

International political sociology

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Outline

- International political sociology (IPS): assumptions
- The “practice turn”
- Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu: field, capital, and habitus

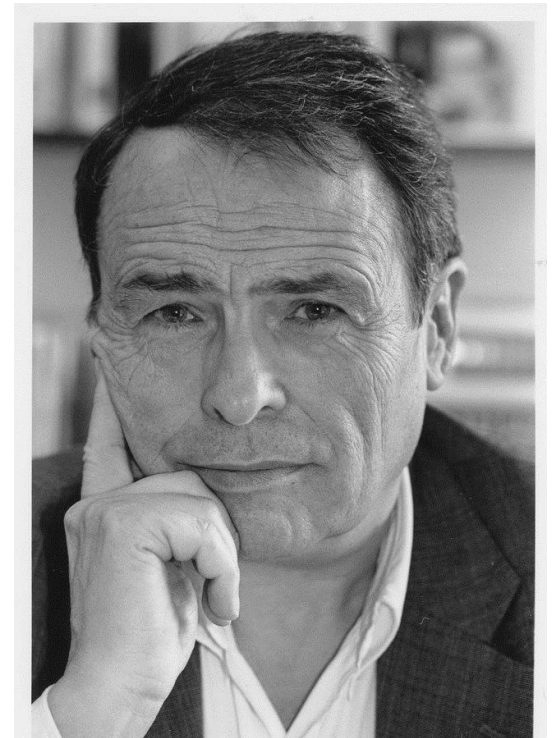
IPS: assumptions

- IPS shares **constructivist background** with Copenhagen school and CSS.
- Both security and insecurity are products of **an (in)securitization** which consists both of discursive and non-discursive processes.
- **Non-discursive processes:** technologies, routines and practices etc.

→ **The central questions of the IPS:** who does securitize what, under what conditions, against whom, and with what consequences?

IPS: background

- The IPS emerged during 1990s; often related to “**Paris school**” which draws on sociology of **Pierre Bourdieu (1930 - 2002)**.
- Bourdieu attempted to overcome distinction between individualism and structuralism.



IPS: the “practice turn”

- The IPS is a part of the “**practice turn**” in IR → focus on **what actors do and why** (Emmanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot).
- Investigates **practical, common-sense knowledge** rather than theoretical knowledge.
- Conceptual differentiation: **behavior, action, practice.**
- **Behavior:** material dimension of “doing”.
- **Action:** adds meaning to the behavior.
- **Practice:** embeds action within social organized context.

IPS: the “practice turn”

