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PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT AND ITS EXISTENTIAL BASIS: THE SOCIOLOGIES OF PHILOSOPHY OF RANDALL COLLINS AND PIERRE BOURDIEU[1]

"While it is true that sociology must deal with 'pauperism, prostitution, and plumbing,' it is all the more true that sociology must take part in explaining the highest, widest, and deepest reaches of the human mind." (Albion W. Small, 1925).[2]

Abstract

The sociology of philosophy is a relatively new discipline aiming to link philosophical thought to the social conditions from which it has emerged. This article examines how two of the discipline's main representatives, Randall Collins and Pierre Bourdieu, understand the relationship between social conditions and philosophical thought in their main relevant works, to so provide a more precise definition of the term 'social conditions'/'social factors.' Basic differences between Bourdieu's and Collins's approaches are considered, as are the consequences of these differences for how much autonomy each author is prepared to ascribe to what they call, respectively, the 'philosophical field' and 'attention space.' The argument is made that the conceptual innovations built into both of these terms represent a clear step forward from Karl Mannheim's overly vague notion of 'existentially connected knowledge.' Ultimately, it is nevertheless Bourdieu's explanatory model that is shown to be the more powerful one of the two.

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1. This paper is largely based on my doctoral dissertation Filosofisociologi – ett sociologiskt perspektiv på filosofiskt tänkande [The Sociology of Philosophy – A Sociological Perspective on Philosophical Thought] (Lund: Lund Univ. Press, 2007).The first draft of this article was written for a symposium on philosophical cultures held in Helsinki, Finland, in April 2008. Had it been conceived today, a discussion of Neil Gross' important study, Richard Rorty: The Making of an American Philosopher (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press), would certainly have had to be included in it. In this study, Gross introduces his theory of "intellectual self-concepts," which he juxtaposes with both Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy. Even if it has not yet managed to influence research in the field to a comparable extent, Gross' theory can rightly be characterized as a "challenger paradigm" within the discipline that deserves to be discussed side by side with both Collins's and Bourdieu's work in the area (Carl-Göran Heidegren, Henrik Lundberg, "Towards a Sociology of Philosophy," Acta Sociologica 53 (2010): 1-18.

2 Review of Max Scheler's Versuche zu einer Sociologie des Wissens, The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1925), pp. 262-264.

1. Introduction

Sociology of philosophy is a relatively new discipline within sociology,
aiming to link philosophical thought to the social conditions from which it has
emerged. Before long, however, the scientific orientation that this ambition
means for the discipline leads to the question what exactly is meant by the ref-
erence to 'social conditions.' In this article, I examine how two of the disci-
pline's main representatives, Randall Collins (born 1941) and Pierre Bourdieu
(1930-2002), understand the relationship between social conditions and philo-
sophical thought in their main works on the subject. The general aim in this
exercise is to provide a more precise definition of the notoriously vague no-
tion of 'social conditions'/ 'social factors.' Such a closer definition is neces-
sary for the sociology of philosophy if it is to be capable of proposing detailed
explanations for philosophical changes, among other things. In other words,
the sociology of philosophy must not content itself with merely drawing some
general parallels between society and culture on the one hand and knowledge
and thought on the other hand. The article also shows how the conceptual in-
novations by Bourdieu and Collins, put forward through their terminology of
the 'philosophical field' (Bourdieu) and the 'attention space' (Collins), repre-
sent a clear step forward from Karl Mannheim's overly vague notion of 'exis-
tentially connected knowledge' [seinsverbundenes Wissen]. Basic differences
between Bourdieu's and Collins's approaches, and the consequences that the-
se differences have for how much autonomy each author is prepared to ascribe
to the philosophical field /attention space, will then be considered in closer de-
tail. Finally, the argument will be made for the superiority of Bourdieu's ex-
planatory model compared to that of Collins's, based on its ability to build on
the strengths of both Mannheim's and Collins's work in the area while avoid-
ing the pitfalls of each.

Philosophical cultures, the theme of this special issue, are one of the social
factors influencing philosophical thinking. As will become clear from what
follows, the models put forward by Bourdieu and Collins differ from each
other in the extent to which they each, in principle at least, allow for the influ-
ence of a certain culture on philosophical thought. Before I enter into this dis-
cussion, however, a few more general observations on the subject of the soci-
ology of philosophy are in order.

The sociology of philosophy is a sub-discipline within the broader field of
sociology of knowledge. Both Collins and Bourdieu are heavily influenced by
the classical tradition of the sociology of knowledge, which can be traced back
to Émile Durkheim and Karl Mannheim. They both make use of inherited
conceptual tools devised already by their predecessors working within that
tradition. Collins, for instance, borrows Durkheim's notion of collective effer-
vescence for his sociology of philosophy, and, though he never openly
acknowledged his theoretical indebtedness to Mannheim, the latter's inspira-
tion is clearly in evidence in the work of Bourdieu. Just like Mannheim, Bour-

dieu, for example, attached much importance to the idea that different groups compete with one another for a position from which to expand the official interpretation of reality.

Although Collins and Bourdieu might be considered as the foremost among those representing the new discipline of the sociology of philosophy, there are several others who deserve to be mentioned, too. The German philosophers Martin Kusch (1995) and Klaus Christian Köhnke (1991), for example, have both made important contributions to the development of the field.[3] The former is also the editor of the major anthology The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge (2000) that brings together work by several notable scholars specializing in the area, such as David Bloor, Randall Collins, and Cristina Chimisso among others. Yet, what makes Collins's and Bourdieu's work of special interest in the area is that their sociologies of philosophy form part of already established research traditions. They have also used their theories, like interaction ritual theory (Collins) and field theory (Bourdieu), for purposes other than those of the sociology of philosophy. Compared to them, Kusch and Köhnke, for instance, are philosophers or historians of philosophy of a more straightforward kind; they are not interested, in the same way as Collins and Bourdieu, in contributing to the development of sociological theory. As already mentioned, moreover, Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy may also be understood as further developments of the classical tradition. However, even if directly inspired by Durkheim and Mannheim, they have each been able to avail themselves of a tool that the classics were lacking – the notion of, in this order, attention space and the philosophical field – helping their respective sociologies of philosophy to overcome some of the obstacles and shortcomings of the classical tradition.

2. Social Being/Thought

The general explanatory direction in the sociology of philosophy goes from social being to thought. That this should be so was suggested already by Marx in his famous preface to his Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859): "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."[4] The idea has later been refined and elaborated on, not least in Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy, but it still continues to provide one of the foundations of the sociology of knowledge. In one of the classic texts shaping the discipline, "Paradigm for the Sociology of Knowledge" from 1945, Robert K. Merton states that the common premise of all research within the field is that some

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3. See Martin Kusch, Psychologism: A Case Study in the Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge (London: Routledge, 1995); Martin Kusch, ed., The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge (Dordrecht, Boston, and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000); and Klaus Christian Köhnke, The Rise of Neo-Kantianism: German Academic Philosophy between Idealism and Positivism (Cambridge UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991).

