the scene for renewed interest in Karl Polanyi, presented as an up-to-date critic of the globalized market economy and its fatal consequences. Since 2007, *The Livelihood of Man* has been translated (Polanyi 2011), and so have a collection of Polanyi's essays (Cangiani and Maucourant 2008). *The Great Transformation* was reissued by Gallimard (Polanyi 1983) in 2008. At the same time, Flammarion, a mainstream publishing house with a much wider potential readership, republished, in 2011, a short essay by Jérôme Maucourant presenting Karl Polanyi's thought, *Avez-vous lu Polanyi?* [Have you read Polanyi?], which had been first published in 2005 by small social sciences publisher La Dispute. The previous publication of a Polanyi book goes all the way back to 1988, when *The Great Transformation* was reissued as a paperback edition by Gallimard (see Table 9.3 below to see complete Polanyi's bibliography in French).

On the market of cultural goods, these publishing houses (Le Seuil, Flammarion, and Gallimard) are characterized by high symbolic capital combined with the ability to reach beyond a relatively minimal academic readership (Bourdieu 1977; Auerbach 2012). According to Bernard Chavance, Jérôme Maucourant played a key role in the recent interest of mainstream publishing houses in Karl Polanyi's work:

Jérôme Maucourant reached out to Flammarion to issue another edition of his book on Polanyi. At the time, I think Flammarion first declined, but



Table 9.3 Karl Polanyi's bibliography in French

Year	Author	French title	Original title	Editor	Collection
1975	Polanyi et al.	<i>Les systèmes économiques dans l'histoire et la théorie</i>	Trade and Markets...	Larousse	Anthropologie
1983	Polanyi	<i>La Grande transformation</i>	The Great Transformation	Gallimard	Bibliothèque SHS
1988	Polanyi	<i>La Grande transformation</i>	The Great Transformation	Gallimard	Tel Quel
1998	Servet et al.	<i>La modernité de Karl Polanyi</i>		Harmattan	Pocket edition
2005	Maucourant	<i>Avez-vous lu Polanyi?</i>		La Dispute	
2008	Maucourant et al.	<i>Essais de Karl Polanyi</i>		Seuil	L'économie humaine
2008	Polanyi	<i>La Grande transformation</i>		Gallimard	Bibliothèque SHS
2011	Maucourant	<i>Avez-vous lu Polanyi?</i>		Flammarion	Reprint
2011	Polanyi	<i>La Subsistance de l'homme</i>	The Livelihood of Man	Flammarion	

asked Maucourant if there were other Polanyi texts that were not translated. Maucourant mentioned *The Livelihood of Man* ... He played an important role because he was in contact with Polanyi's daughter, who is the copyright owner. (Interview)

We have already mentioned the reprinting of Jérôme Maucourant's book, first published by La Dispute, then by Flammarion in 2011. In the same years, Flammarion issued the translation of *The Livelihood of Man* (*La Subsistance de l'homme*). Publication of this text provides a good example of what publishers "do" to a published text by means of an unspoken reading instruction addressed to the reader (Chartier 1997; Auerbach 2008). The translation and introduction of the text were commissioned to Bernard Chavance, Professor of Economics at Paris Diderot University. His report on the translation process reveals the discordance between his expectations and those of the editor. Insisting on the "complexity" of the text, which is primarily addressed to a "specialized readership," the editor of Flammarion wished to reach a broader readership. About his introduction to Polanyi's text (Chavance, 2011), Bernard Chavance mentions the "tensions" regarding the targeted public.

Well, let's say there were tensions with the editor on this matter because I wrote an introduction to the book that they found too sophisticated, oriented toward specialists. I still think that cultivated people, postgraduate students, PhD candidates, and researchers make up the readership of this book. ... So they did not like my introduction at all. There were many footnotes, I tried to put the text into a historical perspective ... So they made me rewrite it for a wider readership, and that is the introduction you read. (Interview with Bernard Chavance, March 2013)

The editor managed to impose her views on the translator. At a later stage, widening Polanyi's readership remained a manifest goal as Flammarion was able to gather important resources for the promotion of the book through its press office and its bookstore dissemination network. *La Subsistance de l'homme* was praised in several long-established news magazines such as *L'Express*, *Les Échos*, and *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the economic pages of *Le Monde*, and the left-leaning

magazine popularizing economic issues, *Alternatives économiques*. Written by journalists, these reviews all insist—as does the back cover of the book—on the topicality of Polanyi’s text despite the fact that it mainly deals with the economy of Ancient Greece and that it was originally published in 1977 in the USA. The “historical erudition” of the text was to feed the most current affairs discussed in the public debate. In the *Les Échos* review, Polanyi is presented as a thinker for the “*indignés*,” referring to Stéphane Hessel’s bestseller *Indignez-vous!* (*Time for Outrage* in its English translation), a book that gave its name to several social movements protesting austerity policies in Europe. *Le Monde Économie* uses a quote from Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz that was already included in Bernard Chavance’s introduction: “We often have the impression that Polanyi deals with current issues.” In *L’Express*, Jean Blain writes: “The least we can say is that this book of economic history talks to us about the present times.”

The success of the “rediscovery” of Polanyi’s work therefore depended on the support personnel’s ability to put him forward as one of the up-to-date thinkers who could add to the debate about the economic crisis and its consequences.

## Conclusion

This study of Karl Polanyi’s reception in France over 40 years shows that the understanding of an author’s thought is highly dependent on what is at stake in the field into which it is imported (Table 9.3). In this regard, the sociology of the support personnel involved in the importation is of primary importance, since it shapes the way a theory is received by stressing or dimming some of its aspects (Polanyi as the contemporary critic of market economy), by making connections with other available thinkers or theories (Marx), or by using it in the struggles between or within disciplines (history/anthropology, heterodox economics).

## Notes

1. The Persée and Cairn databases are the main sources for French-speaking social-sciences journals. Persée mostly indexes journals previous to 2004, while Cairn covers the post-2004 years.
2. All translations of excerpts are by the author.
3. In his preface, Maurice Godelier also insists on Polanyi's idea to "melt together" anthropology and economic history (Polanyi et al. 1975).
4. "Journée d'hommage à Charles Bettelheim," speech by Maurice Godelier. Jan. 20, 2007. <http://cemi.ehess.fr/index.php?1085>.
5. This information about Maurice Godelier was found in an interview by Jean-François Bert (2007).
6. For the regulation economists, the neoclassical theory fails because the "convergence between a concrete economic system and the general equilibrium has never been demonstrated" (Aglietta 1981). As for the structuralist reading of Marx, the regulation theory criticizes the emphasis put on the reproduction of structures, which leads to ignoring the historical dimension of capitalism and the possibility of crises (Lipietz 1979). For a summary of the early regulation-theory texts, see Boyer (1986).
7. For example, along with Karl Polanyi, US anthropologists, especially Malinowski and Sahlins, frequently came to their critique of the neoclassical "fiction" regarding the birth and function of currency in different societies. See Servet (1982) and Orléan (2011).
8. See the debate featured at the end of the *Annales ESC* issue.
9. Recalling this sentence during the interview, she said: "How could the editors allow something like this? They should have called me and say: 'could you think for a minute?' But they didn't."
10. The expression was used by a journalist interviewing two economists in a radio show on France Culture: Adèle Van Reeth and Philippe Petit. 2011. "Avez-vous lu Polanyi?" *Les chemins de la philosophie*. Paris. Nov. 11.

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# 10

## The Troubled Legitimation of Hannah Arendt in the German and Italian Intellectual Field: 1962–2015

Barbara Grüning

### Introduction

Although Arendt (1906–1975) is nowadays identified as a recognized political theorist and philosopher, according to her main interpreters (cf. Kristeva 2004; Benhabib 2006, 2010; Bernstein 2010; Hayden 2014) her legitimation in the academic field has been for a long time prevented by several factors: first, her main works (cf. Arendt 1951, 1963) have either caused heated debates within the international public sphere or have been criticized for their methodological weakness; second, she gained an official academic position only in the 1960s, and, third, she adopted an “anti-institutional mood” (Bourdieu 1984, 229), openly breaking with the philosophical tradition(s) that nurtured her as a young scholar. To what extent, however, should Arendt’s belated and troubled legitimation in the academic field be attributed to the contentious topics

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of some of her famous works, to their little scientific style as well as to her public acting?<sup>1</sup> Are there other factors not immediately linked to her works and biography that have impacted on how she was and she is nowadays received (and even perceived)?<sup>2</sup>

To answer these questions, a few theoretical points need clarification. Let me start with a well-known case study in the sociology of intellectual consecration. In her research on the reception of Jacques Derrida in the United States, Lamont conceives the intellectual legitimation as resulting from two “distinct but simultaneous processes”: “the process by which the producer defines himself and his theory as important, legitimizing and institutionalizing this claim by producing work meeting certain academic requirements [...]; and the process through which, first, peers and, second the intellectual public define and assess a theory and its producer as important” (Lamont 1987, 586). Hence, in order to analyze the intellectual legitimation of a thinker one should also consider who the interpreters are of his/her theories, the disciplinary fields where they act, and their standing in these fields (cf. Ringer 1990; Bourdieu 1966, 1993; Lamont 2012). However, three aspects remain problematic in Lamont’s definition of intellectual legitimation: (1) her underlying understanding of the intellectual field; (2) her apparent assumption that the consecration of an author depends only or mainly on his/her theories, and (3) the marginal role granted to the historical context.

First, Lamont supposes intellectual legitimation mainly occurs by academic evaluation criteria. In this regard, Bourdieu’s distinction between different forms of capital (1984) allows us to better define which kind of prestige (i.e. intellectual notoriety, scientific capital, capital of academic power, etc.) is at stake each time. Nevertheless, only in his later works (Bourdieu 1996, 2005) did he question the autonomy of the intellectual field from political and economic forces and from less prestigious fields of cultural production, such as the journalistic field (cf. Marlière 2000; Bastin 2003; Jacobs and Townsley 2011). This led researchers to look not only at the structure of power relationships among intellectuals, but also at how they *publicly* act in a way that is oriented to a broader audience than their intellectual peers (Baert and Shipman 2012, 180).

Second, aesthetic and moral features concerning the intellectual life of a thinker are also meaningful for his/her consecration, making a case for

what has been labeled a process of *iconization* of a key thinker (Bartmanský 2012) or his/her work (cf. Carreira da Silva and Brito Viera 2019). This consecration process mostly occurs in phases of crisis, in response to the common need to “explain our times,” and it corresponds to a “sudden consecration,” which is different from canonization that requires considerable time. Anyway, the main point of interest is how these two forms of consecration reciprocally interfere (cf. Bianco 2015).

Third, in Lamont’s analysis, the historical social context seems to play a secondary role. However, as Bourdieu (1984) highlights with the example of the May protest in 1968, historical events and contingencies could have a strong impact on the social and symbolic structure of the academic fields, also affecting the “positional properties of a theory” within specific disciplinary fields (Ringer 1990, 272). On the other hand, beyond the theory production of a scholar, one should take into account all his/her intellectual interventions, practices, performances, and narrations as meaningful for his/her legitimation both in the restricted and generalized field of cultural production (Bourdieu 1993), that is, in the *intramoenia* intellectual-academic arena (that is within the intellectual-academic arena) and in the public media intellectual arena.

Thus, as Susen highlights (2017), the legitimation of a (public) intellectual entails at least five processes: “the process by which intellectual distinguish themselves from others” (Baert 2015, 179); the cooperation with other intellectuals belonging to a same currency or school of thought; the construction of intellectual networks; the interplay with social actors belonging to other social fields, such as the political and the journalistic fields; and the interplay with a “general public” (Susen 2017, 34). With respect to our case study, the crucial point is to understand how these processes have impacted on Arendt’s posthumous legitimation.

Moving from these considerations, this chapter aims to explore the structure and timing of the consecration processes of Arendt in two countries, Italy and Germany. Although Arendt participated in the German intellectual field when still alive, Germany and Italy have strong affinities in terms of common historical patterns: the defeat of their previous totalitarian regimes,<sup>3</sup> the strength of student protests in 1968 (with the consequent forms of radicalization in youth political culture), and the

end of the cold war. While the latter is interpreted by many (cf. Calhoun and McGowan 1997) as the starting point of Arendt's consecration, I will argue that this argument can be accepted only with qualifications and refinements. Indeed, this epochal event assumed different meanings in the two countries, a difference that helps to explain Arendt's divergent patterns of consecration. In Germany after 1989, intellectuals played a crucial role as "facilitators in the process of cultural trauma" (Eyerman 2011, 458) caused by the political cultural reunification (Grüning 2010). With the decline of the model of both the organic and the liberal intellectuals (cf. Huyssen 1991), this role of *facilitator* was fulfilled by a new type of intellectual oriented to a broader public and acting in the "inter-field" spaces (Hartley 2017) created at the intersection of various fields of cultural production with the political field. By contrast, in Italy, the end of the cold war had a weaker impact on Arendt's reception in the academic field. Indeed, Arendt's reception has begun already in the 1980s, thanks to important interior institutional transformations of the academic system, which led to an extraordinary growth in the number of academic staff (or faculties), and to the inclusion in the academic field of scholars and theories that had been still peripheral if not marginalized in the 1970s.

To pinpoint the different patterns of Arendt's consecration in the two countries, I will first identify who received Arendt's works in both academic and extra-academic journals and magazines. Secondly, I will trace a profile of Hannah Arendt's core mediators in the two countries by focusing on three main activities related to any process of intellectual reception: editing and/or translation of works (cf. Sapiro 2015), publication of works (books and articles) devoted to her, and last, the coverage of her ideas in handbooks as index of her canonization (cf. Bourdieu 1984; Baehr 2002). Finally, to offer a deeper insight into her reception in the academic and intellectual fields of the two countries, I will compare two paradigmatic interviews of Arendt's mediators.<sup>4</sup> What matters here is not only *which* of Arendt's *concepts and theories* (i.e. totalitarianism; power; revolution; republic; "the political"; public sphere; moral judgment; etc.) they received, but also *how* they received them, according to their position and social network in the intellectual field.

## Hannah Arendt in Journals

Journals offer some information that helps to identify both the standing and networks of an intellectual and of his/her mediators in both the restricted and broader intellectual field. For this analysis, I collected a total of 218 articles devoted to Hannah Arendt from 1962 to 2015 in German and Italian journals. The journals have been classified on the basis of two variables: academic versus political-cultural, and mainstream versus specialized journals. This second variable is useful to pinpoint the intellectual renown of a journal according to its publisher, its core issue(s), and the chance that it will reach a broader audience. Four types of journal with different degrees of academic and intellectual reputation can be derived from these two variables: general academic (A); specialized academic (B); general political-cultural (C); and alternative political-cultural (D).<sup>5</sup>

Thus, by comparing the whole production of articles on Arendt in the two countries, several differences come to light. In Italy, with the exception of two articles devoted to Jewish issues and published respectively in 1963 and in 1964 in a very marginal and specialized journal (*La rassegna mensile di Israel*), no article has been published before 1980. In Germany, conversely, several articles were published in the 1960s and 1970s. In particular, in 1976, the well-known political-cultural journal *Merkur* commemorated Arendt's death with a special issue including articles by renowned scholars such as Jürgen Habermas, Hans Jonas, and Dolf Sternberger. Thus, on the eve of the 1980s, Arendt's intellectual notoriety was supported by prestigious liberal progressive intellectuals—intellectuals with whom she had already developed personal relationships.

If we turn now to the overall production of articles on Arendt, in Italy (Table 10.1) the number of articles in prestigious academic journals (A), predominantly in philosophy and political philosophy, is larger than the sum of the articles published in the other three types of journal. Prestigious political cultural journals (type C journals) are second in number. Finally, for the alternative political cultural journals (D), two journals, *Il Centauro* (1981–1986) and *Alfabeta* (1979–1988), played a crucial role in the 1980s in disseminating Arendt's thought and a new vision of political philosophy in the Italian cultural sphere. This role was strengthened by

**Table 10.1** Articles on Arendt in Italian journals (1963–2015)

Italy	Mainstream		Specialised		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Academic	64 (A)	56.2	12 (B)	10.5	76	66.7
Pol. Cult.	21 (C)	18.4	17 (D)	14.9	38	33.3
Total	84	74.6	31	25.4	114	100

Numeric and percentage value. To give an idea: A journals comprise *Iride*; *Aut Aut*; *Filosofia Politica*; *La società degli individui*; *Belfagor*, *Intersezioni*, *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*; B: *La Nottola*; *Forma di vita*; *Etica & politica*; C: *Il Mulino*; *Palomar*; *Comunità*; *democrazia e diritto*; D: *Il Centauro*; *La politica*; *Alfabeta*; *La rassegna mensile di Israel*

the fact that their founders and editors had strong links with prestigious philosophical and political-philosophical journals (type A), such as *Aut Aut* and *Filosofia Politica*, as well as with general political cultural journal, such as *Il Mulino*. Thus, already in the 1980s, a consistent group of Arendt's mediators shaped a network based on pivotal institutional places of cultural production, which could reach different publics within the broader intellectual field (cf. Grüning 2017).

As in Italy, in Germany Arendt was also mainly received through contributions published in prestigious academic journals (Table 10.2). However, differently from Italy, these journals were distributed across many disciplines—philosophy, but also political science, sociology, literary studies, history, and legal studies. Furthermore, alternative political-cultural journals and specialized academic journals played a more relevant role than in Italy in disseminating Arendt's thought, especially from the 1990s. To give some substance to these categories, the former group comprises journals and magazines close to the radical left, whereas the latter consists mainly of journals specializing in issues with a high symbolic stake in the German public sphere, such as anti-Semitism and exile. Type C (prestigious/general political cultural) journals are therefore more marginal in this process of reception, despite the influential role these journals played in the early phase of Arendt's reception.

After this general overview, we can see in Tables 10.3 and 10.4 the trends in Arendt's legitimation by prestigious (academic and political cultural) journals, and the penetration of her thought into the intellectual field.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 10.2** Articles on Arendt in German journals (1962–2015)

	Mainstream		Specialised		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Germany						
Academic	49 (A)	47.1	17 (B)	16.4	66	63.5
Pol. Cult.	12 (C)	11.5	26 (D)	25	38	36.5
Total	61	58.6	43	41.4	104	100

Numeric and percentage value. For instance, type A includes, among others, the journals: *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*; *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung*; *politische Vierteljahresschrift*; *Zeitschrift für Politik*; *Leviatan*; *Soziale Welt*; *Vierteljahrschrift für Zeitgeschichte*; *Der Staat*; *Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*; *Sociologia internationalis*; *Gegenwartskunde*; *Mittelweg*; *Saeculum*; *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte*; type B: *Metis*; *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*; *Exilforschung*; *Feministischen Studien*; *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*; type C: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*; *Die politische Meinung*; *Merkur*; *Blätter f. deutsche und internationale Politik*; and, finally, type D: *Utopie kreativ*; *Berliner Debatte*; *Das Argument*; *Einsicht*; *Neue Gesellschaft Frankfurter Hefte*; *Osteuropa*; *Tribüne*; *Zeitschrift für Bürgerrechte und Gesellschaftspolitik*

**Table 10.3** Articles on Arendt in Italian and German journals by type (academic/political cultural)

	<1990				1991–2000				>2000			
	Germany		Italy		Germany		Italy		Germany		Italy	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ACAD	11	68.75	6	27.3	19	67.9	23	69.7	36	60	47	81
PC	5	31.25	16	72.7	9	32.1	11	30.3	24	40	11	19

Absolute and percentage value

**Table 10.4** Articles on Arendt in Italian and German journals by position (central/peripheral)

	<1990				1991–2000				>2000			
	Germany		Italy		Germany		Italy		Germany		Italy	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
CEN	13	81.25	14	63.6	15	53.6	26	76.5	33	55	45	77.6
PER	3	18.75	8	26.4	13	46.4	8	23.5	27	45	13	22.4

Absolute and percentage value

According to these figures, we can say that in Italy Arendt's intellectual notoriety and scientific prestige steadily increased from the 1980s. The decrease in her reception in alternative political cultural journals depends both on the closing of the two aforementioned journals *Alfabeta* and *Il Centauro*, which suffered from the heavy crisis of Marxism (cf. Preve 1984; Cantarano 1998), and on the progressive institutionalization of political philosophy as a recognized discipline in the Italian academic system (a rigid bureaucratically sanctioned system of disciplinary classifications, for which a certain province of knowledge does exist only if it is included in this classificatory grid: see Grüning et al. 2018). In Germany, articles on Arendt were published in prestigious political cultural journals mainly until the early 1980s, thanks to a small group of liberal intellectuals who were interested in some of her ideas as they were functional in constructing their own theories: so, for example, Sternberger appropriated Arendt's concept of "republic" for his idea of "constitutional patriotism" (1979), whereas Habermas (1981) reshaped Arendt's idea of "power" for his theories of the public sphere and communicative action. In the 1990s, Arendt's concepts of totalitarianism, republic, moral judgment, democracy, and responsibility caught instead the attention of a new group of intellectuals typically writing for an array of alternative political cultural journals, established in the chaotic phase of the German reunification (also by intellectuals of the ex-German Democratic Republic, i.e. *UtopieCreative* and *Berliner Debatte*) and which offered a new space for debating the more urgent questions about the political development of East Germany and East Europe. Authors of these articles were mainly journalists, free authors, young scholars, or professors of sociology and political science who, in the 1970s and 1980s, participated in undogmatic Marxist groups. Differently from Italy, articles devoted to Arendt in philosophical journals constitute only a small sample. This feature seems to account for the missing objectivization of Arendt's theories and missing inclusion in the German philosophical canon, as stressed by a professor of analytical political philosophy I interviewed:

It is not unfaithful to tie Aristotle and Arendt, but there are many details of Arendt's thought that cannot be used ... yes of course for Aristotle's ethical theory of praxis, but I teach already Aristotle in my course of practical

philosophy, because he is important [...] Does Arendt belong to the canon? The students know Arendt does not belong to the canon so they read on, but her name appears often so they read Arendt texts also with pleasure, but it is not so easy: which is actually her political philosophy? Her understanding of democracy? She needs supplementary interpretations, so I can do a seminar on her to explain her philosophy, but in a course of study, if I select ten authors it is rare that I also insert Arendt ... in this regard she is a secondary author. (Interview: August 2015, author's translation)

As Gosepath added in a further passage, the inclusion of Arendt in philosophical handbooks and textbooks is mainly because of reasons of "political correctness," by paradoxically highlighting the strong gendered matrix of German philosophy. Anyway, the main difficulty in canonizing Arendt seems related to the hegemonic position of analytic philosophy in the last decades, which pushed the orientation of philosophy towards supposedly scientific criteria to which an author such as Arendt fails to conform. Thus, in the last decades, the increasing acceptance of articles on Arendt in scientific journals mainly concern political scientific journals. By contrast, as we will see in the next sections, in Italy since 1980 the boundaries of the whole academic philosophical field have been more fluid, allowing the progressive legitimation even of "non academic" (and unknown) authors such as Arendt.

