

## **The Anthem Companion to Pierre Bourdieu, edited by Derek Robbins**

Of all French sociologists, Bourdieu is the most widely translated and renowned internationally. The concepts that he developed have been used by researchers in many different parts of the world. Given that most of Bourdieu's works focused on France, the question 'how well does Bourdieu travel' has often been asked. However, as Derek Robbins reminds us, Bourdieu did not believe in the universality of his, or others' theories. Instead, he advocated reflexivity: reflexivity to question one's own positionality as a researcher, and to critically examine the spatial and temporal circumstances of the production of theory – rather than accepting and seeking to apply it as a common or universal discourse.

*The Anthem Companion to Pierre Bourdieu* is edited by Derek Robbins, a leading expert on Bourdieu's work, with a particular interest in the transnational transfer of social science concepts. This volume reflects Robbins' focus on how Bourdieu's work is communicated and used beyond the French-speaking world. In the tradition of the collection, it combines a comprehensive overview of Bourdieu's thought with original reflections and case studies illustrating, in this case, the international deployment of Bourdieu's thought and how researchers worldwide have engaged reflexively with his work. The book does assume prior knowledge of Bourdieu's work. It will be of interest to advanced undergraduates and beyond.

Derek Robbins specifically sought contributions from scholars from different continents, including Europe, Asia and Latin America. These scholars were asked to reflect on the relevance of Bourdieu in their own national contexts and to analyse their own use of Bourdieu's theories reflexively. The resulting collection is eclectic, reflecting perhaps the non-prescriptive approach favoured by Bourdieu. Taken together, they illustrate the many ways in which Bourdieu's works can indeed 'travel' and lend themselves to multiple interpretations and re-interpretations.

In his introduction, Derek Robbins offers a socio-genetic analysis of Bourdieu's work, which demonstrates very convincingly the importance of understanding the context of theory production. Each contribution is then carefully contextualised and critically evaluated. In Chapter 2, Simon Susen offers an analysis of reflexivity and the challenges it represents for sociologists. His unpacking of the concept reveals twelve dimensions and explores the tensions within them that require particular attention. Frédéric Vanderberghe (Chapter 3) examines Archer and Lahire as post-Bourdieuian researchers, who, rather than applying Bourdieu's categories, have deconstructed these categories 'from within' and thus expanded rather than negated their heuristic possibilities. Chapter 4 is also written by Derek Robbins and focuses on Bourdieu's intellectual trajectory, examining tensions such as Bourdieu's desire to develop and shape an international field of sociology without imposing symbolic violence, and his growing commitment to the cause of the disadvantaged in France. Chapter 5, by Marco Santoro and Andrea Gallelli, reports on a sophisticated bibliometric analysis that examined the circulation of Bourdieu in Europe. Their network analysis of 'brokers' makes visible networks of affinity between countries and the uneven circulation of Bourdieusian terms and themes across Europe. The next four chapters examine specific national contexts. Based on the example of a movement of 'deoccupation' of car factories in India, Sheena Jain (Chapter 6) explores how Bourdieu's emphasis on practice opens up better ways of understanding social realities that are not 'readable' through existing theories such as, in this case, theories on class consciousness raising. Chapter 7 by Shinichi Aizawa and Naoki Iso provides insights into the social context which influenced the reception of Bourdieu in Japan, explaining researchers' selective focus on cultural reproduction: they argue that attempts to analyse Japanese society through a Bourdieusian lens were disrupted by

the relatively egalitarian distribution of cultural capital through the Japanese schooling system. In Chapter 8, Yang Yang and Xuanyang Gao read post-reform China through a Bourdieusian lens, focusing on the emergence of new dominating classes in China, the specificities of its school system and the enduring importance of political capital. The final chapter by María Luisa Méndez reflects on work undertaken by an international team focused on the local - researching hysteresis in the Chilean middle classes - and highlights issues related to the transfer of concepts as well as to the dual positioning of researchers within a national and an international field.

Each in a different way, the chapters in the collection illustrate Derek Robbin's argument that Bourdieu's and other intellectual works should not be treated as predefined, universal theories disconnected and independent from the specific context in which they were produced; and that social scientists should not lose sight of 'the articulation of the particular'. Each illustrates the heuristic potential of reflexivity in relation to individual positionality and context, as well as in relation to disciplinary discourses and the values of different academic communities. As such, undoubtedly this original and inspiring collection will be of particular interest to scholars of comparative education.