4. "Es ist nicht das Bewußtsein der Menschen, das ihr Sein, sondern umgekehrt ihr gesellschaftliches Sein, das ihr Bewußtsein bestimmt" (Karl Marx, Zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie [MEW Bd. 13] (Berlin [DDR], Dietz Verlag, 1981), p. 9).

kind of determination exists between extra-theoretical social factors and thought:

A central point of agreement in all approaches to the sociology of knowledge is the thesis that thought has an existential basis insofar as it is not immanently determined and insofar as one or another of its aspects can be derived from extra-cognitive factors.[5]

Classical sociology of knowledge, as discussed by Merton in his article, suggests that theoretical thought can be referred to a social context insofar as it is not determined by an internal scientific line of development ("immanently determined"). Accordingly, Merton argues, it is possible to distinguish between knowledge that follows an internal theoretical line of development and knowledge that is conditioned by social and political circumstances. This distinction between external and internal factors, however, has been called into question since the publication of Merton's article.[6] To begin with, it seems difficult to maintain its validity when it concerns the study of the sociology of philosophy. In his introduction to The Sociology of Philosophies, Collins, for instance, has emphasized that his aim is not to study how philosophers are influenced by "non-intellectual motives" – that is, by Merton's "extra-cognitive factors." Rather, what he wants to explain is what intellectual motivation consist of. (As will become clear later on in this article, Collins considers intellectual motivation to basically involve an increase of emotional energy.) To differentiate intellectual motives from non-intellectual ones, Collins claims, would imply that thinking may occur independently of social causes and that philosophical truth is by necessity located beyond the social.[7] According to Collins, philosophical knowledge will emerge through competition within and between different groups of philosophers – and not in spite of that competition. In the same way, Bourdieu claims that philosophical knowledge, doxa, emerges as philosophers come to occupy rival positions within a field. There would in fact be no philosophy without a field where such rivals are putting their arguments and positions against each other. The real subject and explanatory principle of philosophical thought is thus the philosophical field/attention space, not some internal theoretical line of development that may sometimes come into contact with irrational social conditions.

Existentially Connected Knowledge

With his notion of existentially connected knowledge [seinsverbundene Wissen], Mannheim wanted to emphasize that all non-natural scientific knowledge is linked to social conditions. (As may perhaps be clear from

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5. Robert K. Merton 1973, "Paradigm for the Sociology of Knowledge," The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1973 [1945]), p. 13.

6. For a discussion of the distinction's relevance for both older and more recent types of research in the sociology of knowledge, see Charles Camic, and Neil Gross, "The New Sociology of Ideas," in Judith R. Blau, ed., The Blackwell Companion to Sociology, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 236-49.

7. Randall Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change (Cambridge MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2000), p. 7.

above, this notion shows an obvious Marxist influence). According to Mannheim, modern society is characterized by various rival groups fighting amongst themselves for ability to present "the official interpretation of reality" [öffentliche Auslegung des Seins].[8] Each group endeavors to construct reality according to its own basic conception of the world [Weltanschauung]. These projects Mannheim describes as being driven by "world aspiration" [Weltwollung], or the unconscious will to extend and consolidate one's world-view. The group-specific world aspiration manifests itself in the intellectual and artistic works created by the members of the group. It functions as a mediating link between group membership and, for example, the philosophy produced by a thinker. Group membership leads to a certain kind of world aspiration, which, in turn, broadly speaking leads to certain kind of thought. Mannheim's term for knowledge that expresses social aspirations is, precisely, 'existentially connected knowledge'. To this category of knowledge he considered to belong, among others, historical knowledge (the way in which researchers interpret and present history), political thought, and social and humanist knowledge. Natural science, on the other hand, developed according to its own dynamic: once certain basic conditions of its research process are met, natural science, according to Mannheim, can only follow its own course as if by design, immune to any influence of what Merton termed "extra-cognitive factors."

In his article "Die Bedeutung der Konkurrenz im Gebiete des Geistigen" [Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon), Mannheim went on to quite openly proclaim that all sociological, historical, and political knowledge was based on a quest for power and recognition.[9] Sociology and philosophy, in his view, were nothing but unconscious projections of the world aspirations of different groups. The official interpretation of reality, in his analysis, emerges not as a result of an intellectual endeavor to understand, but rather from a struggle to gain power. A crucial methodological error, Mannheim claims, is made when this political dimension of existentially connected knowledge is neglected.[10] One consequence of his view is, then, that no uniform sociological or philosophical knowledge about society, knowledge on which all groups could agree, is attainable.

Like Marx, Mannheim thus rejects the possibility that knowledge might be absolutely independent of social factors. At the same time, however, he fails to provide any closer account, in his published works at least, of how this claimed relationship between social being and knowledge looks like and how it operates. The notion of social connectedness only states that some determining relationship exists between social being and knowledge. Nevertheless, Mannheim was careful not to propose – as is sometimes done in Marxist stud-

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8. Karl Mannheim, "Die Bedeutung der Konkurrenz im Gebiete des Geistigen," in Wissenssoziologie: Auswahl aus dem Werk [Kurt H. Wolff, ed.] (Berlin: Luchterhand, 1964), p. 575.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 573.

10. Ibid., p. 592.

ies - that knowledge is in some way directly constituted by social factors. As he explained it in his Ideology and Utopia:

Here we do not mean by "determination" a mechanical cause–effect sequence: we leave the meaning of "determination" open, and only empirical investigations will show us how strict is the correlation between life-situation and thought-process, or what scope exists for variation in the correlation.[11]

One of those criticizing Mannheim for being too vague when defining the relationship between social being and knowledge was Merton. Mannheim's vagueness in this regard, Merton maintained, was a point of particular embarrassment, given that it was then embedded into the very core of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, leaving the whole idea that knowledge is connected to social being much too indeterminate.[12] In Merton's view, Mannheim should have provided a detailed theoretical explanation of how, exactly, knowledge is determined by social conditions. However, his notion of social connectedness was too broad for Merton to accept it as well; it included in its scope, he claimed, too many different kinds of intellectual products, ranging from popular wisdom to advanced theories of knowledge to be useful for its intended purpose. In Mannheim's conception, folk sayings and Kant's transcendentally deduced categories both appeared to be similarly determined by social conditions, and, as Merton's criticism went, subsuming all the various forms of knowledge under one and the same concept served only to make the notion more obscure, instead of clarifying the processes involved in the social conditioning of thought.[13]