## Arendt's Core Mediators

Any process of reception presumes the existence of someone acting as mediator in the process: be s/he a scholar, a translator, a publisher, a public intellectual, without her activity it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for ideas to gain attention and reach an audience. Who have been the mediators in the case of Hannah Arendt? Which differences if any can be detected in the two countries under study here? My analysis of Arendt's core mediators developed in two steps.

The first step consisted in identifying those scholars who wrote at least three works on Arendt (articles, book chapters and monographs), with reference to the following indicators: disciplinary affiliation; phase of



reception (early: less than 40 years old; mid: 40–50; late: after 50); career advancement, and last academic standing during Arendt's reception (low: PhD student/research fellow; medium: assistant professor; high: professor); number of works and time span of Arendt's reception (see Appendixes 1 and 2 for a detailed description of these indicators).

For the time span from 1962 to 2015, I identified 28 core authors in the German case and 22 in the Italian case, out of a total respectively of 216 and 101 scholars who wrote on Arendt.

With respect to the disciplinary affiliation, in the German case Arendt's core authors are scattered over several disciplines (political science, philosophy, sociology, literature, educational science, and theology), whereas in Italy, except for three sociologists, the scholars all belong to the philosophical and political-philosophical field. If we look then at the reception period in Germany, only Vollrath (who in any case published only three works on Arendt in 24 years), Söllner, and Heuer began to write on Arendt before the 1990s. By contrast, in Italy seven scholars wrote on Arendt in the 1980s. Furthermore, in Germany the number of core mediators began to increase only after the 2000s and mainly in the disciplinary field of political science. On the other hand, this trend is counter-balanced by two facts: various core authors began to write on Arendt only late in life (e.g. the educational scientists Thürmer-Rohr and Micha Brumlik, both close in the 1970s to undogmatic Marxist groups), while others, especially young philosophers, wrote about her only for a short period in the very early phase of their academic life. A final important difference between Germany and Italy concerns academic careers: in Germany, only half of the scholars advanced in their career while they were working on Arendt's thought, whereas in Italy, this is true of almost all Arendt's mediators, partly because of the very long time span of her reception.

To sum up, German core mediators are split into three relatively homogeneous groups. The first group is mainly represented by social and political scientists, who developed an interest in Arendt only in the mid or late phase of their career (and life) and who shared similar "political dispositions" (Bourdieu 1984) that had developed during their academic life (as students or assistants) in the 1970s. A second group is formed by scholars who received Arendt in their early phase of their academic life,

mostly philosophers, who stopped to write on Arendt after a short time and when still assistants or research fellows. Finally, a third group (that emerged only recently) consists of young political scientists (Rensmann, Volk, Straßenberger, and Schulze) who work intensively on Arendt in parallel to their academic career. In the Italian case, by contrast, the combination of indicators shows a more homogeneous picture of Arendt's core authors, who chiefly belong to the philosophical disciplinary field.

As a second step in my analysis, I take into account those mediators involved in at least two of the following cultural activities: translation and editing of Arendt's works, writing of works devoted to Arendt, and editing of items on Arendt in handbooks, textbooks, and encyclopedias.

In Italy Arendt's core mediators are distributed in the first three groups listed in Table 10.5. The first group is mainly represented by the "pioneer generation": Pier Paolo Portinaro, Laura Boella, Alessandro Dal Lago, Carlo Galli, and Simona Forti, the latter not belonging to the same academic generation (she is younger) but involved already during her PhD years in Arendt's reception, having Galli as her co-supervisor.<sup>7</sup> The second group is composed by scholars who began to work on Arendt in the 1980s and the 1990s: Adriana Cavarero, Olivia Guaraldo (a student of Dal Lago and Cavarero), Ilaria Possenti (since 2016 junior researcher in the same institute of Cavarero and Guaraldo), Paolo Costa (a student of Boella), Paolo Flores D'Arcais, Vincenzo Sorrentino, and Francesco Fistetti. Finally, the third group is represented by Roberto Esposito and Teresa Serra, who belong to the very early group of Arendt's mediators. With a few exceptions, these three groups of core mediators coincide with the group of core authors (see the previous paragraph).

**Table 10.5** Groups of mediators by different reception's activities

Number of combinations	Editor and/or translator	Work on Arendt	Items in Handbooks/ Textbooks
1	x	x	x
2	x	x	—
3		x	x
4	x	—	x
5	x	—	—
6	—	—	x
7	—	x	—

Putting together the two analytic streams, the existence of a hierarchical institutional structure (in terms of a set of asymmetrical relationships as student/supervisor or assistant/full professor) emerges very clearly. This made it possible to accumulate and reinforce over time some key interpretations of Arendt's thought, which developed as two theoretical frames (the first one departing from Arendt's understanding of "the political" and the second one from her question about "evil"): the opposition between ontological human intersubjectivity and biopolitics; and the moral understanding of the human faculties of thinking and judging.

The German picture looks very different. First, none of Arendt's mediators is present in the first group listed in Table 10.5. Then, except for the political scientist Kurt Sontheimer, the second group is represented by non-academic intellectuals: Ursula Ludz is a freelance author who worked in the 1970s as research assistant at the Freie Universität of Berlin, Wolfgang Heuer is publicist and adjunct professor; Marie Luise Knott works by the publisher Rowohlt, Ingeborg Nordmann is a freelance author, and Iris Pilling is a journalist. Furthermore, Ludz, Heuer, and Nordmann are co-editors of the non-academic journal *HannahArendt.net*, whereas Ludz, Nordmann, and Knott edited 15 German editions of Arendt's works.<sup>8</sup> The third group is instead formed by scholars with different academic status: Ernst Vollrath, Axel Honneth, Rainer Forst, Rahel Jaeggi (a student of Honneth), Lars Rensmann, Antonia Grunenberg, Micha Brumlik, Heinz-Karl Breier, Hauke Brunkhorst, Stephan Gosepath, Harald Bluhm, Sophie Loidolt, and Urs Marti.<sup>9</sup> If this group is more conspicuous than the Italian one, it is difficult to identify here some networks (also between peers) with the exception of scholars affiliated or close to the Frankfurt School. Rather it is, for example, evident how the representatives of the Frankfurt School and Grunenberg,<sup>10</sup> main representative of the informal group of *Arendtianer* (together with the non-academic mediators of the second group)<sup>11</sup> follow different principles of hierarchization (scientific versus temporal) in receiving Arendt, which result from different forms of intellectual notoriety (one derived from the affiliation to a school and the other one from participation in public political activities). Moreover, the items in handbooks and textbooks reflect the still missing canonization of Arendt. Indeed, if the interpretation of the Frankfurt School's dominates, Arendt's understanding of

totalitarianism, power, democracy, and action is either strongly criticized or subordinated to Habermas' theories of communicative action.

## **Hannah Arendt as “The Saint of (German) Democracy” and the Rebirth of Political Philosophy in Italy**

Let me start this section with a personal reminder. When I got in touch with the political scientist Otto Kallscheuer for an interview on Arendt's reception in Germany, he pointed out he was not a scholar of Arendt since he did not contribute to her “ecumenical consecration” as a “saint of democracy.” He asked me whom I had already interviewed. When he heard the names of my previous interviewees, he exclaimed, “they are all academics!” Actually, some of them are either publicists or authors, whereas the professors I interviewed often expressed their distance from academia.

In this last section, I will focus on two interviews that I consider particularly enlightening regarding the two dominant ways of receiving Arendt respectively in Germany and in Italy, which can therefore offer a closer look at the data outlined in the previous sections.

The first excerpt is taken from the interview I carried out with Christine Thürmer-Rohr, a feminist theorist and professor in educational science from 1972 to 2005, critical of both the reception of Arendt in a “general public sphere” and in the academic field:

In the general public sphere there is always the risk that Arendt is quoted superficially [...]. For instance there was a postcard with the writing “for the love of the people. Hannah Arendt.” But Arendt never said that, she said “for the love of the world,” [...] ... as I said, there was in the 1990s really an intensive ... it was really wonderful until 2005 here in Berlin, with exhibitions and round tables ... all orbited around Arendt, however after that all went back in the disciplines ... but as I said, Arendt does not really fit with any discipline, for that reason we need people who break with canons so that Arendt's thought can be received in its integrity and not only selectively ... and that concerns not only philosophy or political

science ... in all disciplines Arendt is received selectively. (Interview: November 2014, author's translation)

As this witness claims (and as my own research can confirm), since 1989, Arendt has circulated in three different spaces of reception: a “general public sphere,” the academic field, and a sort of “interfield” space. According to Thürmer-Rohr, the general public sphere is strongly influenced by the publishing market. The translatability of Arendt's ideas into slogans (i.e. “love for the world”) represents a not secondary condition for her “public success.” In the academic field, Arendt's concepts have been selected according to the different social sciences and humanities (SSH) disciplinary canons. Nevertheless, Thürmer-Rohr hints here to philosophy and political science as the main disciplines where Arendt has been received, being the more prestigious among the SSH disciplines. However, their prestige is of a very different kind and has different origins. After the end of the Second World War, political scientists in Germany were symbolically engaged in the moral and cultural political reconstruction of German democracy together with teachers, journalists, and the new political institutions (Rathgeb 2005; Sanders 2012).<sup>12</sup> Hence, the capital of intellectual renown played a pivotal role in defining one's standing within the disciplinary field (Hartmann 2003). Conversely, philosophers aimed at preserving the existing “doxic order” (Bourdieu 1984, 198). Furthermore, the student protest of 1968 did not produce a real break in its symbolic and social space, with only the exception of several universities (i.e. Marburg, Frankfurt, and the FU in Berlin). In general, the existing academic evaluation criteria withstood the penetration of heteronomous (political) principles, probably thanks to an internal renewal of the philosophical thought (Gadamer's hermeneutics before and analytical philosophy later), favoring also the endurance of the existing disciplinary habitus (Plümacher 1996).<sup>13</sup> The student protests instead heavily influenced the social and symbolic structures of the less traditional SSH disciplines, that is, educational science, sociology, political science (Kelpanides 1999; Sanders 2012; Kneisler 2015), and to an extent literary sciences (Gärtner 1997). As Bourdieu observed in the French case (1984, 225), one of the consequences of the events of 1968 was the emerging of an internal fault line that concerned above all professors and

assistants (Bourdieu 1984). The sudden enlargement in the 1970s of academic career opportunities introduced a new recruitment method, which allowed younger academics with little interest in reproducing the previous social and symbolic orders rapid career progression (as was the case for Thürmer-Rohr). The twofold crisis of the political and academic system therefore had a syncretistic effect: independently of the logics of each disciplinary field, this new academic generation shared an “identity of position” (Bourdieu 1984, 228) in contrast to the previous dominant fraction of liberal (both conservative and progressive) intellectuals (cf. Boll 2004; Saldhern 2004; Hinck 2012; Forner 2014), and also the far from orthodox Marxist intellectuals. This may explain why, according to representatives of this new academic generation, philosophy and political science occupied the same standing, even though the source of their prestige was very different.

Finally, interfield spaces are characterized by the merging of different forms of capital (Hartley 2017). These are typical of periods of crisis and are a result of the alliance between individuals with similar disposition in the social and the academic fields (Bourdieu 1984). In the case under discussion, they were produced by the entanglement of scientific, artistic, and intellectual activities, even involving academics with a poorly defined “social identity” (Bourdieu 1984, 219). They emerged after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and disappeared at the beginning of the new millennium, when the more troublesome questions about German reunification also seemed to have been overcome.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, with the normalization of German political and cultural identity, Arendt’s consecration took two new routes, one in the market-oriented public sphere and the other in the academic field. But to what extent has Arendt’s reception in the academic field been influenced by her consecration in non-academic interfield spaces? I will attempt to answer this by using a further excerpt of Thürmer-Rohr’s interview:

After 1989 in Germany the students were enormously interested in Arendt, this maybe depends on the radical change, the end of the cold war and of the opposition between right and left ideologies ... at the TU of Berlin 50 percent of the students came from East Germany and differently from West German students they were interested in understanding the political

developments and totalitarianism [...] I decided to find something [...] that could be of interest for both East and West German students and Arendt was for me a very big source of inspiration.

In the 1990s, Thürmer-Rohr introduced Arendt in her teaching courses, following the principle of “political vision and division” (Bourdieu 1984, 243). Her aim was to construct an authentic relationship with Arendt’s thought without the filter of canons, in order to comprehend the current events and to create a shared political cultural basis between East and West German students. Kallscheuer’s definition of Arendt as “Saint of democracy” seems therefore to fit into this academic context. Indeed, if with this expression he mainly referred to Arendt’s reception by the Green Party and political institutions, it is also true that various scholars of Arendt affiliated to SSH disciplines were either close to the Green Party or originated from the same undogmatic Marxist milieu, such as Thürmer-Rohr, Weigel, Heuer, Brumlik, the same Kallscheuer, and Grunenberg.

As Huyssen (1991, 114) claimed, after German reunification “the rules of the game have been fundamentally altered. It is now up to the intellectuals—writers, artists, philosophers, social scientists and political thinkers—to adapt to the new terrain” (ibidem, 143). After 1989 what emerged was then an “intellectual constellation [...] in which ideological, generational, political and aesthetic arguments crisscross to form an ever denser web” (ibid., 114). It is in this “web” that Arendt’s consecration as symbol of the new Berliner Republic (cf. Baule 1996) took root, by impacting over time on different spaces of cultural production: from the less institutionalized disciplines to everyday life, with postcards and the (institutional) renaming of streets, schools and trains.

From its inception, the Italian legitimization process of Arendt presented very different features, well synthesized in the following excerpt from my interview to Carlo Galli, full professor of history of political thought at the University of Bologna and a protagonist in the early reception of Arendt in Italy:

In Italy the rebirth of political philosophy had three driving forces, Rawls, Schmitt and Arendt. That occurred between 1975 and 1985 when the situation created after the Second World War ended ... a situation defined by

an ideological struggle ... Furthermore the study of institutions was matter of the legal scientist, the Marxists had their authors, Hegel, Marx, Lukacs and Gramsci, and academic philosophy was bloodless. [...]. Then when also the social welfare state collapses ... with others of my generation I introduced these authors [...] Political philosophy was before a less prestigious teaching depending on philosophy of law and the less important assistants of the chair-holder went to teach either political philosophy or history of political thought [...] Many of our books were conceptually political philosophical books, but [...] only since the 1980s the chairs in political philosophy increased, so when I talk of its rebirth I refers initially to a research field ... there were strange people such as Dal Lago who was a sociologist, I taught history of political thought, Esposito was at this stage an Italianist [...] Duso was professor of history of philosophy. (Interview: April 2015, author's translation)

At first glance, the two interviews (with Galli and Thürmer-Rohr) seem to share the idea of a rupture within the academic system that occurred between the 1970s and the 1980s. Nevertheless, this rupture is viewed very differently by these two protagonists. While for Thürmer-Rohr it corresponded to a refusal of the academic and scientific evaluation criteria, for Galli it meant the possibility of institutionalizing both political philosophy and the history of political thought. Thus, this process also required the building of a new canon distinct from the traditional political-philosophical thought, long subordinated to both general philosophy and the philosophy of law. The reception of Arendt, as well as of John Rawls and Carl Schmitt—the main characters in this newly born canon—fulfilled then a twofold goal. First, on a symbolic level, it gave support to the claim of epistemological autonomy for political philosophy (cf. Carreira da Silva and Brito Viera 2011) and second, after the crisis of Marxism, it offered left intellectuals new conceptual tools for critical thinking (as Galli asserts in a further passage). Hence, their rupture was not to contrast the academic and scientific evaluation criteria ruling the philosophical discipline, but more the older academic generation. In other words, by investing in Arendt and reworking some of her pivotal ideas, such as that of the authentic political, young political philosophers aimed to define an objective disciplinary space (Connell 1997).<sup>15</sup> Not least, this strategy



entailed stressing the engagement of a plural subject. Whereas Thürmer-Rohr by talking of “exhibitions” and “round tables,” hints at an abstract “we,” Galli underlines the existence of a concrete group that began the institutionalization of political philosophy in Italy by receiving Arendt and other “non conventional” authors. This process was also favored by the university reform that took place in 1980, through which the number of chairs increased from 9000 to 45,000 in just a few years. In this regard, the fact that Arendt’s reception was initially fragmented between more disciplines simply highlights the still open character of the chair system during this ongoing redefinition process of the academic social order.

## Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to compare Arendt’s reception in the intellectual and academic fields of two European countries, Germany and Italy, which experienced similar transformations in correspondence with three global conjunctures of crises: the defeat of fascist regimes, the student protest in 1968, and the end of the cold war. The main goal was to understand to what extent these social and political moments of crisis had similar impacts on the rebirth and development of SSH disciplinary fields in the two countries and, as a consequence, how they conditioned the ways in which Hannah Arendt has been received and eventually consecrated. For the empirical analysis, I combined three different kinds of data: journals where articles on Arendt have been published, the profile and intellectual networks of Arendt’s core mediators, and interviews with Arendt’s mediators.

The survey of journals highlighted two parallel receptions in Italy and in Germany. In Italy since the 1990s, there has been a positive trend for Arendt’s reception in journals with scientific and/or intellectual prestige, whereas in Germany, after an earlier phase (before the 1980s) of discrete reception thanks to renowned scholars (i.e. Habermas and Sternberger), in the 1990s, articles on Arendt were mainly published in specialized academic and alternative political journals that had been founded in the

reunification phase and dealt with current issues related to the new Berlin Republic.

The profile of Arendt's core mediators highlighted in the Italian case the existence of a group of scholars who from the 1980s constructed institutional and scientific communicative networks (by journals, conferences, and editing and translation of Arendt's works), favoring a continuity of interpretations of Arendt's thought over time by three parallel activities: the editing of Arendt's works, writing works on Arendt, and "fixing her theories" in handbooks and textbooks. By contrast, in Germany Arendt's core mediators are split into several groups and different fields of cultural production. This is especially evident if we look at their division by activities: on one hand, the editing of Arendt's works is mainly controlled by non-academic intellectuals, whereas on the other hand, the editing of items in handbooks is a matter for academic scholars. The representatives of the Frankfurt School occupy a relative dominant position here, but the fact they have been only partially interested in Arendt's ideas, and even persona, supports Gosepath's claim that in Germany Arendt's canonization has been possible only as a "secondary author."

The interviews have been helpful in better identifying the structure of the intellectual teams and networks (Baert 2015) of Arendt's key mediators, which concepts and theories they appropriated over time, and how they construct in Arendt a model of (public) intellectual, useful for positioning themselves (*ibid.*) in the intellectual and/or academic fields. With respect to the latter point and in the light of local socio-political transformations, we can argue that if Arendt's image as "anti-institutional" intellectual constituted a crucial symbolic resource for her mediators in both the countries, its meanings and uses have been very different.

In Germany, until the mid-1970s Arendt's intellectual prestige was mainly mediated by a small group of liberal intellectuals dominant in the German public intellectual field. Her ideas about totalitarianism, revolution, and republic, even when criticized, fit the dominant topics they were dealing with. After her death, the main change in Arendt's reception space regarded not only the divergent political orientation of the new dominant group of her mediators, but also the fact that they occupied a marginal position within the intellectual field. By stressing

the image of Arendt as an “anti-institutional intellectual,” they were able to position themselves in the political, academic (mainly in the more heterodox disciplines), and media fields, remaining, however, on their sidelines (cf. Grüning 2017). During German reunification, Arendt’s image as an “exceptional intellectual” was extended to her position as “half-outsider,” stressing both her German-Jewish origin and her distance from the political and cultural conflicts that crossed Germany until 1989. In other words, this image of Arendt, mainly constructed from her biography and public acting, was suitable for the new political situation and was adopted and propagated by different (and conflicting) political and intellectual groups. The fact that some of Arendt’s concepts (i.e. totalitarianism, republic, public sphere, revolution, and “the political”) still provided meaningful explanations to interpret the ongoing political transformations actually reinforced her iconization. Hence, this kind of consecration favored a widespread dissemination of Arendt’s concepts in several social fields, but it also delayed a deeper academic interest in her theories, at least until the new millennium.

By contrast, in Italy, Arendt was unknown until the end of the 1970s. From the 1980s, a progressive interest in Arendt coincided with a progressive transformation of the Italian university system, culminating with university reform in 1980. The reform generated two important changes: first, with the enormous increase in permanent academic staff, a new generation of (relatively) young scholars suddenly reached an academic position; second, new disciplinary fields, such as political philosophy and the history of political thought, gained autonomy. Differently from Germany, Arendt’s attractiveness as “exceptional intellectual” was mainly mediated through her ideas of “the political” and of the public sphere, because of their feeble relationships to specific traditions of thought. In other words, the fact that Arendt’s ideas on the authentic political were easier to handle and to combine with concepts and theories of authors who bore a similar “status” allowed a new generation of scholars in political thought to construct some original interpretations of Arendt as well as a new theoretical framework competitive with more traditional currencies of thought.