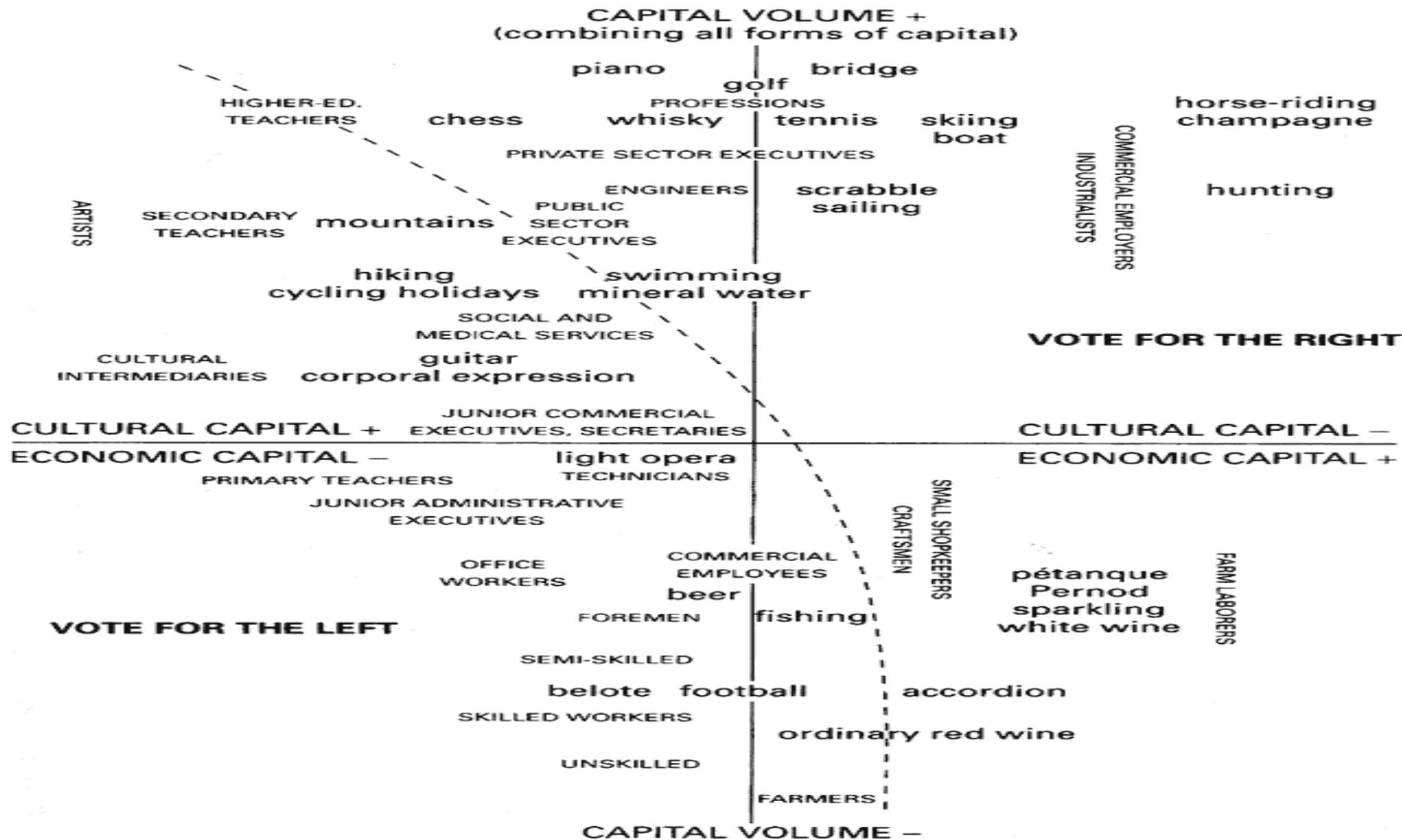


Bourdieu: field

- **Field:** a relatively autonomous, hierarchically organized social space within which transactions, interactions, events etc. in a particular sphere of social life take place.
- Analogy: a “sports field” or a chess board.
- There are **different kinds of fields:** political, military, organized crime, academia, art, medical, bureaucratic, security experts etc.
- Each field operates according to its **own logic (nomos)**.

Bourdieu: field

- Actors compete among themselves according to the field's rules for specific benefits associated with the field.
- There are social **positions** given by **power-differentials** of actors within the field.
- The movement of actors between the positions is called (life) **trajectory**.
- There is a **hierarchy of fields**: most fields subordinated to the field of power and class relations (sometimes called field of the fields).



Bourdieu: capital

- The structure of the social world is conditioned by the distribution of various forms of capital.
- **Capital:** an accumulated labor that enables actors to influence their position and position of others within a given field.
- **Economic capital:** an accumulation of money, assets, property rights.
- **Cultural capital:** an accumulation of knowledge, abilities, qualifications etc.
- **Social capital:** an accumulation of social ties to potential resources.
- **Symbolic capital:** an accumulation of prestige, honor, recognition etc.

Bourdieu: habitus

- **Habitus:** an embodiment and internalization of the social world which structures how the social world is perceived and experienced and is structured by objective structures of the social world which are not controlled by the actor.
- Habitus is **the link** between the private experience of the world (subjective) and the social world itself (objective).
- Habitus consists of **dispositions** that define habitual state, tendencies, and inclinations of an actor.
- Dispositions (and consequently habitus) are formed by the actor's encounters of the objective conditions of the social world.

Bourdieu: habitus

- **Preference vs. dispositions:** “real” preferences might be hidden vs. dispositions (do not have to correspond with preferences) are performed.
- The continuous performance of dispositions, often in form of practices, situates actor within a field.
- Field, capital, and habitus are interdependent.
- → Bourdieu: we should **research both subjective** (habitus) as well as **objective** (field); see Pouliot “subjectivism”.

"objective"

**SOCIAL
STRUCTURE**

*objective structures tend to
produce structured
subjective dispositions that
produce structured
actions which, in turn,
tend to reproduce
objective structure.*

Practice

"subjective"

HABITUS

"dispositions"

transformations

subtle/clumsy
adroit/laborious
lively/slow

gender
categories

unique/ordinary
novel/routine
different/ordinary

**primitive
classifications**

light/heavy

male/female

rare/common

deep structure

dominant/dominated

Conclusions

- IPS shares constructivist background with Copenhagen and Aberystwyth schools (CSS).
- Transdisciplinary
- Blurs borders between international and domestic, strategic and everyday...

- Many actors compete for their definition of (in)security within various fields.
- (In)securitization moves have roots in the practices and routines → goal is to uncover and disrupt those “regimes of truth”.