This criticism undoubtedly has a point. What Merton misses, however, is that socially connected knowledge, for Mannheim, characteristically expresses social aspirations. All non-natural-scientific knowledge, according to him, has in common the fact that it is referable back to a struggle between different social groups competing to define social reality. Socially connected knowledge is functionally dependent on the group which represents it. Mannheim was of course perfectly aware that philosophical and sociological thought, as a form of knowledge, is more refined than popular wisdom. This, however, did not prevent the possibility of ultimately tracing its origin to the social aspirations of some particular group.[14] Since, however, as one might surmise, it did not seem convincing enough to Mannheim to explain the constitution of thought directly by reference to traditional sociological variables such as, for example, class position, he then found himself compelled to discuss the relationship between social being and knowledge in more indefinite and general terms rather than as a strictly causal relationship, which, for him, could never account for the outcome. As noted by philosopher Lars Bergström, for instance, even in-

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11. Karl Mannheim. Ideology and Utopia [Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (trans.)] (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, [1936], 1976), p. 239, footnote.

12. Robert K. Merton, "Karl Mannheim and the Sociology of Knowledge," in Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957), p. 498.

13. Ibid., p. 497.

14. Karl Mannheim, Konservatismus – Ein Beitrag zur Soziologie des Wissens (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), p. 67.

dividuals with the same or a similar set of sociological variables and backgrounds still often end up having widely diverging opinions, viewpoints, and understandings:

It is not unusual, of course, for different individuals who belong to the same cultural and intellectual milieu to nevertheless have even vastly differing understandings and opinions on an important issue. In one and the same university department, for example, one might find different individuals with basically the same education and a similar social background who in certain respects have diametrically opposing viewpoints.[15]

It is quite possible that it was observations of this kind that deterred Mannheim from developing a general theory concerning the relationship between social being and knowledge. Both Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy, however, depart from Mannheim's in this respect. Instead of regarding thought simply as an index of class membership or a cultural ethos, they place an intermediate link between macro-sociological variables and thought.[16] Bourdieu calls this intermediate link 'the philosophical field,' while Collins terms it 'the attention space.' The theoretical purpose of the field and space metaphors is thus to avoid a position where thought is understood as an unmediated expression of social or cultural membership. Both Bourdieu and Collins consider philosophical thought to be largely an effect of factors that are internal to the philosophical field/attention space. All external influences on the philosophical field/attention space, they propose, are staved off through the very way in which the field/space functions, thanks to mechanisms within the field/space itself that will transform these influences in accordance with the field's own laws.[17]

As already noted, Mannheim's notion of existential connectedness has subsequently attracted criticism for being insufficiently differentiated and embracing too broad a range of intellectual products, covering anything from popular wisdom to advanced theories of knowledge. Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy represent an advance over Mannheim's in this respect, too. Collins in particular is careful to emphasize that, compared to political activity, for example, creative philosophical thought is governed by different laws. Bourdieu, for his part, suggests that even if there are invariant laws that shape and influence modernity's multiple fields such as those of politics, philosophy, and religion, there are also properties which are distinct and unique to each. Every field, for example, has its own particular stakes, beliefs, and interests. The stakes (resources used and to be appropriated) over which a journalist struggles when participating in the game of his field, in other words, are different from those of a philosopher.

Despite initial similarities in their respective starting points, there are major differences between Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy.

15. Lars Bergström, "Relativism," Filosofisk tidskrift 19 (1998): 20–21.

16. See also Neil Gross, Richard Rorty: The Making of an American Philosopher (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 236-39.

17. See Charles Camic and Neil Gross, "The New Sociology of Ideas," in Judith R. Blau, ed., *Blackwell Companion to Sociology*, Blackwell, 2001, pp. 248-49.

Bourdieu is not as prone as Collins, for instance, to break with the traditional, Mannheimian sociology of knowledge, ascribing significantly less autonomy to the philosophical field than Collins is prepared to do in the case of his own attention space. Neither of the two, however, confesses to having any problems with causal explanations of why those with a similar social background may nonetheless take diametrically opposed positions with respect to philosophical issues; this, for them, would rather be something to be expected. In the next section of this article, I will discuss this and other aspects of Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy in more detail, based on how they characterize the relationship between social being and thought in their empirical works.

3. Collins's Sociology of Philosophy
3.A. Outline of Collin*s' Sociological Theory of Philosophy*

In his Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change from 1998, Collins presents a sociological theory which, he claims, among other things helps explain why certain ideas, texts, and philosophers are being granted a sacred status. This theory he calls 'interaction ritual theory.' The most important part of it is the notion of emotional energy (hereafter "EE"). In The Sociology of Philosophies, this theory forms part of a larger theoretical construct. Taken as a whole, that larger project of Collins's aims at explaining how intellectual change occurs in all philosophical traditions in the world. Collins, in other words, is not content, as is so often the case in Western historical writing, to simply outline the trajectory of Western philosophy from Thales of Milet to our own times; he goes on to also apply his theory to philosophical developments in China, India, and Japan, as well as to Judaic and Arabic thought. The ambition behind this work, as the subtitle of the book clearly indicates, is thus to provide a theoretical framework that is global in scope in both temporal (across time) and spatial (across cultures and societies) terms.

Collins works at three different causal levels, on which, he suggests, philosophical thought is determined: the micro-, the meso-, and the macro-level. Each level has its own autonomous dynamic and thus requires a sociological theory of its own. The resulting explanatory framework and the presuppositions behind it are summarized by Collins himself as follows:

We should remind ourselves again that intellectual creativity is no mere reflex of economics and politics. There are three layers of causality: (1) economic-political structures, which in turn shape (2) the organizations which support intellectual life; and these in turn allow the buildup of (3) networks among participants in centers of attention on intellectual controversies, which constitute the idea-substance of intellectual life. Economic-political conditions determine ideas not directly but by way of shaping, and above all by changing, the intermediate level, the organizational base of intellectual production.[18]

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18. Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change, p. 324.

At the macro-level, there are economic and political structures that create and shape the organizational base of intellectual life. The organizational base, which represents the meso-level, consists of universities, churches, publishing companies, monasteries, patrons, and research funds, for example; it provides the infrastructure of philosophical thought. The micro-level consists of networks of philosophers who compete for attention in the so-called attention space. As all philosophical positions cannot attract attention simultaneously, attention forms a scarce resource that actors compete for. Philosophers are involved in a feverish struggle for the attention of their peers; much attention results in high EE; and high EE, in turn, leads to a high degree of self-confidence and productivity. The attention space may thus be understood as a kind of philosophical public sphere, which, for its existence, depends on social and cultural factors; not all cultures have thus had a philosophical field where combatants keep fighting for space.