## Appendix 1: German Core Authors of Works on Arendt

Name	Discipline	Reception	Career	Last position	N. work	Period
Ernst Vollrath	Philosophy	Mid	y	H	3	1972–1996
Alfons Söllner	Political theory	Mid	y	H	6	1987–2011
Wolfgang Heuer	Political theory	Early	n	L	9	1987–2011
Karl Heinz Breier	Political theory	Early	y	H	5	1992–2012
Otto Kallscheuer	Political theory	Mid	y	H	4	1993–2010
Barbara Hahn	Literature	Mid	y	H	4	1994–2012
Antonia Grunenberg	Political theory	Late	y	H	9	1995–2013
Roland Schindler	Sociology	Early	n	/	3	1996–2003
Christina Schues	Philosophy	Early	n	L	5	1997–2011
Rahel Jaeggi	Philosophy	Early	n	L	5	1997–2008
Winfried Thaa	Political theory	Middle	y	H	7	1997–2011
Grit Strassenberger	Political theory	Early	y	M	4	1999–2015
Christa Schnabl	Theology	Early	y	M	3	1999–2009
Hauke Brunkhorst	Sociology	Late	n	H	4	1999–2011
Waltraud Meints-Stender	Political education	Early	n	L	5	1999–2012
Annette Vowinkel	History	Early	n	M	5	1999–2004
Christina Thürmer-Rohr	Educational science	Late	n	H	4	2000–2006
Claudia Althaus	Social science	Early	n	/	4	2000–2007
Micha Brumlik	Educational science	Late	n	H	4	2003–2008
Julia Schulze	Political theory	Early	y	m	5	2003–2015
Lars Rensmann	Political theory	Early	y	H	3	2003–2010
Christian Volk	Political theory	Early	y	m	5	2005–2015

(continued)

(continued)

Name	Discipline	Reception	Career	Last position	N. work	Period
Peter Trawny	Philosophy	Middle	n	H	5	2005–2008
Thomas wild	Literature	Early	n	I	3	2005–2009
Liliane Weissberg	Literature	Late	n	H	4	2005–2012
Olivier Marchart	Political philosophy/ sociology	Early	n	H	3	2005–2007
Stefanie Rosenmüller	Philosophy of law	Early	y	m	5	2007–2015

## Appendix 2: Italian Core Authors of Works on Arendt

Name	Discipline	Reception	Career	Last position	N. work	Period
Pier Paolo Portinaro	Political philosophy	Early	n	H	4	1983–1987
Teresa Serra	Political philosophy	Early	y	H	5	1984–2012
Alessandro dal Lago	Sociology	Early	y	H	5	1985–2006
Roberto Esposito	Literature/h. pol. Th./ theor. Philosophy	Early	y	H	8	1985–2001
Simona Forti	History of political thought	Early	y	H	10	1988–2008
Adriana Cavarero	Political philosophy	Middle	y	H	6	1989–2008
Francesco Fistetti	History of philosophy	Middle	y	H	7	1989–2007
Laura Boella	Moral philosophy	Middle	y	H	9	1991–2015
Paolo Costa	Philosophy	Early	y	M	4	1993–2003
Elena Taviani	Esthetics	Early	y	H	4	1993–2013
Alessandra papa	Moral philosophy	Early	n	L	3	1993–2010

(continued)

(continued)

Name	Discipline	Reception	Career	Last position	N. work	Period
Laura Bazzicalupo	Political philosophy	Early	y	H	8	1993–2005
Eugenia Parise	History of political thought	?	y	H	4	1993–2010
Renata Viti Cavaliere	Theoretical philosophy	Middle	y	H	12	1995–2006
Luca Savarino	Political philosophy	Early	n	m	6	1996–2003
Ilaria Possenti	Philosophy/political philosophy	Early	y	m	3	1998–2005
Olivia Guaraldo	Political philosophy	Early	y	h	5	1999–2014
Paolo Terenzi	Sociology	Early	y	h	4	1999–2005
Giorgio Rizzo	Theoretical philosophy	Early	n	m	3	2004–2014
Nataschia Matteucci	Political philosophy	Early	n	h	3	2008–2013
Ruggero D'Alessandro	Sociology	Late	n	/	3	2011–2015

## Notes

1. If we look, for example, at Arendt's reception in German newspapers up to the mid-1960s, before getting tenure, she was either mentioned as a "writer" or as "Frau Arendt" (cf. Grüning 2017). Her masterpiece *The Human Condition* (Arendt 1958) presents an especially literary style, whereas her most controversial works, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963) and *Reflections on Little Rock* (1959), were originally journalistic essays.
2. I refer here, in particular, to: (1) her exile in the United States during the Nazi Regime as a Jewish-born intellectual; (2) her antagonism with Adorno, especially because of the intellectual heritage of Walter Benjamin; and (3) to her love affair with Martin Heidegger when she was still his student.
3. For the German case, the analysis is limited to the German Federal Republic.

4. The journals database has been constructed from the following sources: <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com>; [serial.unibo.it](http://serial.unibo.it); [www.rivisteweb.it](http://www.rivisteweb.it); [www.tor-rerossa.it](http://www.tor-rerossa.it); [webofknowledge.com](http://webofknowledge.com); [www.worldcat.org](http://www.worldcat.org). The databases include all the articles published in Germany and Italy that indicate the name Hannah Arendt in the title. In addition, to identify Arendt's core mediators I have used the following national bibliographical sources: [www.dnb.de](http://www.dnb.de); [www.sbn.it](http://www.sbn.it); <http://opac.bncf.firenze.sbn.it>. The interviews quoted here draw from a sample of 30 interviews I carried out with Arendt's mediators in Germany (18) and in Italy (12) from October 2014 until March 2017.
5. An analysis of newspaper articles on Hannah Arendt (*Die Zeit*) can be found in Grüning (2017).
6. General journals are considered to occupy a central position, whereas specialized journals hold a peripheral position.
7. Interview with Simona Forti (April 2015).
8. As Lars Rensmann said during his interview (October 2015, my translation): "They control the market on Arendt's works."
9. Both in Germany and in Italy, Arendt's reception in handbooks and textbooks started in the 1990s.
10. She also co-founded the Arendt-Preis by the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, close to the Green Party. In his interview, Peter Rüdel (March 2017) confirmed the close relationship between some Arendt scholars and the intellectual milieu around the Green Party (*Die Grünen*).
11. See interviews with Lars Rensmann (October 2015) and Peter Rüdel (March 2017).
12. For example, the "Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung," a state institution created in 1991 and devoted to "political education." The institution promotes collaborations with both scholars and media.
13. Interview with Stephan Gosepath (August 2015).
14. See Habermas, Jürgen. 1999. "Der Zeigefinger. Die Deutschen und ihr Denkmal." *Die Zeit*, March 31: 41–43.
15. In this pioneer phase, the rebirth of political philosophy is related to the conceptualization of "the political" (cf. Esposito 1987, 1988).

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# 11

## From Social Theorist to Global Intellectual: The International Reception of Bourdieu's Work and Its Effect on the Author

Gisèle Sapiro

### Introduction

By 2008, Pierre Bourdieu's oeuvre consisted of 37 works in French and 347 titles translated into 34 languages and published in 42 countries not to mention his hundreds of articles in several dozen languages (Delsaut and Rivière 2002).<sup>1</sup> According to the ISI Web of Science database, from 1999 to 2007 the number of citations of his work throughout the world was more than that of three contemporary sociologists of international repute—Giddens, Goffman, and Habermas—this number increasing from slightly less than 900 in 1999 to 1650 in 2007 (Santoro 2008a).

This international success may seem paradoxical for a body of work so firmly anchored in empirical studies centered on France—aside from

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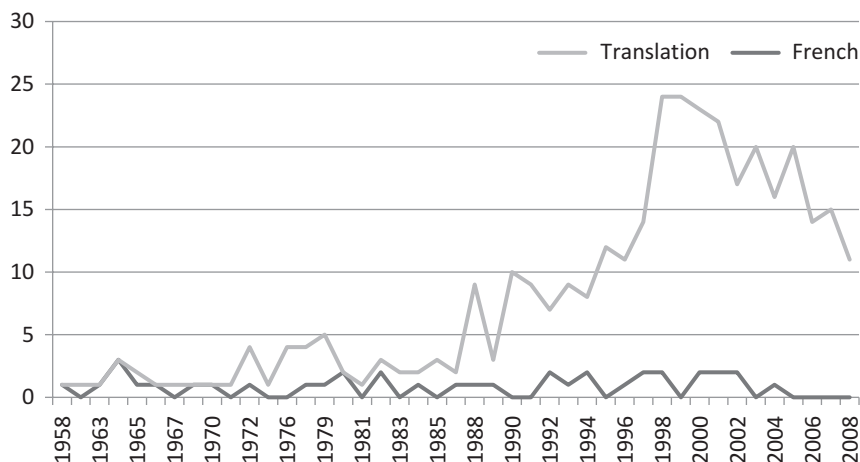
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Bourdieu's first Algerian studies, of course. One might forward the hypothesis that this oeuvre has been received and appropriated as a theoretical reference and "research program," as defined by Imre Lakatos, as the few available studies on its uses tend to confirm (Sallaz and Zavisca 2007). This chapter will first describe the geography and historical stages of Bourdieu's international reception through the prism of the translations of his books. The effects of this reception on his reflection on the international circulation of ideas and on comparativism will be examined in the last section.

## Bourdieu in Translation

A translation can be used, alongside citations, as a proxy to measure a work's international recognition. In previous research, we have characterized the reception of Pierre Bourdieu's work throughout the world as possessing four different traits (Sapiro and Bustamante 2009; for an update of Bourdieu's international reception since 2008, see Santoro et al. 2018).

First of all, it involves an increasing number of languages and countries: as of 1990 the number of translations experienced exponential growth (see Fig. 11.1), according to a logic that one can equate with the

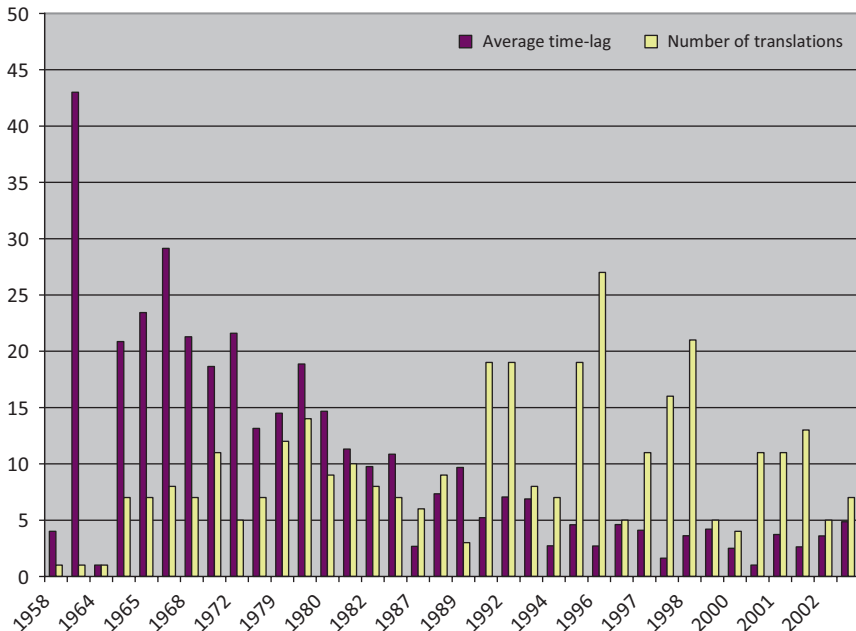


**Fig. 11.1** Evolution of the number of translated titles in comparison to the number of titles in France (1958–2008)

Matthew effect of accumulated advantage as set out by Robert Merton (1973).

Secondly, the works were translated with increasing celerity. The average time lag between the year of publication in the original language and that of the translations in different languages fell from 8.5 years for those books published up until 1995 to three years for the books released after that date. As of 1992, the relationship between the number of translations and the average time lag for the translation was reversed (Fig. 11.2).

Thirdly, one goes from a fragmented importation among the fields of specialization (sociology of education, sociology of culture, anthropology) to a unified reception of “the work” conceived as such from 1990,



**Fig. 11.2** Number of translations by title and the average time lag between the year of publication in the original language and the translations in different languages (1958–2008). (The 1988 German version of *L'Ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger* [*The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*] appeared before the French version and is not included in the computation as to the average time lag so as to avoid skewing the study, but it is taken into account in the number of translations). Source: Sapiro and Bustamante (2009)

the consolidation being effected around theoretical concepts of “field,” “capital,” and “habitus.”

The fourth trait, as of 1996 when Bourdieu’s first book of social-political intervention appeared, *Sur la télévision* (*On Television*; translated into 25 languages, which places it at top of the list) and when he began his engagement against neo-liberalism, this reception transcended the boundaries of the academic field to come within the larger scope of the intellectual field.

The evolution of the reception of his work altered the sociologist’s position in the international academic space: it was at first as a specialist that he saw certain of his works translated and appropriated by fields such as the sociology of education and of culture and anthropology; then in the early 1990s he became an international reference point as a social theorist before taking on the role of the “global intellectual” following his engagement against neo-liberalism in the mid-1990s. Note that each of these new figures superimposed itself on the previous one without effacing it. One may also identify a final phase ever since his death, marked by his canonization as a classic author.

If we now present the translated languages in terms of the number of titles, then there are four linguistic groups that emerge:

- Central languages in the reception (more than 20 translated titles): German (40), Spanish (37), English (33), Portuguese (28), Italian (26).
- Semi-central languages (between 11 and 20 translated titles): Japanese (18), Chinese (17), Greek (17), Korean (15), Arabic (11).
- Semi-peripheral languages (between six and ten translated titles): Romanian (10), Danish (9), Norwegian (8), Polish (8), Catalan (7), Swedish (7), Bulgarian (6), Finnish (6), Hungarian (6), Turkish (6).
- Peripheral languages (between one and five translated titles): Dutch (5), Estonian (4), Hebrew (4), Russian (4), Czech (3), Slovenian (3), Serbian (2), Croatian (1), Galician (1), Georgian (1), Latvian (1), Lithuanian (1), Ukrainian (1), Valencian (1).

As shown by Johan Heilbron (1999), the flow of translations is not arbitrary but discloses regularities, marking out configurations of unequal power relations between the center and periphery. To explain these regularities, we must take into account a complex of economic, political,

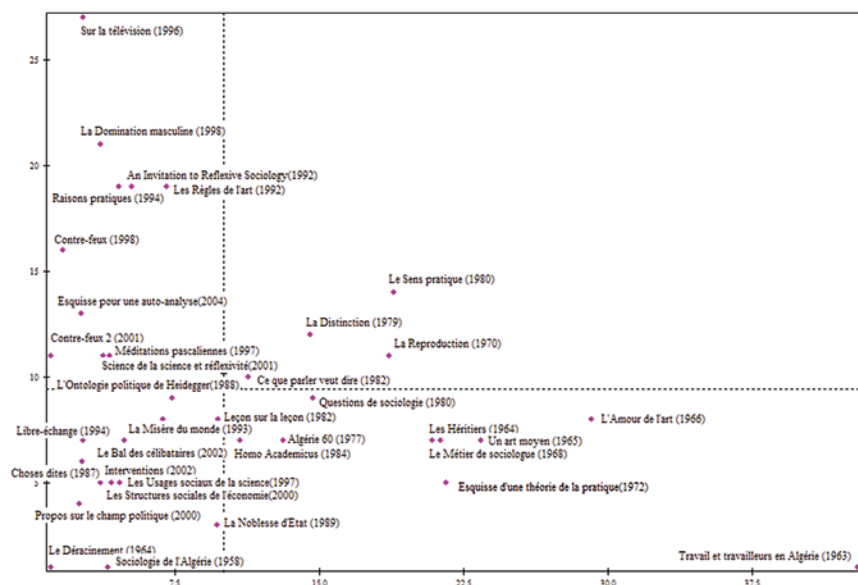
and cultural factors (Heilbron and Sapiro 2008). In the present case, beyond the power relations between languages, there are two more or less independent causal series that come together: the specific logics of the publishing field and those pertaining to the academic field. To reconstitute the complex of factors would necessitate a wide-ranging inquiry to the extent that these logics are rooted in national traditions, but one can nonetheless attempt to delineate certain hypotheses and elements for consideration.

Geographically, there are six countries that make up almost one-half (47.7 percent) of all the translated works: Germany (39), Spain (34),<sup>2</sup> the United Kingdom (31), the United States (USA) (30), followed by Italy (26) and Brazil (25). The concentration of translations around the first four countries reflects the structure of the translation market where they occupy a central position. The publishers in these countries have a large readership in the national language that reaches beyond the national boundaries and extends to areas that share the language. Those titles published in English or Castilian, for example, are disseminated to other Anglophone or Spanish-speaking (in Latin America) countries. The same publishing field logic also underlies the modes of importation and agreements between publishers of different countries: the translations in English-speaking countries have thus often benefited from co-publishing or the transfer of rights between English publishers (Polity Press) and American (US) ones (mainly Stanford University Press, but also the University of Chicago Press), which allows for a reduction in translation costs.

The publishing field logic doubtless helps to explain, at least in part, the diachronic development and in particular the acceleration that can be observed as of the early 1990s. In fact, this coincided with Bourdieu's changeover from Éditions de Minuit to Éditions du Seuil: Minuit is a small publishing house endowed with a great amount of symbolic capital, which placed it among those literary presses—having the highest share of translated titles in the USA during the 1990s (5 percent)—after Gallimard (29 percent) and Le Seuil (7 percent) (Sapiro 2015)—, but having less visibility in the humanities outside France; whereas Seuil is a mid-sized generalist press that among other things specializes in the social and human sciences, including the work of notable authors such as Roland Barthes and Jacques Lacan, and has a very pro-active rights department



that maintains close contact with a number of foreign publishers interested in this type of work, all of which have enabled the firm to accumulate a great deal of symbolic capital on an international scale. It should be noted that with the exception of *La Misère du monde* (*The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*), a collective work that should as such be set apart, the works appearing with Seuil were those that were mostly and most rapidly translated—at least until 1996 when Bourdieu created his own publishing house Liber-Raisons d’agir, initially reserved for little books of political and social intervention that would enjoy great success (see Fig. 11.3). Beyond the specific networks of Éditions du Seuil, on the one hand the dissemination of Bourdieu’s work doubtless benefited from a globalization that fostered the sharp increase in international publishing transactions (Sapiro 2009a), and on the other it profited from the search for new authors in wake of the global success of “French Theory” (Cusset 2003). This latter factor lies at one of the pivot points between publishing and academic logics (Sapiro 2018).



**Fig. 11.3** Bourdieu in translation: number of translations and the average time lag of translation (1958–2008). (Number of translations. Average translation time-lag). Source: Sapiro and Bustamante (2009)

Indeed the publishing logics can neither fully account for the geographic distribution of Bourdieu's translations nor for their development. The semi-central position of countries like Brazil and Greece would suggest that factors apart from market size are at work, notably the role of importers in the academic sphere. Furthermore, the position of Bourdieu himself evolved following the release by Harvard University Press of the English translation of *La Distinction* (*Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*) and subsequent to the efforts of a number of importers of his work to the USA, a country that plays a mediating role in the international dissemination of works, notably in the humanities, as illustrated by the aforementioned "French Theory."

## From a Fragmented Appropriation to a Unified Reception of the Work

The synchronic presentation of the distribution of translations by language in 2008 conceals the historical process of importation pertaining to Bourdieu's oeuvre. This process deserves an in-depth study for the period before he became an intellectual point of reference on an international scale and hence what the publishers call a "brand name"—that is to say, a name endowed with strong symbolic capital that functions as a trademark and is credited with a value per se in the publishing market. It is sufficient here to convey its broad outlines.

Bourdieu's first title *Sociologie de l'Algérie* (*The Sociology of Algeria*), published in 1958 in the series "Que sais-je?" (What Do I Know?) by Presses Universitaires de France (PUF) in the midst of the Algerian War, was quickly translated into English, and appeared in 1962 with Beacon Press (Boston). It was only in 1977 that two other translations were released, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* by Sage and *Outline of a Theory of Practice* by Cambridge University Press, these followed in 1979 by *Algeria 1960* again with Cambridge, and *The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relations to Culture* with University of Chicago Press. The case of this last title is revealing of the time lag produced by international cultural transfers: the translation had been undertaken some years previously on the initiative of Ary Zolberg, a professor of

political science at the University of Chicago, originally from Belgium, who had heard the sociologist Remy Clignet speak of Bourdieu during an African sojourn in the 1960s, and who together with his wife Vera Zolberg had met Bourdieu during a stint in Paris, then seeing him again in 1972 at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study where both spent the year as fellows.<sup>3</sup> As a member of the scientific board of the University of Chicago Press, Ary Zolberg succeeded in having the project accepted despite the reluctance of Edward Shils, but publication of the book in English was delayed owing to problems posed by the translation's first version. Preparing a PhD dissertation on museums, Vera Zolberg drew upon Bourdieu's work in the sociology of art, a work she contributed to introduce in the USA (especially *L'Amour de l'art*, which would only be translated into English as *The Love of Art* more than 20 years later in 1990 along with his articles on the subject). Bourdieu's first books thus only attained to a certain visibility in the English language toward the end of the 1970s. Craig Calhoun, then a student at Oxford, discovered *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* in a Manchester library and introduced Bourdieu's writings to discussions of the working group on social theory at the Center for Psychosocial Studies in Chicago where he was a post-doctorate student in 1982–1983. At his instigation, the working group—which was immersed in reading Marx and structuralist interpretations of his work as well as being absorbed in structuralist and post-structuralist linguistics—began a systematic reading of Bourdieu.<sup>4</sup>

In Europe, there were a number of works that had already been translated. *Le Déracinement* (*Uprooting*) as well as *Les Héritiers* appeared in Spanish one year after having been released in French in 1965 and 1967 respectively. In the early 1970s, three collections of articles were published in German, two of them with the prestigious literary publisher Suhrkamp, which was opening its list to the social sciences, following the example of its French counterparts Gallimard, Le Seuil, and Minuit.<sup>5</sup> After having been introduced as a model for the empirical sociology of art in the 1960s by co-director of the *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, Alfons Silberman, Bourdieu's work had a fragmented reception between the intellectual avant-garde grouped around Suhrkamp, which combated critical theory and presented the 1970 collection *Zur Soziologie der symbolischen Formen* (*The Sociology of Symbolic Forms*) under the banner of

structuralism on the one hand, and the critical inquiry into education on the other (Gemperle 2009). In that same period, there were four titles that appeared in Italian with Guaraldi: *Les Héritiers*, *La Reproduction*, *L'Amour de l'art*, and *Un art moyen (Photography: A Middle-Brow Art)* as well as a compendium of articles. In 1976, this publisher also came out with *Le Métier de sociologue (The Craft of Sociology)*. In Brazil, the work of Bourdieu was imported by Sergio Miceli—who had written his thesis on Brazilian intellectuals at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales under Bourdieu's supervision—with a collection on the economy of symbolic goods, released in 1974 by the prestigious publishing house Perspectiva, where Miceli himself was an editor in parallel to his job teaching sociology.<sup>6</sup> So Bourdieu's works on art and culture were the first to be translated in Italy and Germany, while only appearing in English in the mid-1980s. The reason was that, in these countries, art history enjoys a rich tradition—with which Bourdieu engaged in a dialogue in his own work and which he himself had helped introduce to France, particularly through translations of Cassirer and Panofsky in his series “Le sens commun” (Common Sense) with Éditions de Minuit—and a prestigious position in the academic field. However, Bourdieu's work was principally appropriated for the theoretical debate without giving rise to any research programs, which remained the work of isolated scholars such as Vera Zolberg in the USA; then in the sociology of literature there were two Romance studies scholars, Joseph Jurt in Germany and Anna Boschetti in Italy, this latter having written her thesis on Sartre under Bourdieu's supervision and having published it in 1985 in the series edited by Bourdieu with Éditions de Minuit under the title *Sartre et les Temps Modernes*. In the mid-1980s the work of Bourdieu on literature fostered a research program at the University of Tel Aviv in the Department of Poetics and Comparative Literature around the figure of Itamar Even-Zohar, who gradually combined it with his own theory of the literary polysystem based on the Russian formalist tradition.<sup>7</sup> In Japan, Bourdieu was introduced in this same period, but his reception was also divided between sociologists of education and specialists of French studies (Haruhisa Katô and Ishii Yôjirô; Yôjirô 2001), and while the concept of cultural reproduction was applied to Japanese society by several scholars, it was disconnected from that of symbolic violence (Sanada 2016).

The initial reception of Bourdieu's work was thus fragmented among different specialties (sociology of education, sociology of art and culture, anthropology) as well as countries; "they were parts of different conversations," says Craig Calhoun in speaking of Bourdieu's work.<sup>8</sup> In a 1980 article on this oeuvre, authored by Nicholas Garnham and Raymond Williams, two major figures in cultural studies in Great Britain, they remarked that such a "fragmentary and partial appropriation of what is a rich and unified body of theory and related empirical work [...] can lead to a danger of seriously misreading the theory."<sup>9</sup> This article as well as that published in 1979 by the US sociologist Paul DiMaggio in *American Journal of Sociology* helped unify Bourdieu's reception. But it was especially the publication by prestigious Harvard University Press of the English translation of *La Distinction* that played a unifying and amplifying role, assuring its author greater visibility and making him a central reference in sociology. As noted by US sociologist Rogers Brubaker (1985) on the occasion of an article that he devoted to Bourdieu's work in the journal *Theory and Society*, *La Distinction* brought together a number of themes that Bourdieu had hitherto treated separately. According to Calhoun, "this was the breakthrough sort of book into broader general recognition." That was the case in the USA, but because of the centrality of US social sciences in the international academic space and of the function of English as a lingua franca, this reception has had repercussions on a global scale far beyond that of translations in other languages—in a similar manner as for "French Theory" to which Bourdieu's work would be partially linked.

If the works on education were from the very outset appropriated as a research program, introducing the gauge of cultural capital, *Distinction* served as a catalyst to the structuration of the sociology of culture as a research area in the USA, around the construction of measurement indicators pertaining to cultural capital and cultural practices (Santoro 2008b). At the same time, field theory served as a basis for a research program in the sociology of literature with the Dutch journal *Poetics* at its epicenter. In the face of these appropriations, which one can largely characterize as positivist, certain theoretical readings of *Distinction*, like the aforementioned ones of Calhoun and Brubaker, inscribed it in the entirety of Bourdieu's oeuvre. These readings gained greater visibility in the early 1990s with the collective work *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*

(edited by Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma, and Moishe Postone), which issued from discussions of the social theory group in which Bourdieu participated in 1986 and from a 1989 symposium at which he was present.

Whereas the prevailing references were to the concept of “cultural capital” and to a lesser extent to that of “habitus,” the notion of “field,” hitherto largely ignored in the USA, commenced to be used in articles published in seminal sociological journals, as noted by Sallaz and Zavisca (2007), though often in an impressionistic way and in a less than rigorous fashion. But they also showed, through concrete examples, how in the 1990s Bourdieu’s theory nevertheless became a genuine research program that was not confined to a certain specialty and allowed for the renewal of approaches to subjects ranging from the emergence of capitalism in post-communist Central Europe (Eyal et al. 1999) to the way in which white upper-middle-class men construct class boundaries through morals rather than cultural practice (Lamont 1994).

This development continued, particularly under the impact of the educational work performed by certain importers of Bourdieu’s work. In this regard, one must make special mention of Loïc Wacquant and his 1992 book *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, which was a dialogue with Pierre Bourdieu based on questions posed to him during a workshop organized in Berkeley together with students and centered on concepts forged by Bourdieu and their application to research. This initiative was more focused on research practice and allowed one to move beyond choosing between a purely theoretical reading of the oeuvre and a positivist appropriation, an alternative that reflects the prevailing split between theory and empirical research in US sociology. Elsewhere, particularly in Brazil, Sweden, Russia, and more recently Argentina, the importers have also played a major role in developing research programs.

## **The Impact of Internationalization on the Oeuvre and Its Reinterpretation**

Other than his work on Algeria, Pierre Bourdieu’s oeuvre was based on the research he did on French society. On the one hand it was the theoretical dimension and on the other its appropriation as a research program

that made for its international reception. But the question very quickly arose as to the French specificity of Bourdieu's work. In both the USA and Germany, there were certain researchers who disputed the potential for generalizing from a theory essentially founded on what they considered national particularities.<sup>10</sup> This rejection largely stemmed from the positivist appropriation of the theory, which simply attempted to transpose the analytical model instead of adapting it.

Increasingly invited to present his work around the world, Pierre Bourdieu became progressively aware of this problem and attempted to reflect on the cultural specificities that necessitated an adjustment of the theory. This concern had already manifested itself in the preface to the English edition of *Homo Academicus*, which appeared in 1988 with Polity Press (Cambridge) and where he described two possible readings for someone who is not familiar with the culture under study: either accentuate the differences with one's own system (a bad-faith reading) or focus on the invariants of *homo academicus*. Bourdieu said that in order to encourage the second type of reading, one must be able to propose a series of transformational laws so as to move from one system to another (pp. xv–xvi).

The year 1989 can be considered a turning point. In the lectures that he gave in Japan in early October and in East Berlin on 25–26 October, Bourdieu reflected upon the conditions necessary for transposition of his theory to those countries that sought to accommodate it. As indicated by the subtitles, these are introductions to a Japanese or German reading of *Distinction* and, for Japan, also of his work on French elite schools, *The State Nobility*.

Bourdieu opened his first talk at the University of Tokyo by addressing the irritation that one could feel in hearing scholars from other countries coming to explain your own culture to you. He reassured his public that he would not be speaking of Japan but of the society that he knew best and into which he had invested the most study: France. Nevertheless, he continued, the model of social and symbolic space that he had constructed in the French case was by no means specific to it, and hence to speak of France was also to speak of Japan or, moreover, Germany or the USA. He thus urged his audience to move beyond a particularized reading of his works, which had been encouraged by his being anchored in



empirical studies and the fact that just such a particularized reading did not come in the guise of a “grand theory,” and that they try to mentally transpose the analytic framework to their own culture in a comparative approach that conceived the empirical historical reality as located and dated like “a special case of what is possible,” in the words of Gaston Bachelard (Bourdieu 1991a, 628).<sup>11</sup> As a matter of fact, this framework laid claim to “*universal validity*” and permitted one—far removed from all exoticism or, just the opposite, all essentialist naturalism—to “register the real differences [which separate both the structures and dispositions (*habitus*)], the principle of which must be sought not in the peculiarities but in the particularities of different *collective histories*” (ibid., 629; Bourdieu’s emphasis). The transposability of the model developed in *Distinction* in space and time stems from its relational character: the position of cultural practices in the social space does not result from properties inherent to them but from their use by social groups as a way of distinguishing or differentiating themselves in relation to other practices. So the fact that tennis or golf in France are no longer exclusively associated with dominant positions does nothing to invalidate the analytic model, but instead bears testimony to the changing position of a practice whose usage has become commonplace and hence less distinctive. Bourdieu emphasized that this was why “the comparison is possible only *from system to system*” (ibid., 630–631; Bourdieu’s emphasis). He thus invited his Japanese audience and readers to a “relational but also *generative* reading” that would “apply the model in this other ‘particular case of the possible,’ that is, Japanese society” (ibid., 638).

The second Japanese lecture proposed a reading of *The State Nobility* that focused on the mechanisms of social reproduction and, more particularly, on family strategies for schooling. Comparing the action of the educational system with that of Maxwell’s demon, Bourdieu described the rise of a “hereditary scholastic nobility of leaders [...] of industry, prestigious doctors, higher civil servants, and even political leaders [...]” (Bourdieu 1991b, 646), a model that applied to Japan as to France. And he mentioned the close relationship between this new nobility and the formation of the modern state, which endowed it with a “legitimate monopoly of State power,” so as to suggest a comparison with that process,



which led the samurai, one segment of whom had already in the course of the seventeenth century been transformed into a literate bureaucracy, to promote, in the second half of the nineteenth century, a modern State based on a body of bureaucrats in whom noble origins and a strong scholastic culture were combined, a body anxious to affirm its independence in and through a cult of the national State and characterized by an aristocratic sense of superiority relative to industrialists and merchants, let alone politicians. (Ibid., 646–647)

But particularly in responding to those who would criticize his theory for not taking social change into account, Bourdieu called for a comparative analysis of the impact that those contradictions appertaining to the school system had on social transformations—that he analyzed in a 1978 article entitled “Classement, déclassement, reclassement,” which became part of the conclusion of *Distinction* (“Classes and classifications,” 466–483)—and on political mobilization—as illustrated by his study of May 1968 at the end of *Homo Academicus*. Further comparative approaches were suggested, such as “the link between the new school delinquency, which is more widespread in Japan than in France, and the logic behind of furious competition which dominates the school institution, especially the effect of a final verdict or destiny that the educational system exerts over teenagers” (ibid., 651) or the hierarchization of a system that relegates technical training to the lowest rung on the educational ladder, or those tensions that still exist between the higher and lesser state nobility and the source of future conflict:

Everything points to the supposition that, facing an ever more tenacious monopoly of all the highest positions of power—in banking, industry, politics—on the part of the old boys of the “grandes écoles” in France, of the great public universities in Japan, the holders of second-class titles, the lesser samurai of culture, will be led, in their struggle for an enlargement of the circles of power, to invoke new universalist justifications, much as the minor provincial nobles did in France from the sixteenth-century France to the beginning of the French Revolution, or as did the excluded lesser samurai who, in the name of “liberty and civil rights,” led the revolt against the nineteenth century Meiji reforms. (Ibid., 652)

In his East Berlin lecture, Bourdieu likewise started with the question as to the validity of his analytic model beyond the particular case of France and its possible application to the German Democratic Republic (GDR). So as to resist any substantialist temptations, he proposed to construct the social space as a “structure of differentiated positions, defined in each case by the place they occupy in the distribution of a particular kind of capital” (Bourdieu 1998, 15). This involved bringing to light those principles of differentiation pertaining to the GDR, the major divergence with the French case being the elimination, at least officially, of economic capital defined as private ownership of the means of production, which had resulted in an increase in the relative weight of cultural capital, highly valued in the German tradition as well as in Japan. But this principle was neither sufficient in explaining the “opportunities for appropriating scarce goods and services” in the communist regimes (which he preferred to call “Soviet”) nor in the Scandinavian countries, where a social-democratic “elite” installed in power over several generations had monopolized the collective resources. In order to account for this, Bourdieu proposed to introduce another species of capital, which he called “political capital.” This type of capital, “acquired through the apparatus of the trade union and the Labour Party, is transmitted through networks of family relations, leading to the constitution of true political dynasties,” such as the *nomenklatura* in the USSR (*ibid.*, 16). Bourdieu attempted to construct pertinent indicators for comprehending this political capital in the case of the USSR, particularly the position agents occupy in the apparatus hierarchy, starting with the Communist Party, along with the seniority of each agent and his lineage in the political dynasties. Also to be taken into account, especially for Germany, were the effects of an emigration that had decimated those classes capable of furnishing alternative cultural models. In opposition to those holders of political capital, who occupied a dominant position, were the holders of cultural capital—technocrats, research scholars, or other intellectuals who in part issued from the political-capital segment but tended to rebel against those privileges that the holders of political capital arrogated to themselves. While Bourdieu saw here the origins of the revolution that was just then taking place in the communist countries, he wondered at the end of his lecture about the ability of intellectuals wedded to “true

socialism” to forge an alliance with the dominated, the manual workers in particular along with the minor state bureaucrats, who would not fail to be seduced by the liberal economy. This is a prediction, incidentally, that has since been confirmed in many countries, such as Romania, with the very active participation of intellectuals committed to liberalism.

So it was indeed a program of comparative research that Bourdieu was proposing, through a review of his own work, to his Japanese and German colleagues. He would continue this methodological reflection on the conditions pertaining to comparative studies on the occasion of two inquiries conducted between 1998 and 2002 within the framework of European contracts at the Centre de sociologie européenne. One of these inquiries was headed by Franz Schultheis and addressed the precarious conditions under which young people in Europe were living, while the other was led by Remi Lenoir and dealt with European social and penal policies.<sup>12</sup> One of the objectives was to develop indicators for measuring those social pathologies related to neo-liberal policies.

In that same year, 1989, Pierre Bourdieu engaged in reflections on “the social conditions of the international circulation of ideas” in a talk given under that heading at the University of Freiburg’s Frankreich Zentrum (Bourdieu 1990). Within the context of globalization and European construction, Bourdieu’s lecture laid the foundations of a research agenda for studying the intellectual exchanges among countries, which he then set forth along with Joseph Jurt at a symposium on the state of the circulation of ideas and works, staged on behalf of the Frankreich Zentrum on February 7–9, 1991 at the Fondation Hugot du Collège de France, and then from 1996 to 1998 within the framework of a project on “the determining factors in the international circulation of ideas and works.” This project included a section on the social issues at stake in translation (Jurt 1999; Bourdieu 2008b). It was in the slipstream of this initiative that a research program in the sociology of translation was developed at the Centre de sociologie européenne, a new field whose establishment was helped by the empirical work performed hitherto and the methodology that had been introduced (Heilbron and Sapiro 2002, 2007; Sapiro 2008). After Pierre Bourdieu’s death, the European network ESSE (Pour un espace des sciences sociales en Europe [For a European space of research in the social sciences]) pursued this notion and implemented a

multidisciplinary research program involving a comparative approach and study of cultural transfers while resituating them in a system of power relationships (rivalry, hegemony, dependence, etc.) among national intellectual fields (see notably the network's work of synthesis edited by Sapiro 2009b).

Reflection on the international circulation of ideas found a practical application in the launch—still in 1989—of the journal *Liber*, which was initially subtitled *Revue européenne des livres* (*European Book Review*) and then in 1994 resubtitled *Revue internationale des livres* (*International Book Review*); it relied on a worldwide network of scholars, appeared in several languages, as a supplement to five major European newspapers: *Le Monde*, *L'Indice*, *El País*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and the *Times Literary Supplement* (on that periodical's project, see Casanova 2004). Starting with *Le Monde*, several of them quickly abandoned an enterprise doubtless judged unprofitable or targeting too narrow an audience, but occasional translations continued to appear in German, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Swedish, Italian, Czech, Romanian, Greek, Turkish, Norwegian, and Spanish. This space corresponded with the thrust of thought that had led Bourdieu to form an international network of intellectuals in defense of universal causes,<sup>13</sup> and was also a place to take a public stand on political questions such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Yugoslav war.<sup>14</sup> During this same period, he was also an active member of the Comité international de soutien aux intellectuels algériens (CISIA; International Committee in Support of Algerian Intellectuals) which was created in 1993.

Bourdieu's political engagement against neo-liberalism, starting in 1995, would lead to a second phase in the internationalization of his thought. If up to that point his political interventions, apart from those already cited, remained essentially focused on French problems such as the treatment of immigrants or social policy (and collected in the first volume of *Contre-feux* [*Acts of Resistance*] published in 1998 by Liber-Raisons d'agir) it was in 1996 that he widened his analysis, since he was now convinced of the necessity to approach things on a global scale in order to comprehend contemporary social transformations. It was likewise at the European level that he thought to organize a social movement, this region being one with a rich and long-held tradition of social strug-

gles and of militant organizations, trade unions, or associations. Amplified by the broad media reception of *On Television*, Bourdieu's international reputation assured that his efforts would have an impact on a worldwide scale and make him a true "global intellectual." He was invited to deliver lectures in Germany, Greece, America, Korea, and Japan. These were published in the daily press—*Le Monde*, *Libération*, and *Die Zeit*. One year before his death, Bourdieu participated in a counter-summit in Switzerland, which took place in Zurich on January 27, 2001,<sup>15</sup> in parallel to the World Economic Forum in Davos; and then on April 4 of that year he was involved in a meeting in Quebec of the Hemispheric Social Alliance, which brought together trade union organizations and representatives of social movements from 35 countries in the Western hemisphere in protest against the Summit of the Americas, which aimed at extending free trade laws.

## Conclusion

The international reception of Pierre Bourdieu's oeuvre has thus made the transition from a fragmented appropriation in different specialties to a theoretical reception and then to a media reception with respect to his political interventions in particular, each of these receptions superimposed on the previous one. Thanks to importers of Bourdieu's work there emerged very real research programs, albeit long remaining the work of isolated individuals rather than comprising any true team effort. As we have seen, this international reception had repercussions for Bourdieu's thoughts on the requirements of a comparative approach and the transposition to other countries of the analytic model that he elaborated based on empirical studies of France—thoughts that were made concrete through the establishment of international research programs, such as that developed by the ESSE network. More recently, it was the international symposium "30 ans après *La Distinction*" ("30 Years after *Distinction*"), which took place in Paris in November 2010. This allowed scholars from 16 different countries to compare their work, thus testifying to the vitality of research in this area throughout the world (Coulangeon and Duval 2014).

## Notes

1. This paper is a translation of Gisèle Sapiro, “Du théoricien du social à l’intellectuel global: la réception internationale de l’œuvre de Pierre Bourdieu et ses effets en retour,” In *Lectures de Bourdieu*, eds., Frédéric Lebaron and Gérard Mauger, 373–389. Paris: Ellipse, 2012; the translation was done by Kevin McAleer and revised by Gisèle Sapiro, while she was a fellow at Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, which kindly funded the translation.
2. Of these there are 25 in Castilian, seven in Catalan, one in Galician, and one in Valencian.
3. Interview with Ary and Vera Zolberg, June 19, 2009; written account by Vera Zolberg, June 8, 2009.
4. Interview with Craig Calhoun, February 3, 2009.
5. For a bibliography of Bourdieu translations into German, see Jurt (2004).
6. Account written by Sergio Miceli, May 28, 2009. See also Lopes (2005) and Pinheiro Filho (2009).
7. I myself was part of this team and that is how I discovered Bourdieu’s work. I subsequently enrolled at EHESS under his supervision for my doctoral research.
8. Interview with Craig Calhoun.
9. On the misunderstandings that can result through the transfer of a work like this to another country, see Wacquant (1993).
10. For a review of the literature and a response, see Holt (1997); in Germany, Blasius and Winkler (1989).
11. These lectures first appeared in English in the review *Poetics Today* 12(4), 1991, 625–670, which at that time was led by Itamar Even-Zohar (to whom he sent the text of his presentations for an anthology that he was preparing in Hebrew), in my translation as revised by Brian McHale. They are reprinted in *Practical Reason* (Bourdieu 1998).
12. Another project relating to education had been submitted at the same time, in 1997–1998, but did not obtain funding. I thank Frédéric Lebaron for this information.
13. In May 1989, he gave a conference in Turin that was entitled “Pour une Internationale des intellectuels” (reproduced in *Politis* 1 [1992a]); and in October the third conference in Japan had the theme “For a Corporatism of the Universal” (it appeared in French as a post-scriptum in *Les Règles*

- de l'art* [Bourdieu 1992b]). In 1993 he was involved in establishing the International Parliament of Writers.
14. See Bourdieu (1989, 1993). The English translations of these texts are included in Bourdieu (2008a, 218–221, 228–229).
  15. Retransmitted online: [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xx6kd\\_pierre-bourdieu-davos-.26-janv-2001\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xx6kd_pierre-bourdieu-davos-.26-janv-2001_news).

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# 12

## Foucault in Hungary: The Case of a Peculiar (Non-)Reception

Balázs Berkovits

### Introduction

Michel Foucault is one of the most widely read philosophers in Hungary. His reception mainly started after the regime change in 1989, for he was almost totally absent from academic discourse during the period of state socialism, the effects of which are still observable. Even today, Foucault's popularity with readers and significance in Western academia is reflected very little in social science research, philosophy, and university syllabi. We could presume that the scarcity of Foucault's reception is symptomatic in many respects of the state of academia and universities in Hungary, a country on the periphery of scientific research where the great majority of publications, even if destined to a restricted audience of peers, are still written in Hungarian and where a great number of university professors in human sciences departments do not publish even a single article in a foreign review during their whole careers. Therefore, the study of this

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truly interdisciplinary author's reception, beyond the conceptual analysis of the approaches using his insights, can reveal at least some of the aspects of how Hungarian human and social science research functions.