Economic and political factors are crucially important for the continuity and transformation of the organizations that support intellectual activity. When the economic and political situation shifts, the material conditions of intellectual competition will change, and thus, indirectly, also the philosophical ideas. This means that new philosophical ideas are created when new educational systems emerge, when new social movements appear, or when old religious institutions are replaced by new ones. New ideas, however, also emerge when new forms for supporting intellectual activity make their appearance, as was the case, historically, with the introduction of patrons, independent universities, commercial markets for books, and the like. When the organizational base changes and the attention space is transformed, major eruptions of philosophical creativity occur. If the base is then not subjected to some brutal shock therapies, philosophy will again stagnate in the long run.

One of the most interesting aspects of The Sociology of Philosophies, as the above quote already suggests, is that Collins turns against traditional explanations put forward within the sociology of knowledge. In his framework, the content of philosophical ideas cannot normally be explained by some Zeitgeist or by socio-political factors; indeed, it would a grave mistake to deduce philosophical thought from either socio-political or cultural factors. Instead of reflecting class interests, the Protestant ethic, or "male–female" duality, for instance, such thought is determined by interaction rituals and the rivalry between groups within the philosophical field.[19] When intellectual traditions or academic disciplines have begun to produce their own symbols, tools, and research problems, they can no longer be explained in terms of general cultural or socio-political factors; by then they have left society behind, so to speak. In discussing Collins's sociology of philosophy below, I will mainly focus on the micro-level of his interaction ritual theory. As will be shown, EE is the cornerstone not only of this subtheory, but also of Collins's broader explanatory framework taken as a whole; ultimately, the explanations he provides of phil-

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19. Randall Collins, "On the Acrimoniousness of Intellectual Dispute," Common Knowledge 8 (2002): 48.

osophical change will stand or fall with the notion of EE, which provides Collins with his concept of social being.

Collins's interaction ritual theory is influenced by Durkheim and Erving Goffman. While incorporating elements from both, it, however, at the same time expands Durkheim's and Goffman's notion of ritual to include all kinds of face-to-face interaction that may cause a common focusing of attention and thus also a common emotional mood. Collins's concept of interaction is thus rather inclusive: it refers to anything from sharing a cigarette or watching a football match together to having sexual intercourse, attending a church service, participating in a philosophical discussion, and the like. For an interaction ritual to take place, four conditions must be fulfilled:

> 1. there has to be a group consisting of at least two persons assembled, so that actors can influence one another through their physical presence (whether they are aware of this influence or not);
> 2. there has to be some kind of barrier against outsiders, so that the group members can recognize who participates and who is excluded;
> 3. the participants have to focus their common attention on an object or action at the same time as they are aware that the others are focusing on the same object or action; and:
> 4. the participants have to share the same emotional mood.[20]

In this scheme, successful interaction rituals (rituals that fulfill conditions 1 - 4) give rise to collective effervescence. Conditions 3 and 4 reinforce each other by means of a feedback mechanism. When the participants of an interaction ritual become increasingly focused on the common activity of the group, such as an intense philosophical discussion, for example, they also increasingly experience a common emotional state. This emotional state, in turn, contributes to a further sharpening of attention. The interaction between what takes place under conditions 3 and 4 generates what Collins terms "emotional entrainment," launching an emotional flow. As the intensity of the common activity increases further, the participants are then carried along by the emotional state and the rhythm. All individual feelings are pushed aside by the common emotional state. This emotional flow is then, for Collins, what Durkheim already designated as collective effervescence to capture the idea of social force at its birth.

According to Collins, successful interaction rituals have four major effects:

> 1. group solidarity, a feeling of belonging to the group;
> 2. the participants are filled by EE (feelings such as of self-confidence, effervescence, mental strength, enthusiasm, and power of initiative);
> 3. symbols that represent the group are created (these may include emblems or other representations, such as, for instance, words or gestures, which the participants experience as being associated with themselves as

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20. Randall Collins, Interaction Ritual Chains (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2004), p. 48.

a collective; these symbols will then become a reservoir of EE, symbolizing the unity of the group also when it is not physically assembled; participants who have been charged with strong feelings of group solidarity consider the symbols "sacred" in Durkheim's specific sense of the word; hence, the symbols are protected when attacked by outsiders or deserte;

    4. the participants experience moral feelings (feelings of doing the right thing by being members of the group and protecting its symbols against attackers) and are furnished with a moral rule.[21]

To formulate Collins's interaction ritual theory as concisely as possible: The common focusing of attention within a physically assembled group leads to a common emotional state. By means of feedback mechanisms, this common emotional state then contributes to a further sharpening of attention. Participation in the interaction ritual generates an emotional flow, or collective effervescence. If the interaction ritual is repeated continually, this collective effervescence becomes expressed in group-specific symbols. On the individual plane, the participants become charged with EE, that is, with feelings of power of initiative, enthusiasm, and mental strength.

According to Collins, all elements included in this model are variables. The collective effervescence that is generated may, in other words, be more or less strong. This also means that an interaction ritual may create more or less EE. For interaction rituals to be successful, the common attention and the emotional state must exceed a certain threshold value. Unsuccessful interaction rituals never reach this value, and no collective effervescence resulting in collective symbols or EE is generated. While the collective effervescence that is generated by the interaction ritual, expressed through intense feelings of for instance happiness or anger, is transient, EE is more long-standing. For this reason alone, EE should not be confused with temporary and transient feelings like anger or fear, for example. What it rather describes is one's readiness to act or one's power of initiative, dispositions that are more or less enduring.

One of the fundamental postulates of Collins's sociology of philosophy is that important philosophers are not isolated in an organizational sense, but have contacts with other prominent philosophers. These contacts may be through membership in an intellectual peer group, or with rivals within the philosophical field (horizontal relations). However, they may also be network contacts with teachers from an earlier generation (vertical relations). For Collins's theory to hold, it is necessary that the direction of causality goes from early network contacts to later important achievements: thinkers first become equipped with EE (but also with cultural capital) under the impact of their network contacts with teachers and persons of their own age, and then gradually embark upon a successful intellectual career and are, in a manner of speaking, transported to the front to accomplish heroic deeds. However, the fact that already known thinkers have network contacts with other thinkers, quite obviously, cannot be used to validate Collins's theory. Nevertheless, creativity will generate still more creativity, as Collins observes: where phi-

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21. Ibid., p. 49.

losophers operate within a network of other creative philosophers, the probability that they will make an important contribution is much greater compared to a situation where they act outside of those networks. Gifted autodidacts rarely become great philosophers: without access to the flows of energy and cultural capital within the intellectual networks, their ability to produce philosophical masterpieces will remain compromised.