## Foucault as a Structuralist

The first Foucault book translated into Hungarian was *Discipline and Punish* in 1990, followed by some famous short writings such as "Nietzsche, Genealogy and History" and "What is Enlightenment?". Before that, only two very short articles of his had been translated. The first, entitled "Foucault Responds to Sartre," came out in a textbook published in two tiny volumes in 1971 under the title of *Structuralism*, edited by the eminent literary critic and later sociologist Elemér Hankiss who, along with the literary theoretician Endre Bojtár, personified structuralism in Hungarian literary theory in the 1960s and 1970s. The second, "What Is an Author?" was published in a social science and philosophy review (Foucault 1981).

Clearly, by that time in Hungary, Foucault was placed among the structuralists and associated with the structuralist movement; there is no question about that. However, it is also true that, in this specific context, Hungarian scholars understood structuralism to encompass both a much narrower and a much wider range of works than did Western academics: it was seen as being of the utmost significance in literary theory (as the social sciences were underdeveloped and even banned during certain periods); at the same time, it grouped together various schools of thought that were viewed as more rigorously scientific than the ideologically tainted methodologies of committed Marxists or those approaches that focused on the history of literature using a Marxist lens.

In official academia, structuralism, being at the height of its international importance (see Chap. 1 in this volume), was considered an enemy science and even an ideology capable of questioning the supremacy of Marxist analysis. Therefore, from the end of the 1960s onwards, it was heavily combated and often denounced by the officially mandated scholars who occupied the most important institutional positions (Bezeczky 2006). However, previously, in the early 1960s, structuralist approaches

had flourished more freely and appeared regularly in the newly founded Institute for the History of Literature of the Hungarian Academy and its review, *Kritika*. By the beginning of the 1970s, hardliners had gained the upper hand in the domain of culture (and also in economics and planning, resulting in the halt of structural economic reforms). In 1971, *Kritika* was taken away from the Institute and placed under the leadership of the highly dogmatic literary historian Pál Pándi, who transformed it into a periodical of denouncement and stigmatization in service to the party line. Pándi also conducted the so-called “structuralism debate” (Szerdahelyi 1977), which, far from being a scholarly exchange, furthered the ideological debunking of this intellectual current (Bezeczky 2006).

Although Hankiss, in his “Introduction” to *Strukturalizmus* [Structuralism], took great pains to prove the compatibility of structuralism with Marxism (less with respect to the theoretical formulations than to the anti-capitalist political stance of most of the authors), he had to admit that Foucault broke with Marx and left the Communist Party for good (Hankiss 1971, 16). It is not surprising, therefore, that Foucault could not be translated until the regime change in 1989, as opposed to at least some of the books and articles of other theoreticians tagged as “structuralist” (Saussure, Jakobson, Chomsky, Wellek, Barthes, Eco, Lotman, Ingarden, Lévi-Strauss, and, of course, Althusser).

Nevertheless, it has to be noted that Foucault visited Hungary in 1967, at the time that structuralism was among the most prestigious intellectual currents in Europe. Quite a few years later, recalling his Hungarian visit in one of his most important interviews about his life and work, with the Italian left intellectual and journalist Duccio Trombadori, Foucault made a highly interesting remark on the link between structuralism and Eastern Europe:

In 1967 it was proposed that I give a series of lectures in Hungary. I had proposed, among other things, to deal with the subjects of the debate in progress on structuralism. All the arguments were assembled, and I began my series of lectures in university auditoriums and theaters. When the moment came when I was supposed to speak about structuralism, however, I was advised that on that occasion the lecture would be delivered in the office of the president of the university: it is so specialist a subject, they told

me, that there isn't much interest. I didn't think things were like that. I talked about it with my young interpreter, and he replied: "There are three things we cannot discuss at the university: Nazism, the Hort[h]y regime, and structuralism." I was disconcerted. But in thinking back over this episode, I too began to understand that essentially the problem of structuralism was a problem of Eastern Europe, and that the heated arguments and confused fate to which the topic was subjected in France were only the consequence, certainly poorly understood by everyone, of a much more serious and difficult struggle taking place in the countries of Eastern Europe. (Foucault 1991, 92–93)

Clearly, Foucault thought that structuralism was of great importance in Eastern European thinking as an alternative idiom to Marxism. The question was, according to him, "to what extent is it possible to constitute forms of thought and analysis that are not irrationalistic, that are not coming from the right, and that moreover are not reducible to Marxist dogmatism." Of course, Foucault had a certain interest in Eastern Europe, having spent some time in Poland while writing his doctoral dissertation, *The History of Madness*. He was very keen on supporting Eastern European dissidence, and especially the Polish Solidarity, which is why in 1981 he quarreled with the French Socialist Party leadership, which had refused to follow suit (Eribon 2011).

Now if what Foucault says here is true, and it is certainly partly so, he surely would have excused Hungarian fellow philosophers for treating him as a structuralist well into the 1980s and perhaps even the 1990s, even though he had always rejected this qualification whenever anyone tried to categorize him as such. For in a sense, it was with the help of structuralism that Foucault liberated himself from his Marxist (and also phenomenological) upbringing. Furthermore, structuralism also proved to be (or so it seemed in the 1960s) a powerful means to combat the "human sciences," which is explicitly, and maybe somewhat naively, pronounced in *The Order of Things*. For Foucault, the fight against the "human sciences" had more practical stakes than any animosity against Marxism. It meant that, with the introduction of a different type of thinking stemming from structuralism, the grip, that is, the power and control of the human categories could be weakened. However, the

importance of structuralism as a means, even though only strategic, was fraught with the peril that Foucault would be included in this current of thought by some of his interpreters.

## The Battle of Translations

After 1990, interest in structuralism progressively faded away in Hungary as elsewhere, and Foucault was much more perceived as a theoretician and a critic of power—although university courses lagged behind. Given this switch in interpretation, it is perhaps unsurprising that his works written in the 1970s gained momentum, for these were the ones that were first translated in the context of the regime change and the period immediately afterwards. The translation of *Discipline and Punish* sparked a debate in the freshly founded *Budapest Review of Books* (abbreviated as *BUKSZ*, because of the Hungarian spelling). The medievalist Gábor Klaniczay, professor at Central European University, and one of the founders of the review, wrote a very sharp and totally justified criticism of the Hungarian edition (Klaniczay 1991). Undoubtedly, *Discipline and Punish* is barely readable in Hungarian, and not only for terminological reasons but also because it is full of misunderstandings and simplifications. And, indeed, many of Foucault's other books in Hungarian, even if they are somewhat better translated, are clearly off the mark. However, some others are pretty good—as who translates what and under what kind of supervision is completely arbitrary.

Ever since Klaniczay's early critique, unfortunately, the translation of the terminology in Foucault's books seems to be one of the biggest stakes in the Hungarian reception. If there is an excerpt published in a philosophical or social science journal, one can be sure that, when the whole book is translated, it will be by someone else, using slightly or completely different terms in Hungarian. One example is the translation of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 2001). The "Preface" (Foucault 1992) and four chapters (Foucault 1998a) had been translated before the publication of the book by two different translators, Gábor Gángó and Gergely Angyalosi. However, the book itself was translated by a third person, István Perczel, and the previously mentioned excerpts were

*retranslated* by him. Furthermore, a fourth translator translated the essay entitled “On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Questions for Michel Foucault” (Foucault 2012). This was very significant with regard to terminology for, in its time, it was a kind of summary ahead of the publication of the whole work. Perczel put a postscript at the end of the book, explaining his choices of words and providing a Foucault dictionary, in which he enumerated the different solutions of the different translators, perhaps to give some orientation to lay readers who were caught up in the jungle of various terminologies. In the meantime, *The Order of Things* was entrusted to another translator, Gábor Romhányi Török (Foucault 1999), who had already been much criticized for his Nietzsche translations, and not without reason.

This battle and sometimes dialogue among translators as well as their critics revolved around such Foucauldian concepts as “dispositive,” “enunciation,” “discursive formation,” “discourse,” and also “madness” and “unreason”—although the translation of these latter two would have seemed more evident at first glance. And though the translators claimed at least tacitly to be experts on Foucault, most of them had never written anything about his works (with the notable exception of Tibor Sutyák). This peculiar translation and publication policy resulted in completely diverse Foucault vocabularies, not only in the translated books, but also in articles on Foucault, which either opt for one Hungarian terminology or another, or create their own, using the original works in French. One evident line of dispute is whether to conserve the Latin roots of the concepts (which in Hungarian, in many cases, may sound somewhat odd) or to substitute them with proper Hungarian terms. For example, translating “discourse” as *beszéd* (literally: “speech”) instead of *diskurzus* or “discursive formations” as *beszédképződmények* (as in Foucault 2001), may sound better, but can be confusing, for it gives the impression that the author is talking about purely oral enunciations.

Another problem emerges with the hermeneutics of madness: how should the term *folie* be translated, if there is no single word that bears all the necessary connotations of the French? In Hungarian, the translator László Sujtó opted for *bolond*, which, as he explains in a footnote (Foucault 2004, 14), is a milder term. However, it seems to be closer to “crazy” than to “mad,” which, also because of its humoristic undertone



and its usage in invectives, poses quite a few difficulties. But the problem runs deeper: had it been translated as *őrület* (madness, but signaling a pathological state), it would have had a somewhat psychiatric connotation, thereby possibly posing the danger of projecting a historically formed scientific concept onto a very different reality. Modern psychiatry was born only at the beginning of the nineteenth century; therefore, it could not have had an influence on previous categorizations. Foucault did not write a history of psychiatry but of madness, partly in order to be able to question the essentialized psychiatric categories, which were generally used by histories of psychiatry to make sense of and pathologize psychic phenomena. However, *őrület* is also a general term, and the context of Foucault's book may have proved strong enough to liberate it from the connotations mentioned, in which case it would have been a much better choice than *bolondság*, which lacks the necessary seriousness.

## Reception and Commentary

All of Foucault's books have been translated into Hungarian, but of course not all his works: very few interviews and short writings have appeared, and none of the Collège de France lectures except for one series, *Les Anormaux* (in English: Abnormal), which is my translation (Foucault 2015). Therefore, it is not surprising that the Hungarian reception and even simple interpretation of Foucault lags behind contemporary Western interpretations, which nowadays concentrate on topics of governmentality or the hermeneutics of the subject and truth-telling.

But the real question is whether there has ever been a genuine reception of Foucault in Hungary, that is, if there has been any original theoretical interpretation as such, based on his works, or empirical usage of his concepts in making sense of Hungarian history and society (e.g. state socialism, the transition, and its aftermath). In Hungary, there are certainly no schools or currents that have been constituted in the wake of Foucault; people drawing on his books usually work individually or form temporary groups, which are dissolved after the extremely scarce research funds dry up.

In what follows, I will not consider as “proper” reception simple references or descriptions. I will also exclude descriptive or synthetic works on “Power” or “Sexuality,” which provide summaries of Foucault’s supposedly relevant writings concerning the topic, placing them among many other theories. Including these in the study of Foucault’s reception would not have made sense, for there are no systematic relationships between these types of commentaries or citations, neither with regard to the author named Foucault (beyond the fact that it is supposed to unite what commentators have to say), nor to the people mentioning or citing his thoughts. No specific orientation is observable concerning these descriptions; therefore, they do not reach the level of interpretation: no specific research groups have been formed in the wake of these commentaries. By including these, one would lack categories for the interpretation of the data.

Therefore, in the Hungarian context, it is useful to turn to the ideas of Foucault himself in the selection of criteria for any meaningful study of the reception of his works. Foucault questioned authorship as such, most explicitly in his article “What Is an Author?”, while in his archeology and genealogy he tried to provide an a-subjective method directed against human science-type problematics (as was mentioned earlier, structuralism came in handy in this endeavor, but its usage conveyed the risk that he would be identified with the structuralist movement). Constructing and defining discursive formations proved to be a powerful means to wake us up from our anthropological slumber. There is no need for even the possibility of identifying “discursive formations” in the Hungarian context, where Foucauldian enunciations could have a role to play; however, persisting in this slumber here would have an extended meaning: it would amount to considering scattered mentions of Foucault or the enumeration of some of his “great ideas,” without making connections between them, as reception.

Foucault argues that “The coming into being of the notion of ‘author’ constitutes the privileged moment of individualization in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy, and the sciences” (Foucault 1998b, 205). And then he goes on to analyze what he calls the author function:

[...] these aspects of an individual which we designate as making him an author are only a projection, in more or less psychologizing terms, of the operations we force texts to undergo, the connections we make, the traits we establish as pertinent, the continuities we recognize, or the exclusions we practice. All these operations vary according to periods and types of discourse. (Foucault 1998b, 214)

Furthermore, as one of his Hungarian interpreters has put it, “If I take as given the unity of works designated by the name of Foucault, then [...] I disregard one of the most notable characteristics of this corpus of texts, namely its fragmentary nature” (Sutyák 2007, 29). However, these works also furnish good arguments on a theoretical level for why this fragmentariness is significant. And, for sure, conjuring away authorship and the required coherence through his different works attached to the quality of author (Foucault 1984) is also the reason why Foucault advocates the usage of his methods and findings as toolboxes; moreover, many times, he expresses his disapproval of merely commenting on authors and texts (Foucault 1972).

Therefore, by having recourse to these Foucauldian criteria, I will exclude mere description and exegesis from the study of the Hungarian reception of Foucault, whereas I will consider cases of reception where there is proper theoretical or empirical usage of thoughts, findings, or methods of the author named Foucault.

In fact, there are not very many researchers or research groups who effectively use Foucault in Hungary or who are inspired by his findings. I will cite five different disciplinary approaches, the first being a joint reflection in history and philosophy, the second in philosophy, the third in political sociology, the fourth in history and historical anthropology, and the fifth in the history and philosophy of the psychological sciences. Before analyzing these approaches in detail, I will provide a brief overview of the stances of Hungarian social science departments towards Foucault. This is necessary, for I believe that the scarcity of genuine reception is partly due to the very strict disciplinary boundaries in Hungarian academia, where the status of an author, who cannot exactly be placed under a disciplinary heading, becomes dubious, even if he or she is world famous. This is owing to the rigidity and conservatism of the existing

scientific institutions inherited from state socialism; or, in case of new, emerging disciplines and departments, to the struggle for legitimation (although this needs to be confirmed by future qualitative research). Therefore, it turns out that, first of all, it is not possible to write a unitary historical narrative of the reception and, secondly, that people who have dealt with Foucault either work on the margins of academia or deal with topics and methods that are rarely found in the Hungarian context (or both).

## Foucault in the Social Science Departments

When considering philosophical reception, it has to be noted that, after the regime change, phenomenology as well as analytical philosophy became dominant in philosophy departments. A post-metaphysical philosophy such as Foucault's did not seem to be a good fit for approaches searching for evidence and secure foundations. There was also a parallel process: not surprisingly, philosophy became apolitical. Political philosophy and especially critical and contextualizing approaches lost significance, which also influenced the reception of thinkers who, like Foucault, were not guided by Marxist obedience. Courses on political philosophy and ethics started to deal with rather decontextualized and abstract approaches in the Anglo-American style. Nothing could have been more alien to a Foucauldian type of reflection.

Sociology departments, perhaps because they had only come to exist relatively recently and were struggling for legitimacy, created a history of sociology-based curriculum. Owing to the dominance of the history of sociology approach, created by Dénes Némethi and his disciples at the Eötvös Loránd University, mostly well-established classics were taught, including Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Habermas, and Bourdieu. This resulted in the establishment of a fairly solid theoretical training; however, the connection with empirical research was often lacking. Foucault, who is certainly not a sociologist (it never occurs to him that he could be one but, more importantly, he strives to renew historical and not sociological method), could not really figure in such a narrow interpretation of social science, whereas he should have a place in a broadly understood

category. Unlike in philosophy, in sociology critical idiom was preserved, for it was institutionalized as a dissident discipline in the 1970s with relative freedom, after a long period of being banned. However, departments opted for a critical idiom that was more obvious and more easily applicable than Foucauldian genealogy; that is, they chose to teach critical theory and its most recent representatives, as well as critical sociology, especially the work of Bourdieu. In fact, Foucault never thought in the categories of the “social” as such, and was not dealing directly with evident topics of critical sociology such as inequality, social mobility, social domination, and so forth (e.g. Le Blanc 2006), which were (and still are) the main topics of Hungarian empirical sociology as it tried to come to terms with state socialist society and its later development. In Hungarian sociology, apart from the study of inequalities (in education, work, housing, etc.) and social stratification, studies on public space and the social psychology of prejudice have been dominant, which, furthermore, were lacking a historical component to a large degree.

While Foucault’s thoughts on power, his nominalist method, and his critique of the “human sciences” informed by historical epistemology are not easily applicable to developing social theory (he would have rejected all theory of society himself), it is also true that, in the frame of his criticism of the “human sciences,” focused especially on the psy-sciences, one could just as well include sociology (even if Foucault seldom, if ever, states this possibility explicitly).

With regard to history departments, they continued to work in their positivistic style as before, with the incorporation of such a thinker as Foucault seeming completely unimaginable. However, there was one notable exception, a social history department at the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest called “Atelier,” which conducted an interdisciplinary program while trying to uphold the tradition of the French *Annales* in the fairly positivist-minded context that was dominated by traditional history departments. In the “Atelier” department, there were also some attempts to engage with the tradition of micro-history and to establish historical anthropology on the margins of history teaching at the university (connected to the Medieval History department and the works of Gábor Klaniczay).

## Philosophy and the Theory of History

The first approach relative to Foucault that should be mentioned is the work of Ádám Takács, a philosopher working in the “Atelier” department. As the Institute of Philosophy at the Eötvös Loránd University has recruited very few (in most periods, no) new professors in the last three decades, some philosophers have been trying to find refuge in departments of aesthetics (upholding the legacy of German idealism and Lukács, but also engaging in the teaching of cultural studies, the sociology of art, and media and film studies), or even in non-mainstream history departments. This is the reason why Takács, a scholar of historical theory in addition to phenomenology, could find a place in “Atelier” to teach Foucault, who had been situated on the margins of philosophy teaching and totally non-existent in other history departments.

Takács interpreted Foucault as an interdisciplinary thinker who did history and philosophy at the same time, the Foucauldian program of philosophy and history being correlative (Takács 2008 [1998]). According to Takács, historical research for Foucault was not interesting in itself, but only from the perspective of a philosophical critique of the present or, in Foucault’s words, the “historical ontology of ourselves.” But this is not only about scientific interest: there are unavoidable philosophical stakes to be addressed. If all knowledge is historical, then there is no point in trying to think about history from outside history. All reflection on history will be historical as well. Therefore, it cannot just be *on* history, as a totalizing perspective would think was possible, but it is always necessarily *in* history. This means that the validity claims of philosophy are equally limited by the historical perspective. The only route out of the *aporia* is to reflect upon our existence in time, which involves the “history of the present” perspective (Takács 2008, 149–150). This perspective implies an unusual practice of both philosophy and history.

Indeed, in Takács’ view, Foucault’s philosophical practice seems to be somewhat strange, because we encounter historical research on madness, prisons, psychiatry, and so forth, topics that are loaded with philosophical stakes because they bear great importance for our present. How is it possible, then, to harmonize philosophical questions with the empirical

research program and with always concrete historical analyses? Foucault, by rendering philosophy and history compatible, realized real interdisciplinarity, which is not based on the doubtful analogy between different disciplines, but on his problematic itself (Takács 2006, 12–13). This means that the diagnosis of the present can only be achieved on the basis of its own historical conditions. Foucault's books could not have been written from a traditional historical perspective; they are not histories of institutions or sciences that strive to reconstruct the past, but rather depend on the “discursive interests” of the present. Takács has recently published a monograph in Hungarian under the title *The Traces of Time. Michel Foucault and the Problem of History*, based on his reworked articles (Takács 2018).

## Drugs and Transgression

Takács also initiated a research program on drugs and drug use based on Foucault's insights and methods. It is true that Foucault never analyzed illegal drug use as such. However, says Takács, Foucauldian methods can be fruitfully exploited for its analysis if we understand how our notions about the usage of drugs are regulated by historically conditioned practices of knowledge: if we realize what kind of power mechanisms generate its social situations of consumption and law enforcement, and if we recognize what kind of subjective and moral factors are involved in drug usage in the formation of the self (Takács 2006, 9). Furthermore, not only Foucault's method but also some of his findings are important in this respect. In his lectures on “Psychiatric Power” at the Collège de France in the 1970s, Foucault demonstrated that the effects of drugs had been confiscated by psychiatry and interpreted within the system of mental illness. In 1845, the French psychiatrist Moreau de Tours used hashish to provoke the same effects that are supposedly provoked by madness (thus, experience with drugs became the artificial reproduction of madness). This means that a direct relationship had been forged between drug intoxication and madness, thereby creating the conditions for similar treatment of the two, using the same type of disciplinary mechanisms.

In the same volume (Takács 2006), the philosopher Tibor Sutyák argued that the problematic of drugs is also very important in a Foucauldian perspective, for it is the place of potentially radically different experience (or perceived as such) of transgression. Foucault maintained that it was a genuine ethical possibility for people to experiment with their self-affection, to elaborate their *askesis*, that is, their intellectual, mental, and sensual life by way of taking drugs. Sometimes this is interpreted as the emergence of the experience of madness outside the normal–pathological opposition (Sutyák 2006, 32–33). For sure, this kind of approach is very rare in the Hungarian social and political context, where “drugs” are still looked upon indiscriminately as the manifestation of evil and where we find some of the most repressive legislation in Europe. Politicians build their credit on ritually rejecting all kinds of decriminalization and any distinction between different types of drugs, and most of the media follow suit.