A question, however, will soon arise: how does one decide who is a great philosopher? Collins's measure of intellectual greatness is crude and simple: the number of pages in which each philosopher is discussed in acknowledged works on the history of philosophy. It, however, maintains Collins, gives an indication of the extent to which the ideas of different philosophers are being, or have already been, transmitted to succeeding generations. On the basis of this information, Collins then divides philosophers into major, secondary, and minor philosophers. In The Sociology of Philosophies, a total of no fewer than 2,670 philosophers have been included in these three categories. Based on the data collected by Collins, one can then also conclude that modern European philosophy produced 19 major, 61 secondary, and 350 minor philosophers between 1600 and 1900. This period corresponds to nine generations, with one generation amounting to 33 years in Collins's estimate.

To illustrate his thesis that important philosophers are those who are centrally placed in organizational terms, Collins mainly makes use of chains of networks in ancient Greece and China. For the purposes of my own argument here, I will, however, content myself with reproducing his calculations of network contacts for ancient Greece only.[22] In addition to his categories of major, secondary, and minor philosophers, Collins in this context also operationalizes the category of a "dominant philosopher." According to Collins's data, Greek thought between 600 BC and 600 AD was advanced by eight dominant, 20 major, 68 secondary, and 237 minor philosophers, with the temporal frame covering 36 generations. The network contacts in his interest Collins has traced both "upstream" (predecessors and contemporaries) and "downstream" (disciples). Overall, the total scheme then provides the following picture:

Philosopher Category	Ustream Contacts	Dowstream Contacts
Dominant (8)	3.8	4.0
Major (20)	2.0	2.2
Secondary (68)	1.3	1.0
Minor (237)	0.7	0.4

Table of Developers of Greek thought, 600 BC to 600 AD.

Collins's data elsewhere (not included in the table), moreover, demonstrate that, on average, dominant philosophers have more network contacts with major philosophers than other categories of philosophers have. A closer inspec-

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22. See Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies, p. 66.

tion of the categories of philosophers with whom the highly placed philosophers had been in contact shows these to have been highly placed, too. As the data also shows, when the categories of dominant and major philosophers are combined, 18 of the total of 28 individuals belonging to this overall group (or 64 percent) had had network contacts with philosophers within their own category. Among the secondary philosophers, on the other hand, 33 of the total of 68 belonging to this category (or 48 percent) had had network contacts with dominant/major philosophers. One can sum up these findings as: the more significant the philosopher is, the larger the number of upstream and downstream contacts that he has had.

Thus, the general conclusion to be drawn from Collins's data is that important philosophers, from the very beginning of their professional careers, are right in the thick of intellectual give-and-take, partaking in events shaping the philosophical field. A requirement for becoming a great philosopher would then seem to be that one is centrally located within a network. It is not enough to merely partake of the books or articles of great philosophers – to acquire general cultural capital – to succeed; it is also necessary to stay socially very close to these philosophers. Through personal contacts with prominent teachers one becomes familiar with and knowledgeable about the ideas and issues that are "fashionable," in vogue or current, and learns how to approach them. Peripherally positioned philosophers tend to be able to partake of new ideas only after they have already circulated around and become debated in several rounds of discussion. These philosophers will always be too late on the scene.[23]

The most important thing mediated through network contacts with prominent philosophers, however, is EE. The feeling of belonging to a status group is particularly motivating. The creative spark that becoming identified as a "great prospect" or as someone to "take the next major step" in the field brings to one's intellectual career can only be ignited through network contacts. In this respect, Collins reminds us, network contacts with opponents, too, are important: they can be emotionally inciting just as much as those one has with allies. Opponents, in fact, are drawn to one another like magnets.[24] Watching one's opponents, however, is also important as a way of learning about new opportunities that may be opening up within the intellectual field.

As Collins himself is keen to point out, his theoretical framework differs significantly from Bourdieu's general field theory. Philosophical innovators, according to Collins, do not constitute an underprivileged vanguard group – young pretenders who lack sufficient cultural capital – fighting for entry into the philosophical field. As a rule, they have direct network contacts with the elite groups of the preceding generation.[25] Philosophical innovators no longer need to fight to gain entrance into the field; the road is already paved for them. Philosophical revolts, then, are for Collins not about opposing some prevailing

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23. Ibid., pp. 55-79.

24. Ibid., p. 73.

25. Randall Collins, "Sociology and Philosophy," in Craig Calhoun, Chris Rojek, and Bryan S. Turner, eds., The Sage Handbook of Sociology (London: Sage, 2005), p. 72.

orthodoxy, as they are for Bourdieu, but about breaking with one's teachers or one's original group.

3.B. The Law of Small Numbers and the Material Infrastructure

Until now, I have concentrated on describing the micro-level in Collins's theory of intellectual change. In this section, my focus will be on the material conditions of intellectual life and how changes in these – through the law of small numbers – may influence philosophical thought.[26] According to Collins, the two main motive forces of philosophical change are:

> 1. the inclination of philosophers to combine ideas from earlier generations (synthesis) and juxtapose these to contemporary ideas (negation); this process determines the content of ideas;
> 2. the creative energy that is released when macro-factors transform the infrastructure of intellectual life and when philosophers adjust to the new conditions of competition.

The first of these, the inclination to combine ideas, is a constantly ongoing process at the micro-level. The second process (creative energy) is less common compared to the former, and it involves all levels of causality although its triggering mechanisms operate at the macro-level. The two processes are best discussed separately, beginning with the first-mentioned.

The networks Collins is interested in consist of two dimensions: a vertical and a horizontal one. From a vertical point of view, all thinkers exist within a stream of arguments and styles of thought that have reached them from earlier generations. The philosophers will combine these ideas and arguments into new ideas. From a horizontal point of view, the thinkers are surrounded by contemporary rivals and same-generation peers. To draw attention to their thoughts, they look for a niche where their ideas can negate the most important ideas within the area in which they are or want to be active. Philosophical innovation occurs when philosophers synthesize various ideas and simultaneously negate others. Philosophers who merely closely follow their teachers or same-generation peers will not draw any attention to their thoughts: the fame of the stars always overshadows that of the epigones. This creates an incentive to maximize one's distance from already established positions and combine cultural capital in the most pioneering ways.