Sutyák merits being mentioned in his own right as well (as the representative of the second, philosophical, approach I will talk about) because he was the first author in Hungary to write a monograph on Foucault (2007). Sutyák (lately working on themes in the Anglo-American tradition and also having published a book on Freud) is an exceptionally broad-sighted philosopher who works at the University of Szeged. He earned his PhD at the University of Debrecen under the guidance of Mihály Vajda, at the time when it was still an incubator of talent. Vajda was a member of the “Budapest School,” a Lukács “grandson” and part of the opposition under the socialist regime; the department he headed after his rehabilitation from 1990 onwards was a rare example of progressive and creative thinking.

Sutyák’s philosophically minded work on Foucault is partly introductory, but at the same time conveys a particular interpretation. He strove to read the whole work of Foucault from the perspective of an early short writing: “The Preface to Transgression,” written as early as 1963 and an interpretation of Georges Bataille. The transgression of limits as a philosophical program is something that fragments subjectivity and is thereby the principal means for the subject to become another. This interpretation of Foucault is very much in phase with contemporary scholarship, which has now shifted to analyzing the later works, and especially the later



Collège de France lectures that deal with *parrhesia*, emphasizing the practical aspects of Foucault's philosophy. However, Sutyák does not follow this current of interpretation, because he only deals with the early works and those of the 1970s (by the time his book was published, some of those lectures were not available even in French), and still manages to point out the practical relevance of Foucauldian philosophy in a very convincing manner. Besides his lectures on Antiquity and the aesthetics of existence, Foucault clearly formulated the ethical and practical relevance of his scholarship in "What Is Enlightenment?" in which he intended to interpret his whole oeuvre retroactively in light of the "historical ontology of ourselves," which addresses the following questions: "How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power relations? How are we constituted as moral subjects of our own actions?" (Foucault 1984, 49).

## Interpreting Political Transition

The third research project, that of Ágnes Horváth and Árpád Szakolczai, is a very early attempt to use Foucault for empirical research and political sociology. Their case is very interesting, for they left the country immediately after the regime change and have been teaching abroad and publishing in English ever since. Therefore, their later work should not be included in the Hungarian reception of Foucault.

Horváth and Szakolczai together wrote a series of articles as well as a book on the collapse of the socialist system in 1989 from a Foucauldian perspective (1989). The authors emphasize in the introduction of the (largely modified) English version of their book that Foucault is much cited but very little used (not only in Hungary but also internationally). Commentary abounds, but little is done to exploit his works for empirical research (Horváth and Szakolczai 1992, 20), whereas their goal is precisely to introduce Foucault to Eastern European studies, to empirical political sociology.

They borrow Foucault's method of analyzing power, his view on the "microphysics of power": Horváth and Szakolczai (1989) interpret it as

power being exercised on micro-levels, as everyday forms of power against what they call traditional theories of power, which link power to large-scale social and political structures. Their book deals with the activity of local party functionaries at district level in Budapest. They study not the decision-makers, but the so-called “political instructors,” who are responsible for the everyday practice of exercising power. What are local party functionaries doing on a daily basis (15)? How is it possible for the party to stretch out to the whole sphere of the private life of the individuals (24)? To get the answers, they conducted qualitative research in all 22 districts of Budapest, questioning the local party functionaries. The research took place in 1988–1989, during the process of the collapse of the Communist Party and the whole political system.

Furthermore, they use the notion of “police” in the way it was elaborated by Foucault and understood in the sense of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as *Polizeiwissenschaft*, meaning the regulation of spheres outside legal regulation: order and security, but also habits, health and cleanliness, food and economic activities, and so forth (Szakolczai 1991, 24). According to the authors, there is an analogy between the disciplinary mechanisms of police of the absolutist period and the Communist single party state. The everyday work of party functionaries cannot be described as oppression; therefore, the researchers are in need of a notion of positive power promoting social development, public interest, individual well-being—according to the understanding of the actors in question. So, in Foucault’s footsteps, the two authors ask: what made it possible to extend control to more and more domains of everyday life in modern society and later on in the Communist state? And how did it happen that these mechanisms of power became increasingly effective over time, through the instrumentalization of the consent and collaboration of the individuals themselves (51)? It did not happen by recourse to violence, but rather through certain techniques and methods that were capable of influencing the possible range of actions of others (54). Even though the merits of using Foucault so early, almost in a pioneering fashion in the Hungarian reception, cannot be denied, one has the strange feeling that there is a huge gap between the authors’ research agenda and the theoretical framework they use. For it seems that the empirical findings can be interpreted in their own right, or at least that

many other types of theories could be applicable here (or, in fact, are even unconsciously applied by them). Therefore, it does not even strike us as strange that Foucault's name seldom reappears in the later sections of the book when it comes to analyzing the interviews, which are based on the most classical sociological methodology and questions. The interpretation of the results fits into very broad sociological categorizing, even typology, somewhat at odds with the highly creative initial hypotheses. This is the reason why we have already forgotten about Foucault when we finish reading this otherwise very insightful and interesting book. This is not surprising if we consider the fact that Foucault was not a sociologist, and that his enterprise can even be contrasted with sociological research (Berkovits 2016). Therefore, using Foucauldian sociology is always difficult and poses many problems; but all the more so if there is no reflection at all on this problematic nature. So Horváth and Szakolczai's book, while avoiding commentary and offering empirical research supposedly built on Foucault, fails to account for this usage to a large degree, thereby becoming somewhat arbitrary.

## The "Other" of Civilization

The fourth research agenda is the one initiated by the previously mentioned Gábor Klaniczay. In his first book, a collection of essays written in the 1980s but published only at the time of the political regime change (1990a), he clearly outlines a socio-political focus for his historical research. Klaniczay writes that his sensibility for historically examining "the edge of civilization" (which is also the title of the book) was formed by his encounter with the counter-cultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s (*ibid.*, 10). Under state socialism, Klaniczay was close to dissident groups, and his friends were from the democratic opposition, although his academic position (in the Institute of History and later at the Eötvös Loránd University) was not affected by it. In his book, he concentrates on marginal groups, superstitions, the transgression of norms, heresies, and popular culture, all of which are, according to him, the "other" of civilization, excluded by the dominant and legitimate forms of civilization.

According to Klaniczay, the historian has to unearth these figures and movements (perhaps as a repercussion of the Foucauldian “oppressed knowledge”), and with their help establish the critique of civilization. Moreover, the task of the historian is to deconstruct the prejudices and stereotypes with which we perceive these figures, by granting them their *sui generis* existence (ibid., 10–11). It seems that Klaniczay has something of the spirit of the Foucault of *The History of Madness* (unearthing “madness itself”). However, he never analyzes this book in detail; rather, he turns to Bakhtin as the theoretician of popular culture and of laughter, and to the anthropologist Victor Turner, in order to forge the conception of popular culture characterized by transgressive practices directed against medieval Christianity as a “closed ideological system.”

Whereas Klaniczay declares that he relies on Foucault’s conception of power as we find it in *Discipline and Punish* and *The Will to Knowledge*, the spirit of the “Foreword” evokes more the Foucault of the 1960s—equally because of the counter-cultural references, to which Klaniczay also devoted a book later on (2004). However, but not surprisingly, because Klaniczay is above all a historian, the book contains more traditional historical analyses, and we do not really find the proper Foucauldian genealogical method in it. His questions are those of a professional historian’s (which Foucault was not), even though he makes a reference to writing history from the point of view of the present (which is not the same as the Foucauldian “history of the present” approach) (1990a, 12).

In the English version of the book, which is not an exact translation of the Hungarian one (some essays are left out, while others, not present in the original, are added), the Foucauldian program seems to have been abandoned. The “Introduction” to the English edition does not provide any Foucauldian framework; however, Foucault remains an important author among others, mainly playing a role in the formulation of some highly important questions for guiding research, such as: “could we speak of a kind of ‘microphysics of religious power’ [...]?” (Klaniczay 1990b). Meanwhile, Klaniczay also speaks of “actors in the ‘religious field,’” as a hint to Bourdieu, who is probably of equal importance for him; and, as previously mentioned, he relies on many other authors in order to construct his own problematic. Therefore, one could say that Klaniczay’s engagement with Foucault does not mean the adoption of his method or

his problematics; rather, at least in the Hungarian version of his book, he is taken by the spirit of Foucauldian analysis and the gesture of criticism mediated by historical interpretation, while this ethos of writing history seems to have somewhat faded away in the English version.

As a matter of fact, the analysis of the “microphysics of religious power,” mentioned by Klaniczay as one of his main goals, does play a key role in Foucault’s oeuvre, especially in his (to date unpublished) fourth volume of the *History of Sexuality*, but also in his Collège de France lectures, which perhaps Klaniczay could not get hold of at the time he was writing his book. For example, in *Abnormal*, Foucault traces back the phenomenon of possession in religious communities, especially convents, to the imperative formulated by the new, Tridentine regimes of confession, regulating speech on sexual desire.

Possession, although inscribed within this Christianization that gets under way at the end of the fifteenth century, is an internal, rather than an external, effect. It appears to be the aftereffect of a religious and detailed investment of the body and [...] of an exhaustive discourse and exclusive authority, rather than of the penetration of new regions and new geographical or social domains. (Foucault 2003, 205)

However, other examples of the genealogical method (also of religious practices) abounded even then, but, contrary to Foucault, Klaniczay himself does not engage in analyzing individual cases in detail; rather, he summarizes cases in order to reach general conclusions about tendencies in witch-hunting, magical practices, and the like, taking the “microphysics of religious power” in a broader sense and providing a synoptic image.

## Psy-Sciences and Ability Grouping

Finally, the fifth research project in close relationship to Foucauldian conceptions is the genealogy and critique of Hungarian psychiatric and psychological sciences and special education (in which the author of the present chapter has been involved as well). This is an approach combining the sociology of education and the philosophy of social sciences with

Foucauldian insights (Berkovits and Oblath 2008; Berkovits 2011). The task is to deal with questions of scientific classification with regard to the psychological sciences operating in schools. According to the authors' hypothesis, there is an inner and historically stabilized logic of scientific classification (all that constitutes legitimate science, scientific protocols, also because of university education, manuals, etc.) preceding any direct sociological causes of segregative practices or the reproduction of inequalities by social mechanisms. The aim is to establish a diagnosis of the intrusion of psychology, ability grouping, IQ testing, and so forth into the educational practices of school selection and categorization, relying on Foucault and on those of his followers who have dealt with sciences from a sociological (e.g. Nikolas Rose) or philosophical (e.g. Ian Hacking) perspective. This diagnosis is intended to function as the immanent criticism of psychology/psychiatry and normalization, emerging through the genealogy of the psychological and psychiatric sciences and their functioning. In what sense do schools define "mild mental handicap" and other problems and disadvantages? How are abnormal individuals constructed? And how is it possible to criticize these processes?

This project strives to renew critical approaches in the field of the sociology of education, along with the theoretical ambition to complement and sometimes criticize critical sociology by clarifying the presuppositions of constructionist and critical approaches (see especially Berkovits 2019). This could suggest a new critical stance with regard to the "human sciences." Within this approach (Berkovits 2016), Foucault is treated as a philosopher of science, of the "human" (social and psychological) sciences, who links the emergence of scientific entities to the functioning of these sciences. It is an analysis of the coming about of objects in a Foucauldian manner, relying on his works of the 1970s, especially *Discipline and Punish* and his Collège de France lectures (*Abnormal, Psychiatric Power*). According to this interpretation, Foucault's intention is not to unmask the sciences constructing madness, deviance, or criminality, even if he rejects their interpretations; rather, he investigates how the entities of the sciences come about, and how they could eventually become different as a result of the practical effects of genealogy.

## Conclusion

We have seen that many Hungarian university departments are not keen on accepting and teaching Foucault, while research projects and groups using this author in academic institutions are scarce. Under state socialism, but even more so during the transition and also after, working on Foucault has been an expression of dissent. For sure, without ever becoming dominant or even widespread in the Hungarian context, discourses informed by Foucauldian tools and methods have always served to uphold criticism against existing institutions and norms. But dissent has also been expressed by traditional academia, which has been unable to espouse truly interdisciplinary figures and methods, while working on Foucault could also represent and express one's own marginal position in academia: the authors and groups mentioned, whose starting point for research were Foucauldian concepts and/or methods, all found themselves (at least while working in Hungarian institutions) in marginalized positions either intellectually or institutionally, or both.

It should be noted that there is no planned policy for Foucault translations and that the publications do not follow any pattern. Furthermore, research groups cannot last very long for material reasons: they are dissolved when the temporary and limited funding runs out. All this can explain the fact that Foucault's reception lacks any kind of systematic nature, and that there is a wide gap between the success of Foucault with readers and the fact that much of academia ignores this author.

Although there can be no unitary history written on the usages of Foucault, starting for example from the "structuralist Foucault," through the theoretician of power to that of the "care of the self" or *parrhesia*, and although we cannot find any systematic treatment of any of these topics or others by authors or research groups through different periods of time and publications, some of the existing works did make significant theoretical contributions to the theory of history, to questions regarding critique, to the comprehension of the nature of state socialism and regime change, and so on. The question is whether these contributions will ever join global knowledge outside the highly isolated Hungarian context. This would be further hindered by their marginal status inside Hungarian

academia, in which they constitute a form of “oppressed knowledge” in Foucault’s sense—that is, doomed to being forgotten.

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# 13

## The Reception of a “Traveling Theory”: Edward Said’s Citations in the French Academic Publishing Space

Clarisse Fordant and Mohamed Amine Brahimi

Translated by Marina Urquidi

### Introduction

Edward Said, who was Professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia University from 1963 to 2003, is one of the best known and most highly discussed contemporary intellectuals and academics. His work, some of which was translated into more than 35 languages, is still the subject of debate. Said owes this reputation, among other reasons, to one of his first books, *Orientalism*, published in the United States (USA) in 1978 and translated into French soon thereafter, in 1980. In spite of this, there have been very few studies from a sociohistorical perspective on how Said has been perceived within the space of social science in the French-speaking

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world (Clavaron 2013; Poché 2013). Thus, we have examined citations of his work in the academic literature published in French and French-language journals between 1980 and 2014.

In a previous article, we identified some correlation between the authors' attributes and their citing of Said's work (Brahimi and Fordant 2017). The social space in which Said is cited in the world of French-speaking social science is notably structured around three opposing principles: the authors' country of residence, their gender, and their disciplinary affiliation. To start with, female authors have quoted Said's work in a positive way more often than male ones. In addition, Said has been apprehended much more critically by authors from Western Europe than by those from North America. In terms of disciplines, literary authors have as a whole had a favorable view of Said, while historians and political scientists have been mostly critical.

After this analysis of the social space of French-language citations of Edward Said, which was focused on the authors of articles citing his work, this chapter sets out to study the journals in which these articles were published. Authors' social properties can determine their chances of being published by certain journals (Crane 1967). This begs the question of how these opposing principles inform and/or are informed by the academic publishing space of the French-language journals in which Said has been cited.<sup>1</sup> In Europe, journals, through the articles they publish, have constituted the loci of circulation of knowledge since the seventeenth century (Kronick 1962). Journals are instruments of the scientific development and autonomization of disciplines, paradigms, and schools of thought, and they are where knowledge, subjected to peer review, is expressed and diffused; thus, they act as scientific authorities participating in the construction of reputations and in the constitution, development, or loss of symbolic capital within the field of social and human sciences (Merton 1968; Watt 1985).

Transnational and transdisciplinary circulation of this knowledge, considered as a symbolic good, is more or less significant depending on the more or less dominant position, within the academic publishing space of social sciences, of the journals publicizing it (Boure 1993). Its mobility within the scientific field (Bourdieu 1976) energizes social relations among the players of the scientific field by contributing, for the producers and the communicators of this knowledge, to bestow notoriety

and recognition (Crane 1972; Milard 2013). In this context, bibliometry constitutes an instrument to measure the diffusion and circulation of this knowledge from the point of view of sociology of scholarly citations (Brooks 1985) taken as indicators of recognition and consecration. Citing will be considered as a symbolic good taken in a composite academic publishing space currently undergoing a full digital revolution (Jaffrin and Parisot 2014) and operating as both a market and a theater, that is, a space where the production of knowledge and its evaluation are staged and where scientific capital is exchanged between citing authors and cited authors (Bourdieu 1976; Cronin 1984). From this perspective, a case study of Edward Said provides particularly interesting information about this composite academic publishing space. By performing a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) of the editorial characteristics of these periodicals and of the citing they include, we will thus try to describe the French-language academic publishing space of reception of Edward Said from the early 1980s to the mid-2010s so as to conduct a joint analysis of the places, and the interdisciplinary and international circulation patterns of his thought. Into what foci of the French-language academic publishing space were Said's thought imported? Do praise, criticism, and recognition unfold within the same academic publishing spaces at different moments and throughout the entire time frame under examination?

## Scholarly Citations as "Traveling Theories"

Articles mentioning Edward Said and his work can be found on three French and Canadian social science databases: Cairn, Persée, and Web of Science. Construction of the space under examination is based on an inventory of all articles mentioning Edward Said published between 1980 and 2014 in the journals included in these three databases. For this period of almost 35 years, there is a total of 245 articles written by 235 authors or coauthors published in 106 journals. For the MCA, the activated variables are: the main discipline of these journals; their founding date; their type of publisher; and the latter's geographical location. In addition, an analysis of the content of the published articles in which the authors referred to Said made it possible to determine how long ago the

citing began, its density, its intensity, and the type of citation of the American-Palestinian intellectual's work. For each journal, the density of the citation of Said is evaluated in terms of the number of authors citing Said published per journal. Citing intensity is defined by the distribution of these citations over time during the period under examination, while how long ago the citing began is determined by the publication date of the first article citing Said in each of the listed journals.

To measure how long ago the citing began, the 1980–2014 period under examination is divided into decennial periods, showing that for 31.1 percent of the listed journals the date of the first article citing Said stood between 1980 and 1989, for 28.3 percent between 1990 and 1999, for 29.3 percent between 2000 and 2009, and for 11.3 percent between 2010 and 2014. Between 1980 and 2014 the majority of journals (52.8 percent) published only one author citing Said, whereas nearly one-third (29.3 percent) published two or three authors citing Said, 10.3 percent four or five, and 7.6 percent six or more. Of the 245 listed articles, only about a dozen were signed by two or more coauthors. Coauthored articles are therefore sufficiently rare for the number of authors to be used as an indicator to account for the number of articles published by each journal. In addition, as the journals can be considered here as spaces of sociability, concentrating on the number of authors rather than on the number of articles makes it possible to focus on some of the individual players who are animating these spaces. The variable relating to the number of authors citing Said thus makes it possible to measure citation density in each journal. It seemed interesting, however, to qualify this indicator by taking account of the citing intensity, that is, its distribution over time throughout the period under examination. Some journals, for example, published a dossier on Said or on one of his research areas, making citation of his work in a single issue inevitable. In these journals, the citing density is thus rather high but its intensity rather low because this citing is related to a specific point in time. This is the case, for instance, of the journal *Nouvelles questions féministes*, which published a dossier on “Sexism, racism, and post-colonialism” in 2006. Three of the five articles that this comprises refer to Edward Said's work. *Perspective*, the journal of the French national art-history institute, Institut national d'histoire de l'art, can also be mentioned in that it published a transcript of discussions

among five researchers at a round table organized in 2012 on "The arts, violence, identities: the contribution of post-colonial studies," at which Said's work was discussed. Otherwise, the citing in other journals is just as dense but distributed over several decades. For the variable relating to citing intensity, that is, to its more or less high distribution over time, the 1980–2014 period under examination here is also divided into four (infra-)decennial periods: 1980–1989, 1990–1999, 2000–2009, and 2010–2014. Although the vast majority of the journals (70.8 percent) published articles in only one of these decades, nearly one-quarter of them (23.6 percent) published one or more articles over two decades. For example, the journals *Archipel* and *Expressions maghrébines* both published eight authors, the former between 1980 and 2009 but none during the 1990s, and the latter between 2000 and 2014. In four other journals (3.8 percent) the intensity of citing Said is even higher, with articles published over three decennial periods (*Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*; *Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales*; *Revue de littérature comparée*; and *Revue française d'études américaines*). Only two journals (*Vingtième Siècle* and *L'Homme*) published articles citing Said throughout the entire period under examination, 1980–2014. Before discussing what characterizes the six journals in which the intensity of citing Said is very high, we will address the type of citation contained in the 106 listed journals.

A qualitative analysis of the content of the 245 listed articles made it possible to determine whether appreciation (MacRoberts and MacRoberts 1984) of Edward Said's work had been positive or negative, and to identify his academic and intellectual work as cited in these articles. Coding the type of citation according to three modalities (positive, negative, or neutral) requires a fine analysis of the content of the listed articles. The positive modality distinguishes articles containing a favorable or laudatory value judgment of Said's work; these are often published in journals of literary studies, and their authors bring Said into the theoretical framework of their demonstration by citing him in reference to the specific subject of their study and/or by adopting an argument put forward by Said. The negative modality applies to articles containing instead a critical or disapproving value judgment of the argumentation defended by Said; these articles are mainly concentrated in the 1980s, when *Orientalism* was given a controversial reception. The neutral modality identifies arti-

cles in which there is no value judgment on Said, that is, where one of his works is simply cited in the bibliography or in a footnote. Neutral citing, most often in articles published between 2000 and 2009, is a reliable indicator of the process of recognition of Said.