As concerns the second of these two processes driving philosophical change, Collins's way of treating social causality as something operating at different levels has the methodological consequence that he no longer can look for structurally homologous positions between the field of philosophy and the rest of society. Here he thus differentiates himself from Mannheim, Bourdieu, and all those representing the more Marxist-inspired sociology of knowledge. As long as the intellectual networks are assured an organizational base – and thus also their autonomy – they, according to Collins, develop according to their own intrinsic logic, which he calls "the law of small num-

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26. Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies, pp. 81-82.

bers." This law states that the number of creative philosophical schools that reproduce themselves for more than one or two generations tends to remain between three and six. The principle then structures the positions that can be occupied within the philosophical field at any given time, leaving philosophers competing for room in the attention space made more restricted by the law of small numbers. [27]

Collins's theory of the law of small numbers may at first seem a little curious: why should such a law exist at all? As the subtitle of Collins's work – a global theory of intellectual change – indicates, he has set himself the task of explaining intellectual change in general. The argument he develops is that creative intellectual change is propelled by conflicts between philosophical camps. Conflict and antagonism are the natural state of the intellectual world. Since creativity is a process premised on conflicts, the number of philosophical schools must by necessity be always more than one: if only one position were to dominate the field, philosophy would stagnate. As soon as there are two camps, however, the possibility arises of a third position in opposition to the other two. However, the maximum number of philosophical schools specified by the law as capable of perpetuating themselves over time is also based on the conflict-ridden nature of intellectual life. For philosophers to be able to spread their ideas among contemporary thinkers and to new generations, allies are required. As long as there are no more than six major philosophical positions, it is still possible for the philosophical schools to recruit followers while remaining distinct and relatively unified. When the number of positions exceeds this, however, intellectual life begins to undermine itself. It becomes impossible in the long run to attract new disciples and pass the teachings of the school on to future generations. Competition thus tends to be self-regulating.[28] When the maximum number of possible positions as specified by the law begins to be exceeded, a skeptic or a creator of synthesis will typically emerge and reduce the number of positions once more. The former does this by turning at once against all viewpoints, while the latter integrates several viewpoints into a new totality.[29] As a result, in the first case the skeptical position comes to dominate, while in the second the number of contenders is reduced. In considering these claims, however, one should keep in mind that the law of small numbers is not just a pure theoretical construct: Collins claims to have derived the principle from empirical studies covering all major intellectual traditions of the world.

The connecting link between these two motive forces behind intellectual change is EE. As soon as macro- and micro-level factors transform the attention space, the opportunity emerges for dividing it between different competing positions, i.e., for detecting exploitable battle lines. The motivation behind the search for new issues and arguments is EE. In this argument, philosophical

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27. See section 3 in the paper by Vesa Oittinen in this issue for an alternative explanation why the Principle of Plenitude does not work in philosophy (nor elsewhere, for that matter).

28. Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies, p. 82.

29. Ibid., p. 380.

thought does not then begin with "wonder," as Plato claimed, but rather with an unconscious will to increase EE. Those who are first in finding exploitable opportunities will become famous and, consequently, increase their EE. And therein lies the ultimate impetus behind all intellectual change: "If not EE-seekers, what else could human beings be?"[30]

3.C. The Absent Micro-Level

In The Sociology of Philosophies, Collins never studies philosophical activity from a micro-perspective. Although he devotes the two introductory chapters of the book to presenting his interaction ritual theory, emphasizing that "the flow of micro-situations . . . is the topic of our story," his explanations only embrace the macro- and meso-levels.[31] The reader finds thus no analyses of diaries, conferences, letters, or any other kinds of historical material that might shed light on how interaction rituals among philosophers in fact took place. In the first chapter of the book, Collins argues that the historical material is too sparse to allow for historical research within the philosophical field from a micro-perspective: the telescope of philosophical history lacks sufficient resolution to enable us to study the interaction rituals of previous times.[32] In chapter twelve, however, Collins seems to contradict his own claim by noting the abundance of historical documentation concerning network contacts and individual biographies from the 18th century onwards.[33]

What should be pointed out here is that EE is a phenomenon the reality of which Collins infers rather than observes; as he himself characterizes his project, what he is trying to do is "to infer the micro-situations of individuals at central locations in intellectual networks."[34] Collins needs EE to explain the phenomenon he wants to define by means of the law of small numbers: the fact that the positions within the attention space are subjected to competition. Ultimately, for him, this competition can be explained by the unconscious will to increase EE. EE thus constitutes the very dynamic of the law of small numbers, and this law, in turn, has a key mediating function: it is what transmits changes in the material base to the attention space. Should a school or philosophical position lose its base and disappear, the vacant position is soon taken over by another. When philosophers notice that a position is about to be opened up, they rush to it in for the sake of the attention it promises them. Only the one who comes first, however, will obtain the benefit of "first-mover advantages," that is, increased EE. Yet, given this centrality assigned to the notion of EE in Collins's theory, it is rather surprising that the evidence Collins offers for EE is no more than indirect. His argument would have been greatly strengthened by the inclusion of one or more detailed micro-level case studies in the book. As he himself admits, there is no dearth of material from modern times that could have been analyzed from a micro-perspective. Col-

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30. Collins, Interaction Ritual Chains, p. 373.
31. Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies, p. 53.
32. Ibid., p. 53.
33. Ibid., p. 620.
34. Collins, Interaction Ritual Chains, p. 194.

lins's neglect of the micro-level seems thus inexcusable, and perhaps something worth taking a look at in more detail.

In his 1981 article "On the Microfoundations of Macrosociology," Collins asserts that such macro-level notions as, for example, "class" and "culture" must allow for their translation into micro-level concepts in order to have any explanatory power. Elliptical statements such as "class membership influences the attitude towards higher education" are not complete explanations until those mechanisms have been found which cause people from different classes to have different attitudes towards higher education. The notion of "class" has thus no explanatory value in itself, but is rather a reification of social micro-processes. In his subsequent Interaction Ritual Chains, Collins then returns to this issue, stating, among other things, that "[m]icro-situational encounters are the ground zero of all social action and all sociological evidence. Nothing has reality unless it is manifested in a situation somewhere."[35] Collins, to be sure, does not claim that all explanations must necessarily take the micro-level as their point of departure; for practical purposes, it may also be appropriate to use data and concepts from the macro-level. It is rather macro-level data that are not referable to the micro-level that, according to him, present a misleading picture of social reality. Sociological macro- and micro-level concepts must be empirically based on at least some sample of the kind of central micro-level situations that constitute the content of the concept. In Collins's own words:

Sociological concepts can be made fully empirical only by grounding them in a sample of the typical micro-events that make them up. The implication is that the ultimate empirical validation of sociological statements depends upon their micro-translation. By this standard, virtually all sociological evidence as yet presented is tentative only.[36]

Since Collins, in The Sociology of Philosophies, does not present any detailed case studies of interaction rituals among philosophers, he falls prey to his own criticism. His claim that philosophers try to maximize EE under pressure of the law of small numbers is to a large extent underdetermined by his data, given that the law of small numbers is not empirically grounded in studies of actual interaction rituals taking place among philosophers. There are other sociological theories, such as those of Mannheim or Bourdieu, for instance, that can equally well explain the presence of competition within the philosophical field (which is Collins's evidence for the law of small numbers). To the extent that Collins fails to provide any direct proof for his claim that philosophers are striving to maximize EE, his sociology of philosophy falls thus short of his own, stated ambitions, being no more empirically based than general theories of culture or class. As a matter of fact, in The Sociology of Philosophies, Collins does exactly the opposite of what his methodological rule in "On the Microfoundations of Macrosociology" prescribes. Rather than founding his theoretical concepts on empirical data from the micro-level, that

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35. Ibid., p. 259.

36. Randall Collins, "On the Microfoundations of Macrosociology," The American Journal of Sociology 86 (1981): 988.

way making them "fully empirical," he derives the contents of his micro-level from the law of small numbers, which is no more than an abstract theoretical notion. At the same time, one might note, Collins, in keeping with his own methodological rule, would only have had to present a sample of empirical micro-level studies to render his law of small numbers empirically based. The lack of concrete case studies in The Sociology of Philosophies is thus, in this light, nothing short of astonishing.

In a letter to his teacher Thomasius, Leibniz complained that all the histories of philosophy in Antiquity mostly consisted of anecdotes about philosophers, saying little or nothing about their actual ideas and arguments; in stark contrast, Thomasius' own history of philosophy was "a history of philosophy and not of philosophers."[37] About Collins's sociological history of philosophy it might then – to reverse Leibniz's endorsement of Thomasius – be said that it should mainly have been a story about philosophers and not of philosophy. Yet, as a history, The Sociology of Philosophies is less a detailed about the interaction rituals of philosophers than about ideas and arguments. All in all, then, we might conclude that Collins has neglected his own injunction to provide adequate proof for his theory at the micro-level. The last word about Collins's sociology of philosophy, however, has probably not been said quite yet by putting forth this observation. Collins has presented a simple and elegant theory that readily lends itself to empirical research, and it very much remains a possibility that there will be other researchers who in the years to come go on to provide its missing piece.

To sum up my analysis of Collins's sociology of philosophy, I suggest, in conclusion of this section, that we look at it as follows. Instead of discussing the relationship between social being and thought in vague and abstract terms à la Mannheim and his notion of existential connectedness, Collins' ambition in The Sociology of Philosophies is to develop a general theory. He distinguishes between three different levels of causality (micro-, meso-, and macro-) that, through their joint operation, determine philosophical thought. Nevertheless, the most important notion of the overall theory is EE, which stands behind the dynamic of the law of small numbers. Without it, the material base might change without any impact on the attention space, in the absence of any repercussions at the micro-level from events at the macro- and meso-levels. EE can thus be said to constitute the very cornerstone of Collins's sociology of philosophy. Above, however, I have criticized Collins for not adequately clarifying this notion in his work, which thus remains as abstract and vague as anything Mannheim ever left for posterity. In a similar vein, however, one might also draw critical attention to the way Collins employs his notion of culture and how culture, in his scheme, can possibly influence philosophy. According to Collins, the cultural and intellectual climate of the era, its Zeitgeist, has the capacity to furnish material for philosophical thinking, but it does this without any possibility for direct or causal influence. As soon as an attention space has become established, philosophers occupy themselves with attempts

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37. Quoted from Donald R. Kelley, "Intellectual History and Cultural History: The Inside and the Outside," History of the Human Sciences 15 (2002): 4.

to negate and synthesize philosophical positions in the competition-laden market for ideas. It is in this way that the content of philosophical ideas becomes determined and the level of abstraction in thinking and thought moved up. Cultural conditions can only set the starting point for philosophical thinking, which then will nevertheless soon be left behind when more abstract and reflexive notions and ideas take over, effectuating a radical break with these initial conditions. It is only during periods of philosophical decline and decay that the abstraction level of philosophical thought drops down, to become once again one with that of everyday knowledge.[38] For Collins, there is thus no continuity between general cultural conditions and philosophical thinking at all.

4. Bourdieu's Sociology of Philosophy
4.A. General Outline

The sociology of philosophy of Pierre Bourdieu can – to succumb to a kind of "spontaneous Hegelianism" in the art of presentation – be characterized as a kind of Aufhebung of Mannheim's and Collins's sociologies of philosophy. Like Mannheim, Bourdieu assumes that philosophical thought forms part of the political context and serves political purposes. Unlike him, however, what Bourdieu seeks is to develop a general theory of the relationship between social being and thought. Similarly to Collins, again, Bourdieu maintains that philosophy operates under special conditions, meaning that it is not directly referable to general socio-political conditions. Yet, in contradistinction to Collins, Bourdieu refuses to relinquish the traditional ambition of the sociology of knowledge to recover a political-activist element in philosophical thought. In advancing his work, furthermore, Bourdieu, as I will suggest below, succeeds in avoiding the methodological pitfalls of both Mannheim and Collins. While managing to combine the strengths of the two, he simultaneously steers clear of their weaknesses. In claiming so, I should immediately add, I have no intention of tracing any substantial or direct influences between these authors; in what follows, I simply wish to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of their respective methodological frameworks.

Bourdieu's sociology of philosophy takes its point of departure from a double rejection: while denying the possibility that philosophical texts might have some absolute autonomy in their relationship to external factors, he also refuses to reduce them to any general socio-political factors. According to Bourdieu, we indeed may acknowledge the autonomy of the text, but only if immediately qualifying this claim by stating it to be just another way of expressing that text's dependence on the philosophical field. Similarly, we may also acknowledge the dependence of the text on socio-political conditions, but only when simultaneously admitting that the way these conditions find expression within the field of philosophy is a most peculiar and always indirect one.[39] The philosophical field, in Bourdieu's view, in fact performs a mediat-

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38. Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies, pp. 799-800.
39. Pierre Bourdieu, The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1991 [orig.: *l'Ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger* (Paris: Les Éditions de

ing function between general socio-political conditions and philosophical thought. The influence of the former on the latter is to be comprehended as a matter of a partial rather than complete reflection: philosophical thought, as driven by social aspirations, becomes transformed when confronted with the specific type of censorship of the philosophical field. This metamorphosis makes it impossible to directly reduce thought to something like a class position. It is still possible, however, to search for homologous or equivalent positions between socio-political conditions and the philosophical field.