In terms of citation distribution according to type (negative, positive, and neutral), 64 journals contain at least one positive citation of Said, 53 at least one neutral citation, and 19 at least one negative citation. Nonetheless, it seemed more relevant to distinguish ad hoc citation profiles by taking into account the combinations found in each journal. One-third of the listed journals (33.0 percent) thus published one or more articles containing positive citation of Said (indicated in the map by the + sign). Among those in which the citing is the densest are *Poétique*, *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*, and *Études rurales*. Next are the 27 journals (25.5 percent) that published articles containing only neutral citations (=), such as *Cahiers d'histoire des Littératures Romanes*, *Mil neuf cent*, *Études littéraires*, or *Journal de la Société des océanistes*. There are also journals that published articles containing either positive or neutral citations (+/=); there are 17 of these, or 16.0 percent, including *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, *Cahiers d'études africaines*, *Expressions Maghrébines*, and *Esprit*. We then have eight journals that published articles containing either positive, or negative, or neutral citations (+/-/=), including *Mots*, *Politique étrangère*, *Romantisme*, and *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*. Six journals (5.7 percent) contain only one negative citation (-); this is for instance the case of *Sociétés contemporaines*, *Études françaises*, and *Comparative Civilizations Review*. Four journals (3.8 percent) contain one positive or negative citation (+/-): *Politix*, *Outre-mers*, *Genèses*, and *Critique*. Only one journal, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, published articles containing negative and neutral citations (-/=).

The founding date of the journals is also indicated.<sup>2</sup> Nearly 4.7 percent of the listed journals were launched before 1918, 17.0 percent between 1919 and 1945, 34.9 percent between 1946 and 1968, 34.0 percent between 1969 and 1989, and 9.4 percent after 1990.

As for the type of publisher, distinction was made between university presses, professional associations and learned societies, and independent publishers. About half of the journals under examination were published

by a university press (45.3 percent). These are followed by those published by independent publishers (39.6 percent) and those backed by learned societies or professional associations (15.1 percent). We have 14 publishers of two or more journals. With four and six journals, respectively, among those listed, Presses de Sciences Po and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) are the most prolific publishers here. The current country of the publishers of the journals was also taken into account. Thus, within the French-language space of Said citation, 60.4 percent of the journals are published in France, 13.2 percent are published in other European countries, particularly in the United Kingdom and in Germany, and 26.4 percent are published outside Europe, particularly in Canada and the USA.

In addition, information was collected on the main discipline of the journal. To get a proper categorization of this academic publishing space for serious consideration, the modalities of this variable were coded based on the presentation texts of the journals. More than one-third of the journals under examination (34.9 percent) specialized in literary studies. These are followed by general academic journals (16.0 percent), then those relating to history (10.4 percent), science of religion (8.5 percent), political science (6.6 percent), sociology (5.6 percent), and art history (3.8 percent).<sup>3</sup> Nearly 8.5 percent of the journals are part of minority knowledge fields such as architecture, psychoanalysis, or linguistics; these are distinguished by the modality "other disciplines."

## **Structuring Principles of the Academic Publishing Space of French-Language Citation of Edward Said**

To materialize the academic publishing space of French-language citation of Edward Said, an MCA (Duval 2013) was performed with the data described above: the publication period of the first article citing Said in each journal; the number of authors published by each journal; the number of citation periods; the types of citation contained; the founding date and main discipline of the journals; and the type and country of their publisher.



The eigenvalue of Axis 1 is 0.367, contributing a total of 10.1 percent to the original variance; the eigenvalue of Axis 2 is 0.241, contributing a total of 6.6 percent to the original variance, or a 16.7 percent cumulated contribution of these two axes to the variance of the cloud. The modified cumulated rate of Axes 1 and 2 is 68.6 percent, which is sufficient to focus here on this first factorial design. The modalities contributing most to Axis 1 relate (in descending order) to the number of authors published, to the number of citation periods, and the type of citation (and publication period of the first article). The modalities contributing most to Axis 2 relate (in descending order) to the type of the current publisher, to the country in which the journal is published, and the discipline of the journal. Axis 1 thus concentrates the modalities relating to citation of Said, while Axis 2 is structured around the publishing characteristics of the journals (Table 13.1 and Figs. 13.1 and 13.2).

On the right side of the resulting geometrical space are the journals where the citing is old (1980s and 1990s), dense (four authors or more), intense (two decades or more), and varied (at least two types of citing per journal). Often founded in the 1960s and published by a university press or an independent publisher based in France, such as for the first the EHESS or for the second Le Seuil, these journals published their first article citing Said between 1980 and 1989, at the beginning of the period under examination, and for the most part published one or more additional articles in the following decades. It is in the journals where the first citing is the oldest that the types of citation are most varied, including positive, negative, and neutral references. The journals in which the citing is more of an occasional occurrence and far from dense (one author over one decade) and in which it is also the most recent (since 2000) are in the other half of the map on the left. Most of these are published in countries other than France—in the rest of Europe and in North America—and usually by professional associations or learned societies.

The modalities relating to the main discipline of the journal are distributed over the four areas defined by Axes 1 and 2. At the top on the right, where the density, how long ago the citing began, and the intensity and the diversity of the citing are largest, there are mostly political science and literature journals. At the bottom, still on the right, where these modalities are rather high, are in particular general social science

**Table 13.1** Contributions of significant modalities to Axes 1 and 2

Variables	Markers	Modalities	Axis 1		Axis 2	
				To the	To the upper part	To the lower part
Country of current publisher	▼	France		1.248		0.216
		other cntries	1.122		9.887	
		other eur cntries	0.794			11.928
Date of creation	■	bef. 18	1.680		0.241	
		bet. 19&45		0.039		0.003
		bet. 46&68	0.306		1.414	
		bet. 69&89		0.382		1.757
		aft. 90		0.294		0.002
Main journal discipline (JD)	◆	JD Anthro	0.003		5.296	
		JD Art Hist	0.327			3.041
		JD History	0.011		0.609	
		JD Liter		0.004	0.283	
		JD Others	2.999		0.342	
		JD Pol		0.394	1.087	
		JD Reli Stud	0.007			0.518
		JD Socio	0.168		0.001	
Moment of the first article	▲	JD SS		2.152		6.162
		1st art 80-89		4.658	0.580	
		1st art 90-99		0.360	0.000	
		1st art 00-09	5.025		1.965	
		1st art 10&+	0.855			12.439
Number of authors published	◀	1 author	10.648		0.048	
		2-3 authors		2.162		0.803
		4-5 authors		6.838	0.030	
		6or+ authors		7.142	0.956	
Number of citation periods	▶	1 PP	7.011			0.673
		2 PP		11.876	1.953	
		3 PP		4.100		0.527
Type of citation	✕	+/-		0.501		0.080
		-	0.117		1.387	
		+/=		6.888		1.947
		=	2.854		2.846	
		+	2.443			2.936
		+/-/=		9.303	4.280	
Type of current publisher	●	university presses		0.772	4.726	
		lrndsoc & profass	4.395		5.157	
		independant publishers		0.126		13.880

Cells containing significant contributions (higher than 2.7027, i.e. 1/37) are greyed out



or anthropology, or of minority disciplines, mostly published by learned societies or professional associations.

This first rough description of the geometrical space of Said citation in the French-language space of social sciences needs to be supplemented by a finer description of the four areas of this space and of the journals (or groups of journals) where the date of the first citation, and the density, intensity, and type of citation are most exemplary. Compared with the social properties of the authors citing Said, this academic publishing space is somewhat polarized between journals focused on dominant disciplines and publishing mostly male authors, and other journals frequently publishing authors, often women, focused on disciplines that have lesser recognition in the French-language space of social sciences. Female authors tend, as we have said, to cite Said positively or neutrally. The women citing Said, found in dominated positions within the academic field more frequently than men, producing work more often in dominated disciplines such as educational sciences, geography, psychology, or cultural studies, published their articles in journals publicizing issues related to women or to feminism. In this area, we can mention the journal *Nouvelles Questions Féministes*, but also *L'Homme et la société* or *French Review*.

This gendered structuring principle of the social space of Said citation is, however, less important in the structuring of the academic publishing space of this citation than the structuring principle relating to the discipline or the country in which the journal or the author is established. It should indeed be noted that the journals citing Said published outside Europe, particularly in Canada and the USA, are mainly journals of literary studies in this North American French-language space, which is his original disciplinary and national field, Said therefore constitutes a positive reference, whereas negative citing is essentially Western European. But whatever its type, citation of Said within the listed articles shows the transdisciplinary and transnational circulation of his thought and his work.

This circulation is facilitated by that of the authors who cite him, thus contributing to his being imported into diversified national and disciplinary spaces, in particular when these authors are not from centers of the international academic space located in North America. Among the 235 listed authors, 59 (25.1 percent) are from a country not in Western

Europe or North America. Unlike Western European and North American authors, who are much more sedentary, eight out of ten of these authors from a country outside Western Europe and North America—Algeria, India, Togo, and Lebanon in particular—were living in Western Europe (nearly half of this subpopulation) or in North America (more than one-third of this subpopulation) when their articles citing Edward Said were published. Working mostly in the realm of cultural studies, these authors have contributed to introducing an approach into the French-language space and bestowed recognition on its most important authors, which include Edward Said, whom they cite mostly in a neutral or positive way in literary (*Esprit Créateur*, *Expressions maghrébines*), political science (*Mots*), or sociology (*Genèses*) journals. We thus count 14 journals with published authors who were affiliated with cultural studies at the time the article was published, nine of which are French. The other journals are Canadian or American. In France, authors who cited Said and worked in cultural studies mostly published their articles in the 1990s, when this field of research was internationalized (Bourcier 2004), and in journals specializing in a large variety of disciplines, for example, literary studies (*Romantisme*), political science (*Mots*), sociology (*Genèses*), and musicology (*Avant-scène Opéra*).

As can be expected, the authors working in the area of cultural studies reach beyond the disciplinary boundaries of the journals in which they publish their work. What about the authors working in other, more dominant, disciplines? The academic publishing space of Said citation in France is indeed basically cut out according to the main disciplines of the journals. The data on the disciplinary grounding of the journals can, however, be qualified by comparing it with the information on the academic profiles of the authors they publish; this allows us to study the publishing and social multidisciplinary overlaps involved in Said citation in the French-language space of social sciences. Authors mostly publish in journals focused on their disciplinary field. Nonetheless, a journal presented as focused on anthropology or ethnology such as *L'Homme*—which is dominant in the academic editorial space of these disciplines—has published several authors working in other disciplinary fields such as history or literature. Though specializing in political science, the journal *Mots* too is quite multidisciplinary in its content; in addition to authors

from the field of political science, there are also authors from the fields of cultural studies, sociology, and history. In the field of history, *Vingtième siècle* is the journal with the greatest disciplinary diversity among its authors citing Said, most of whom are in fact focused on sociology and political science. In literary studies, the journal *Romantisme* is among the most multidisciplinary; among its authors citing Said are authors specializing notably in cultural studies and history. In sociology, the journal *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* offers the most varied disciplinary panorama since it has also published historians and anthropologists citing Said. Among the journals focused on specific fields of research, the journals *Archipel* (history, literature, and philosophy) and *Nouvelles questions féministes* (law, sociology, history, literature, and geography) offer the richest disciplinary interconnections.

## Citing Intensity, Density, and Quality: A Split in Citational Use

In which academic publishing foci is Said-citing most dense and intense? Six journals have published articles citing Said in the period under examination and fall under this category: *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*; *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*; *Vingtième Siècle*; *Revue de littérature comparée*; *Revue française d'études américaines*; and *L'Homme*. All are French, their disciplinary profiles are diverse (sociology, history, literature, American studies, and anthropology), and most of them are dominant in the academic publishing field of their discipline, which helps to diffuse Said's thought and contributes, whatever the type of citation, to the notoriety and recognition of his work in disciplines other than literary studies. The sociology journal founded by Pierre Bourdieu, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, for instance, published three articles citing Said, the first by a French anthropologist, who cites him negatively (François Pouillon in 1988), and the other two by two American sociologists (Robert Bogdan in 1994 and George Steinmetz in 2008), who cite him neutrally. *Revue française d'études américaines* published, on its side, articles by three French authors, two of whom, specializing in literary

studies, cite Said neutrally (Morot-Sir in 1987 and Bleikasten in 2012). The third, an Americanist, signed two articles in the 1990s, one citing Said's work positively and the other neutrally (Guerlain in 1995 and 1996). In a similar citing trend, *Revue de littérature comparée*, from 2001 to 2013, and the journal of contemporary history *Vingtième siècle*, from 1989 to 2007, published articles by six authors citing Said neutrally or positively.

*L'Homme*, in the field of anthropology, and *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* in that of history, are part of the group of eight journals containing the greatest diversity in types of citation. The same is true for *Mots* and *Politique étrangère* in political science, for *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* and *Archipel*, both of these transdisciplinary journals specializing in religious studies and the Indian archipelago, respectively, and for *Romantisme* and *French Review* in literature. The latter two are an exception in their disciplinary field in that they contain, inter alia, negative citing, whereas only five of the 37 listed literary journals, or one in eight, contain negative citing, including *Études françaises* and *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, both of which published only one author each who cited Said, and both citations were negative. Said-citing is thus unanimously positive in the editorial field of French-language literary studies. The intensity and density of the citing, however, is variable. Certain journals of literary studies—such as *Œuvres & Critiques* or *Nottingham French Studies*—containing only one positive citation of Said published one article citing Said, and did so only at the beginning of the period under examination, during the 1980s, which amounts to a very low intensity and density of Said citation. In contrast, from the mid-1990s to 2013, *Revue de littérature comparée* regularly published about ten authors, each having signed one article in which Said is cited positively or neutrally.

While the citing is largely positive in literature, negative citing tends to be the strongest in history and political science journals. Here we can mention *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, *Revue française de science politique*, and *Sociétés contemporaines*, where the citing is far from dense (one to two authors) and exclusively negative. In *Revue française de science politique*, for instance, citing of Said only appears in the late 1980s, not to be seen again in the following years. The citing, by two political

scientists referring to *Orientalism*, is particularly critical, one of them considering that "[Said's] anti-orientalism is admittedly in vogue, but for ideological reasons, not based on relevant argumentation" (Carré 1987, 491). Here, reference to Said becomes a subject of criticism and dispute rather than a contribution to the research problem. *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* otherwise published a review by the historian Daniel Rivet of the French translation of *Culture and Imperialism*, published in 2000. Admittedly, in his review Rivet salutes Said's scholarship and theorizing power, but he sees these virtues as nourishing "the existential malaise of an angry man in exile, who is locked up in his character of finger-pointer from the South" (Rivet 2001, 209) and is thus all too eager to essentialize the East and the West. This twofold disciplinary grounding of negative citing, in history and in political science, is revealing; indeed, it is in these two disciplinary fields that French oriental studies were developed and institutionalized, in history since the end of the nineteenth century, and particularly in the 1980s in political science. As previously stated, in the journal *Mots*, there are also two other types of citation: neutral (Juteau in 1996 and Nasr in 1997) and positive (Fenouillet in 1992). The journal also has negative citing of Said by two authors, including that of the anthropologist Alban Bensa (in 1997), who was critical of the figure offered by Said in *Representations of the Intellectual*—published in French in 1996—of a researcher in seclusion from the world as opposed to that of a committed intellectual.

## Conclusion

The study described in this chapter comes in the wake of pioneering work on the sociology of literary journals (Boschetti 1988). According to a structural logic and to a relational thinking mode, we have considered scientific journals as legitimizing media and tried to build the academic publishing space of Said citation. Three levels of social analysis were then mobilized to characterize the reception of Edward Said: citation, to explain the nature of the theoretical use of reference to Said; the authors, as producers of this type of symbolic good; and finally, the journal as a medium for the citing.



By considering the academic publishing aspect as key to understanding, we were able to reveal a number of structuring oppositions built not only around the journals, but also in connection with the authors and the type of citation.

- A first geographical opposition can be interpreted in temporal terms because the first reception of Said (1980–1990) occurred mainly in France. The articles published in the following period were mainly in journals from other countries (Europe and North America).
- The recurrence of Said citation varies according to the discipline of the journals in which he is cited; thus, Said is most discussed in general academic journals and those specializing in political science or literature. In contrast, there is less citing in journals of sociology, religious studies, history, and anthropology.
- Gender-based oppositions are also reflected in the disciplinary grounding of the various journals of our corpus. Thus, women citing Said usually publish in journals connected to dominated disciplines (science of education, geography, psychology, et cetera) whereas men are in more dominant disciplines. This gendered distribution also influences the type of citation, with women showing a much more positive appreciation of Said.

This case study of Said's work citation makes it possible to question the different devices and vehicles for travel of theory and for circulation of ideas within areas of knowledge that are bounded and hierarchized (Bourdieu 2002). But the effects of the unequal power relations established within these multiscalar spaces are not only a matter of exchange or simple influence (Sapiro 2009). They also give deep and lasting shape to the content of knowledge produced in social sciences and humanities as well as to individual and collective national, disciplinary, and intellectual positioning strategies.

## Notes

1. The MCA presented hereafter on the journals in which Said is cited factors in other variables, relating to certain social properties of the citing authors. Mobilized here in a qualitative perspective, these properties make

it possible to perceive the intermixture of the social space and the academic publishing space in which Said is cited.

2. Some of the journals changed their name several times during the period under examination. This is the case, for example, of *Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales*, and *Outre-mers*. In this analysis, only the founding date of the journal under its first name was taken into account.
3. Except for journals such as *Social Science Information* or *Queens Quarterly*, the journals indicated here as "general" are interdisciplinary but usually devoted to a specific research area or field. These include, for instance, *Revue française d'études américaines*, *Archiv orientální*, and *Gaia*.

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# 14

## Can the Subaltern Speak (in French)? Reception of Gayatri Spivak in France

Thomas Brisson

### Introduction

Pondering on what was assumed to be a renowned intellectual whose texts only a handful of people would ever read, Louis Althusser once bitterly joked that he was “famous for his notoriety.”<sup>1</sup> The same remark could somehow characterize Gayatri Spivak’s reception in France in the last decades of the twentieth century. Known as a key figure of postcolonial studies and a leading global intellectual, her work has nevertheless been only marginally translated and has just begun to prompt critical examination. Though her name has become a recurrent reference in some political and intellectual debates, the content of her thinking remains little or barely known, save for some key texts. In 2014, fifteen years after her first translation, an article described her as “a figure the French public is not very familiar with yet” (Verjus 2014).

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This situation is to a large extent paradoxical. Not only is France a former colonial empire, but some of Spivak's key references are contemporary French philosophers, particularly Jacques Derrida, whose *Of Grammatology* she translated in 1976. Besides, France has long been a major center for the humanities, as well as literary and feminist studies. All this should have made her diffusion easier and more significant than it actually was. Starting from this paradox, this chapter will follow two complementary lines of reasoning. First, it will analyze which scholars, publishers, and translators have been instrumental in her reception and describe the asymmetry between Spivak's centrality in American (US) academic life and her comparatively marginal position on the French intellectual scene. It will then seek to account for this discrepancy and, to do so, will assume that it is necessary to understand Spivak's fate in France against the background of a complex reception of subaltern/postcolonial thought there.

## The Elusive Reception of Gayatri Spivak in the French-Speaking Academic World

Spivak's first sustained contacts with France go back to 1971, with a seminar that was held at the elite university École Normale Supérieure in Paris. At that time, after beginning a PhD under the supervision of Paul de Man at Cornell, she was teaching English Literature at the University of Iowa and had already embarked on a translation of Derrida's *Grammatology*. According to the various interviews she gave on her formative years, nothing had inclined her before this time to pay attention to modern French philosophy and humanities. Born in Calcutta in 1942 into a Bengali middle-class (but high-caste) family, she left for the United States (USA) after having completed her BA in English Literature at the University of Calcutta in 1959. Her academic interests were firmly grounded in the British canon; an outstanding student of English (for which she was awarded top prizes in India), she was well versed in the former colonizer's language and literary references.

Yet her early career was far from strictly canonical and certainly did not conform to what was expected from a woman of the Third World. Precociously “critical” (Brohi 2014) of the way English was taught in Calcutta, she went to study abroad on her own. She chose the USA over England (despite a year’s fellowship at Cambridge University in the early 1960s), which was very uncommon for elite Indian students in those years. She did so before the USA reversed its restrictive immigration policy with the 1965 Immigration Act, which largely opened the doors of the country to East and South-East Asians. As a single English-educated Indian woman in a still very white USA, her position was rather unorthodox in terms of the (post)colonial order in which she had been raised. Her decision to work on Yeats for her PhD may also be seen as a rebuttal of classical English hierarchies, for Yeats had promoted decisive innovations in English and a revival of the Gaelic language against the background of British rule in Ireland (like Spivak, he had worked between two languages, one of them being the colonizer’s). Spivak’s position in the 1960s only compares to Edward Said’s. Both obtained their PhD in Literature at elite universities (the symbolic credit of these institutions was eventually decisive in their promotion of a critical agenda); both studied classical yet slightly unorthodox and multilingual authors (Said’s choice to work on the Polish-born Conrad parallels Spivak’s engagement with the Irish Yeats); and both became major theoreticians of postcolonial studies, resorting to French authors, to whom their relation was not devoid of ambiguities.

This can help us to understand why Spivak eventually gained some familiarity with a French philosophical world with which she had previously had very few contacts. Her decision to translate *Of Grammatology*, a book she said she randomly ordered out of a catalog without any prior knowledge of the debates around Derrida, is in fact more consistent with her position in the US academic field than she has acknowledged. At the turn of the 1960s–1970s, her critical stance—linked to her experience of being a woman born in colonial India who ended up working in the West—could not result in a direct challenge of a long-established literary tradition, the main texts of which had been written by male European writers. On the other hand, promoting new readings of old texts, based on a slightly heretical yet legitimate reference such as a rising French

philosopher, allowed her to call existing hierarchies into question. Derrida's position in France was similar to Spivak's in the USA (he was a Jew born in colonial Algeria and trained in French elite schools; his capacity to challenge the intellectual legitimacies was linked to his being both an insider and an outsider); moreover, his method of deconstruction was a tool that feminist and postcolonial scholars could use functionally to read academic canons against the grain and, addressing their gaps and silences, to carve a space for those who had been kept at their margins.

Spivak's contacts with France during the 1970s were shaped in this context of a slow but steady elaboration of her own critical thinking. They were mediated by scholars who were at the interface of Europe and North America, such as Helene Cixous, later Anne-Emmanuelle Berger, and, more significantly, Luce Irigaray, to whom Spivak has long been close. These scholars had one foot in the USA and another in the most radical positions of the post-1968 French academic structure (especially at the University Paris 8, which was founded by Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, among others). In addition, they all had a common interest in fresh perspectives in feminism, premised on a hybridization of literary studies, psychoanalysis, and philosophy. Spivak also collaborated with a new generation of innovative philosophers who had gathered around Derrida (Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Sarah Kofman, Jean-Luc Nancy, etc.), she published with them (in French), and was associated with the work they did at the Cerisy Meetings, a renowned annual gathering of scholars and intellectuals (Spivak 1971). Obviously, it was not Spivak's reception as such that was at stake because, although a promising scholar and translator, she was still a young academic teaching in a remote Midwestern university, whose connections to France were primarily defined by the authoritative figure of Derrida. As a matter of fact, in terms of human sciences and humanities, France was in a dominant position and was exporting its ideas to the USA much more than the other way round. With the rise of postmodernism, French theories became hegemonic in some parts of US academia. In this context, though Spivak was a recognized student of continental philosophy, her first publications did not spread beyond erudite circles.

The situation gradually changed in the 1980s, when Spivak became the tenured Mellon Professor of English Literature at the University of

Pittsburgh and published some of the articles and books that would eventually make her a key figure in gender/postcolonial studies. “French Feminism in an international Frame,” “Can the Subaltern Speak?” and *In Other Worlds* were decisive, among other works, in her early reception among French-speaking academics. Yet an analysis of quotations from Spivak shows that they come almost exclusively from scholars located in Canada and the USA.<sup>2</sup> Gerard Defaux, for instance, a specialist of French literature who got his PhD in Paris but went to teach at Johns Hopkins from 1981 on, was one of the first to consistently refer to Spivak. Accordingly, scholars from only four North American universities (Yale, California, Montreal, and Quebec) account for most of the references in French in the 1980s.

Taking a detailed look shows that Spivak was originally read either by colleagues instrumental in the dissemination of French Theory in the USA or by those involved in a new reading of the French canon in the light of postcolonial studies—two partially complementary trends that took place at a moment of intellectual upheaval. At the turn of the 1980s–1990s, US departments of French Language and Literature were facing a crisis that had begun a decade earlier with the mounting pressure on universities to be financially accountable. In this new “economy of knowledge” in which the cost of enrollment had steadily increased, students shunned the old disciplines, such as the Romance languages, which were deemed unrewarding for a future career. At the same time, US universities and colleges were experiencing a completely different set of changes; as US society embraced its multicultural identity, the National Endowment for Humanities officially asked the humanities to contribute to this new idea of citizenship and to mediate across cultures. In a context of academic democratization, with students from minority groups now entering higher education, classical departments had to reinvent their missions almost from scratch. Some departments of French Studies, especially at major universities, set up new curricula where texts by (North) African and Caribbean authors, male as well as female, were central. They embraced the diversity of a disseminated postimperial literature and began questioning the divide between *littérature française* and *littérature francophone* (that is to say not written by French nationals) that was still informing literary studies in France. In this context, Spivak quite naturally



became a major reference for French studies in the USA; her call to deconstruct texts in a Derridean way and her articles on Third World women authors inspired some scholars of French studies in North America, whose academic interests could no longer be limited to refined Parisian writers. Yet, as we will argue later, this also explains why her reception in France was significantly delayed. Despite attempts to better reflect the richness of the literature written in French, literary studies there remained structured by a national viewpoint ill suited to groundbreaking postcolonial/feminist readings. Moreover, in the USA these radical trends developed in departments of elite universities—most of them Ivy League—whereas in France such approaches, when they captured any attention at all, were known in intellectually innovative but peripheral universities, such as Paris 8 Saint-Denis or Paris 10-Nanterre, which had been pushed to the fringes of the Parisian suburbs and lacked influence and financial resources.

Paradoxically, then, Spivak, who had acquired global intellectual fame by the end of the 1990s, was practically unknown in France, save for the few scholars who worked in the same theoretical vein. Lack of translation, in a country where reading foreign languages was sometimes still perceived as an oddity, also accounts for this late reception. Indeed, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” was not translated for the first time until 1999, fourteen years after it first appeared in *Wedge*. For reasons that will be dealt with later, the title chosen (“Les Subalternes peuvent-ils parler?”) was not uncontroversial. The translator, Mamadou Diouf, is very much in line with the scholars who had thus far tried to introduce Spivak (Diouf 1999). A Senegalese historian, he had obtained his PhD in Paris in 1980 before returning to teach and conduct research in Africa until 1999, when he was hired by the University of Michigan. Here again, Diouf is both an outsider and an insider in France and has had strong connections with the academic world in the USA. Equally interesting are his motivations to translate Spivak; they originate in a slightly less-known aspect of her writing, namely her engagement with the historiography of subaltern studies. Diouf’s main goal was to translate and introduce not only Spivak (and, we should add, not mainly as a literary specialist) but also the whole group of subaltern historians who, under the guidance of Ranajit Guha, had been redefining what could be a history of colonial

people written from below. In his introduction, Diouf makes clear that his interest for his Indian colleagues stems from the possibility of adapting their historical insights to gain fresh perspectives on African history. Several decades after African intellectuals had begun to discuss colonial historians (Diouf repeatedly refers to Cheikh Anta Diop), history written from an African viewpoint was still needed, he argues, along the same lines that subalterns had chosen for India (see also Mudimbe 1994). As for Spivak, Diouf introduces her as a proponent of a “counter-history” that challenges the assumptions of European-style historiography.

After this first translation, the name of Spivak gradually became more familiar to French readers, along with growing recognition of postcolonial studies, which had started at the turn of the 1990s–2000s. Yet her reception remained slow and often did not go beyond fragmentary indications of the main themes of her writing. For instance, in 1999, in one of the very first books published on the question, Jean-Marc Moura quoted Spivak only once and referred solely to *In Other Worlds*, written in 1987 (Moura 1999). When doing so, he stressed the meaningful link between gender, postcolonial, and literary studies, but did not elaborate further on what Spivak had specifically brought to the topic.

In the same years, another important group of scholars, who so far had not been involved except for the early work of Roland Lardinois (Lardinois 1988), began to play a key role: the Indologists, most of them researchers working at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) or the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). In a 2000 issue of *L'Homme*, the journal founded by Claude Lévi-Strauss, they translated and published a series of texts written by seven major Indian intellectuals and analyzed the contribution of the “Indian intellectual diaspora” to some historical and political debates. Veronique Bénéï and Jacky Assayag, as well as Jacques Pouchepadass, referred several times to Spivak (Assayag and Bénéï 2000). They introduced her as a theoretician of gender and postcolonial studies through her contribution to the field of literary studies and her translation of Derrida. They stressed the role she had had in the legitimation of subaltern studies in the USA after the introduction she had written to a selected volume of the group with Edward Said. Finally, they provided brief biographical information and mentioned her position as professor at Columbia University, a sign that

she was now considered a major Indian intellectual. Yet Bénéï and Assayag did not include any of her texts among the seven they had selected, with Spivak being still in the awkward position of a renowned theoretician whose texts, all but one, were unavailable in French.

Starting in the mid-2000s, two publishing houses therefore launched several translations of Spivak. Under the supervision of Christophe Guias at Payot & Rivages, Françoise Bouillot translated *The Global State* (written with Judith Butler) in 2007 (republished in 2009), *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* in 2009, as well as *Nationalism and the Imagination* in 2011. At Éditions Amsterdam, Jérôme Vidal translated and published a new version of “Can the Subaltern speak?” in 2009. All of them had a political background that accounted for their interest in Spivak. Françoise Bouillot, herself a writer who had had connections with the USA since the 1980s, set about translating Spivak as both she and Christophe Guias believed that US postcolonial thinking could help to put new questions on the agenda of the Left, where questions of “class” had long impeded reflection on inequalities based on “race.” Moreover, Éditions Payot, founded in 1912, was a long-established scholarly publishing house in the field of human sciences and had published numerous translations. The decision to introduce Spivak, among other important postcolonial theoreticians, to French readers was in line with its past choices, and was strategically important in a context where the market of publications in human sciences was facing a deep financial crisis. Éditions Amsterdam, on the other hand, was more recent. It had been founded in 2003 with the aim of publishing theoretical/political texts that had no place in mainstream publishing houses (its very name alludes to the city where dissent philosophers of the seventeenth century had found shelter). Vidal, who was also editing the influential *Revue internationale des livres et des idées*, translated “Can the Subaltern speak?” under a new title, “Les Subalternes peuvent-elles parler?”, which sparked controversy; as the text focused on women subalterns, he chose to use the feminine pronoun (“elles”), whereas Diouf had opted for the masculine/general pronoun “ils,” considering that the question in the title alluded to the collective situation of subalterns, as Guha and other historians had defined it. Vidal had actually had a different idea in mind than the historian Diouf ten years earlier. His goal was to introduce Spivak into the political debate,

especially her idea of “strategic essentialism,” which, he believed, could help to gain a better understanding of questions raised by recent political events.

Indeed the reception of Spivak, which had been slowly maturing since the early 2000s, seemed to finally gain momentum in the tense political context of 2005. During several weeks in October and November, riots erupted in suburbs predominantly inhabited by migrants of postcolonial descent, leading the government to declare a state of emergency. A few months earlier, parliament had approved a law that called for a reappraisal of the so-called “positive side of French colonization.” This outraged a large part of civil society and led left-wing intellectuals and political activists to launch a debate on the erasure of colonization from French history. A group called the Indigènes of the Republic, created that very same year, became the emblematic and controversial symbol of the movement. For the first time in decades, the question of the memory of colonization and the current situation of French citizens who were linked, in one way or another, to the late colonial Empire, became central. Historians and sociologists had somehow paved the way for such recognition, as many innovative works in social history had already reassessed the problem in the previous years. In 2005, *La Fracture coloniale* (the colonial split), edited by three historians, went beyond the academic realm and clearly engaged with political issues (Bancel et al. 2005). Yet in all these works, US postcolonial studies, those of Spivak among them, were at best marginal references and most of the time conspicuously absent.

After 2005, on the other hand, importing postcolonial studies was seen as a way of strengthening political and intellectual reflection (Bhabha, Said, and Chakrabarty were also translated or retranslated in these years). Social scientists, some belonging to major institutions, published landmark books on postcolonial thinking—even though they were not all positive in their appraisal of it (Smouts 2007; Amselle 2008). Several reviews at the interface of the political and intellectual fields had special issues on the question. *Mouvements* hinted at a “The postcolonial turn, French style” (Cohen et al. 2007). The main title of *Labyrinthe* openly asked “Do we have to be Postcolonial?,” while *Multitude* discussed “Can the Subaltern speak?” as well as Spivak’s activity as a translator (Montag 2006). *Herodote* and *Esprit*, two well-established journals, also tackled the

issue extensively (Lacoste 2006). Yet except for *Multitude*, most of the articles either did not refer to Spivak or did so in rather general terms. In *Esprit*, for instance, Marc-Olivier Padis and Philippe Roussin introduced Spivak as a “representative of the new analytical trend of Indian literature” with no further comments (Padis and Roussin 2006). Likewise, Achille Mbembe, even though his interview in the same issue of *Esprit* is one of the most exhaustive and thought-provoking texts, only mentioned Spivak once and characterized her as a “key figure of the second period” of postcolonial studies owing to the highly theoretical nature of her writings (Mbembe et al. 2006). The longest account was to be found in an article by Bayart and Bertrand, but this was rather critical. According to them, Spivak had developed an abstract view of colonialism that barely fitted any empirical analysis of the concrete historical situations. Her concepts did not help to grasp the various trends in and the recent transformations of imperial politics, which, Bayart and Bertrand assumed, was precisely the kind of questions that the French debate should tackle (2006).

The phase of reception triggered by the debates after the riots and the translations at Payot and Amsterdam gave rise to the situation described at the beginning of this chapter; Spivak was now a well-identified thinker in the intellectual landscape but the content of her thinking had barely begun to infuse the discussion outside some very specific circles. In November 2014, she was awarded Doctor *Honoris Causa* at the University Paris 8. Statistics from the *Web of Science* accordingly show that the scholars who refer to her come mostly from three institutions: Paris 8, Paris 10, and the CNRS (most of them in philosophy, literary, or gender studies). Many conferences or seminars in which she participated since 2005 have revolved around these institutions, as well as the EHESS, the École Normale Supérieure and the Collège International de Philosophie (founded by Derrida). Through this latter institution, she has had enduring contacts with scholars who had been precociously exploring postcolonial perspectives (such as Rada Ivekovic, Kadya Tall, and Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga, who invited her to deliver a talk on the epistemologies of the South in November 2015), but also with left-wing intellectuals with whom she shares a Marxist commitment (such as Étienne Balibar

in 2005). The Collège was also instrumental in the dissemination and creative reassessment of her work; Seloua Boulbina, a Paris-based scholar of Algerian origins who organized a seminar there on postcolonial theories, clearly alluded to Spivak when she published her *Les Arabes peuvent-ils parler?* (Can the Arabs speak?) (Boulbina 2011). More recently, young scholars from the École Normale Supérieure of Lyon created the Collectif Write Back, and published a book in which Spivak's influence was decisive (2013).

A brief analysis of the institutions and the scholars with whom Spivak has collaborated in the past decades shows two specific patterns: those who teach or do research in mainstream disciplines (literature or philosophy) often do so at radical universities; those who belong to central institutions (CNRS, EHESS) are also known for their political commitment and/or their unorthodox academic concerns. Many have connections (by birth or scholarly interest) with the non-Western worlds. Their position can somehow be compared to Spivak's; in the USA, she is considered a radical intellectual but teaches at a major university. Yet this is also a significant difference that may explain why Spivak's reception has so far been rather limited; with her global fame linked to a dominant US academic institution, she has been introduced in France by scholars who belong to less central universities. Her influence, then, has not been significant beyond these narrow circles. At the time of writing this chapter, in 2018, no analytical introduction or doctoral thesis on her work was available in French. Since 2009, only eight PhD dissertations have explicitly referred to her as one of their main sources of theoretical influence (six in literature, one in literature and politics, and one in art).<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the discussion triggered by the importing of postcolonial studies has revealed the many predicaments and problems of adapting theories originally elaborated in the British-US context to a French situation where (post)imperial politics have had their own historical trajectory. It is to this set of questions that the chapter will now turn. In doing so, it will discuss some general hypotheses on why the acclimation of Spivak and postcolonial theories in general has been so complex in France.

## Spivak and the Diffusion of Postcolonial Studies in France

When the reception of the main theoreticians of postcolonial studies finally gained momentum in France, in the 2000s, it became commonplace to lament the French exception; unlike its neighbors—where Spivak, Said, or Bhabha are supposed to have influenced the debates from the late 1980s on—France is said to have long resisted a questioning that, owing to its imperial past, it should have paid attention to much earlier. Is such characterization accurate and, granting that it is, at least partially, can we try to account for Spivak's reception in the light of some structural/historical factors specific to France?

First of all, one should note that the idea that France has long been reluctant to submit to postcolonial questionings must be treated carefully. Several theoretical/political debates actually took place from the 1960s on, during and after the Algerian war—as the names of Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, or Anouar Abdelmalek, among many others, will testify. Paradoxically, this early discussion may account for the delayed interest of the French in the US debates. In the 1980s, Said or Spivak seemed to raise questions that, to a French ear, had been solved two decades earlier (Roussillon 1990). One could even go one step further. After the end of the French colonial empire, the question of “scientific decolonization” was addressed in terms more or less opposite to those that came to define US postcolonial studies (Sibeud 2011). In France the postcolonial origins of the many Arab and African researchers who were shaping intellectual life was not taken into consideration as such, but a broad consensus was reached to promote an overall *aggiornamento* of the old colonial knowledge in order to promote fresh perspectives on the non-Western worlds. To put it plainly, there was a scientific revolution after the decolonization, but it was kept distinct from political events: postcolonial intellectuals took a position as scholars much more than as Africans, Arabs, or Asians. In the USA, on the other hand, politics and knowledge have been two sides of the same coin—with postcolonial scholars openly advocating a form of identity politics and intervening in academic debates as African, Arab, or Asian intellectuals. In a way, the



stance Spivak promoted was running contrary, for her French readers, to what had been the political/scientific apparatus set up after the collapse of French colonial rule.

Another explanation of the complex reception of postcolonial studies in France is to be found in the importance of Marxism in the academic and scientific fields—but accounts here are often contradictory. Some scholars have pointed to the declining importance of Marxism in the past decades, noting that subaltern and a significant part of postcolonial studies are precisely premised on a Gramscian and neo-Marxist line (Zancarini-Fournel 2012). Yet others have criticized these very theoreticians, especially Spivak, for having diluted the classical Marxist analysis in the murky waters of postmodernism (Amselle 2008). Depending on the authors, then, Spivak appears either too Marxist at a time when Marxism was on the verge of collapsing, or too postmodern in a country where the social and economic perspectives have retained a strong legitimacy. What is certain is that her reception has to do with the metamorphosis of Marxism in the last quarter of the twentieth century and the many twists she has given to its basic concepts and questionings. Spivak has promoted many non-orthodox readings of Marx and has dismissed claims to categorize her as a Marxist as well as a non- or post-Marxist author—therefore making it complicated to import a thinker almost impossible to classify with regard to such a central trend of French intellectual life. Indeed, if the definitive version of her most famous text has been published in a book on the Marxist interpretation of culture (Spivak 1988), her work remains conspicuously critical of the gendered and ethnocentric biases of the Marxist tradition.

Furthermore, not only Marxism but also the whole theoretical apparatus of postcolonial studies has raised questions in France and has likely impeded their recognition. Postcolonial thinkers have developed a strong critique of the West, but this critique is paradoxically based on some prominent Western thinkers (Gidanki 2004): Bhabha with Lacan, Said with Foucault, Chakrabarty with Marx/Heidegger, and, of course, Spivak with (among others) Derrida. This is in itself not a problem. The West is not monolithic, and many European and North American scholars have long developed rebuttals of Western epistemological systems. In this respect, the aforementioned Indian and Arab authors only discussed, and



borrowed from, European scholars who shared their dissatisfaction with the current Eurocentric system of knowledge. Yet this situation has given rise to at least two types of critique. The first deals with the positive side of the postcolonial project, whereby deconstructing Western texts and knowledge (as Spivak does) is one thing, but leaves unresolved the question of what actual non-Western knowledge could consist of. With no clear answer, some of the most vocal advocates of the epistemic provincialization of Europe eventually had to admit that the Western theories could not be bypassed that easily (Chakrabarty 2007). Many a French reader consequently saw with skepticism such an attempt to replace Western epistemologies, which was not only based on the theories of this very West, but also seemed to be ultimately aporetic.

Moreover, many have expressed their uneasiness with the way Spivak has dealt with the French references on which her work is premised. As stated earlier, she has had contacts with the French academic world from the early 1970s on, especially with philosophers and scholars working in the field of gender studies. These contacts have been fundamental to elaborating thinking that, from Deleuze to Derrida and several other authors, has extensively drawn its inspiration from contemporary French thinkers. Yet Spivak has also been extremely critical of these very thinkers. “French Feminism in an International Frame” (1981), for instance, is a virulent attack on what Spivak sees as the shortcomings of a typically Western brand of feminism. For her French colleagues, though, the article has been considered a form of “friendly fire” against theoreticians with whom she shares many political and intellectual concerns. What we could call her “Third-Worldist” turn in the 1980s—a time when she began to emphasize her Indian origins, publicly wore saris, and redefined her scholarly interests to integrate more systematically non-Western women’s texts—occurred at the expense of some of her former French connections, with Spivak distancing herself from the feminist milieu. This has been detrimental to her reception in France for two complementary reasons. In terms of gender differences, first, as women thinkers tend to be less translated than men (only 15 to 18 percent of the translations in social and human sciences between English and French have a female author, see Sapiro 2018), Spivak could not rely on one of the few scholarly networks that was fully aware of the problem. Besides, unlike Edward

Said who had managed to strike a balance between *Orientalism*'s harsh stance against the French literary canon and his universalist commitment to the liberating power of classical culture and humanism, Spivak remained in the awkward position of having repudiated a tradition from which she had previously extensively borrowed. With no clear indication of how this contradiction should be solved, her work has been variously dubbed (post-)Marxist, (post)feminist, deconstructionist, and of course postmodernist (a label still somehow anathema in France), which shows how unclear her place is with regard to the structuring trends and patterns of intellectual life in France.

## Conclusion

It would be misleading, however, to account for the slow reception of Spivak and postcolonial thinkers only in terms of their relative mismatch with the theoretical requirements of the French academic field. To a great extent, this is also a result of the global situation shaped by the end of the Cold War and changing hierarchies among the dominating intellectual traditions. Until the end of the 1980s, France could still be considered a major intellectual and scientific player, a situation that changed in the subsequent context of globalization, where the supremacy of the USA and the English language was reinforced and became practically unchallenged. Whereas it had traditionally been exporting its ideas and references, France was now translating and borrowing much more significantly from the English-speaking world; this led to a complex and uneven process of translation, where the hegemony of English was both reinforced and challenged (Sapiro 2008; Popa and Sapiro 2008). While other countries had been more precociously influenced by the Anglo-US world (including such a central scientific tradition as the German one), French academia was suddenly forced to open up to global debates it had more or less dismissed. It often proved problematic to adjust, for many questions appeared displaced or redundant in the local intellectual life. Such was especially the case of postcolonial studies, with the French considering that they had already tackled similar issues in the 1960s and 1970s. This general reluctance to open up to a new brand of postcolonial thought

combined with Spivak's specific reception in France, which took place among institutions and scholars who, as mentioned earlier, did not match her central position in the USA. These trends reinforced each other. A major theoretician in the USA, Spivak remained a peripheral figure on a French intellectual scene that has tended to assume that postcolonial studies had nothing really new to offer.

## Notes

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2. Data collected from the *Web of Science*.
3. According to the abstract available in *Répertoire National des Thèses*.

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