Bourdieu, accordingly, characterizes his method for the sociology of philosophy as a "dual reading."[40] This method aims at simultaneously disclosing the philosophical and political significance of the text. In other words, Bourdieu keeps one eye on the philosophical field and another on the political field, so as to be able to examine the extent to which it might be possible to establish a connection between positions in the two fields. This connection, however, cannot simply be postulated: it needs to be verified empirically. Neither should the sociology of philosophy, as already mentioned above, rest content with drawing some general parallels between socio-political conditions and philosophical ideas: doing so would leave the discipline vulnerable to the same criticism of vagueness that Merton leveled against Mannheim's notion of "existentially connected knowledge," or, as Bourdieu himself calls it, "the short-circuit mistake." This mistake consists in connecting distant phenomena such as philosophical thought and class membership, for example, without the help of any intervening link. The sociology of philosophy has no room for vulgar explanations of the type "The philosophical system x reflects the dilemma experienced by a rising middle class."[41]

As already noted, both Collins and Bourdieu locate social causality, not in the force of general social conditions as such, but in factors intrinsic to the philosophical field. Compared to Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, this considerably improves the ability of sociology of philosophy to furnish plausible causal explanations. At the same time, however, Bourdieu argues for a stronger connection between surrounding society and philosophical field than Collins is prepared to allow for. Where society is entirely excluded from Collins's attention space, at least when it concerns phenomena like first-rate philosophical thought, in Bourdieu's philosophical field it does make its presence felt, but in a transfigured and sublimated form, giving the connection between politics and philosophy its particular but nevertheless very real character in Bourdieu's sociology of philosophy.

In his Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger [*l'Ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger*] (1991), Bourdieu wants to prove the existence of a social connection between philosophical viewpoints and political ideas in general and between Heidegger's philosophy and politics in particular. In Bourdieu's assessment, Heidegger's main work, Sein und Zeit (1927), articulates a posi-

Minuit, 1988)]), pp. 2-3.

40. Ibid., p. 3.

41. Cf. P Bourdieu and L Wacquant, An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 69.

tion that can only be described as that of sublimated anti-modernism, elitism, and revolutionary conservatism. Heidegger's allegedly "pure philosophy" (Croce) is actually saturated with ideas that betray its affiliation to the revolutionary conservatism of the 1920s' Germany. Heidegger's Denkweg, for Bourdieu, is thus a political one from beginning to end. To identify and analyze this non-philosophical substance in Heidegger's thought, Bourdieu, in the book's first chapter entitled "Pure Philosophy and the Zeitgeist," discusses the general philosophical-historical context in which Sein und Zeit was conceived and which left on the work its mark reflecting "the spirit of the times."

During the Weimar Republic, the ideological atmosphere in Germany was notably conservative, populist [völkisch], and anti-modernist in nature. This general climate had emerged in the margins of the academic world, but gradually spread to the educated bourgeoisie and university faculties more broadly.[42] Its ideological component was built on pairs of contrastive notions that then, as an overall set of binary oppositions, formed its conceptual scheme. This scheme was to serve as a basis for the interpretation of reality and society by the intellectuals. The most prominent of the binary oppositions included in it were the contrasts drawn between culture and civilization (Germany on the one side, France and England on the other); Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft; the people and uncontrollable masses; the Führer/the Reich and liberalism/parliamentarism; the countryside/the forest and the city/the factory; the peasant/hero and the factory worker/shopkeeper; organism/life and dehumanized technology; as well as ontology and science.[43] The first and the second terms of the conceptual pairs, when brought together on both sides of the opposition they expressed, then constituted a coherent interpretation of reality for those embracing the radical conservative view of the world dominant at the time. Even if no logical connection existed between the different notions thus associated – between 'the peasant' and 'Germany,' for example – the connection was nonetheless socially drawn and established. The homegrown nationalist "Blubo" literature (Blut und Boden [blood and soil]), for instance, glorified peasant life and portrayed the moral decadence and "Jewishness" of big-city life.

Seemingly neutral words and concepts were thus given political connotations to signal determinate political affiliation. Bourdieu describes, for example, how seemingly neutral orientations in sociology towards quantification and mathematization served as definite political markers within the intellectual field: a positive attitude to quantification was immediately associated with contents attached to notions like "liberalism," "modernism," or "socialism." The conservative sociologist and economist Werner Sombart, for example, argued for "synthesis" and "totality" as appropriate methods for "humanist" (that is, "German") sociology. These he contrasted to the "quantitative" and "naturalist" search for "mechanical" laws of "Western" (that is, "French" and "English") sociology.[44] Rheinhold Seeberg, in an attempt to be more Catholic

42. Bourdieu, Political Ontology, p. 8.
43. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
44. Ibid., p. 23.

even than the pope, went further still, objecting also to the use of "synthesis": this notion, he claimed, might indicate that reality is fragmented and in need of reconstruction.[45] By combining the binary oppositions in different ways, each thinker would then create a unique conceptual scheme. These schemes differed in terms of both their form and their function, depending on the fields in which they were deployed. When applied in the literary field (as in the Blubo literature), they thus looked different compared to the way they were utilized in, for example, philosophy (as in Heidegger's thought). In other words, although the conceptual schemes operationalized at the time all represented variations on one and the same theme, derived from the conservative world of ideas, they were not reducible to one another.

According to the principle of pars pro toto, a single concept will contain within itself a whole semantic field. It is through familiarity with a specific culture and world of ideas that members of a culture attain, at a practical level, a moral-political capacity, a sense of the "the rules of the game," which then guides their evaluations of, and attitudes towards, ideas and concepts.[46] Learning and mastering the conservative world of ideas of the 1920s' Germany mainly took place at a preconscious and practical level. The concepts on which this view of the world was built were linked to one another through loose associations rather than sharp definitions. Since it was "the Jew" that served as the common denominator for notions like "the big city," "modernity," and "intellectualism," it thus seems almost reasonable − in terms of the associative logic of the day − to blame "the Jews" for instance for destroying "German" agriculture by introducing "machines."[47]

The existence of a moral-political sense of direction is what thus separates Bourdieu's intellectuals and philosophers from those of Collins's. In Collins's attention space, philosophers choose the elements of their thought solely to call attention to themselves and their philosophy. It is possible, too, in principle, for a philosopher to combine all the ideas existing within the field. Since Bourdieu's field is divided by political lines of demarcation, thinkers will nevertheless avoid certain ideologically charged notions and theories. Particular thoughts thus become excluded beforehand as they signal affiliation with an enemy camp.

Here, however, one might, on the basis of Collins's theory, raise an objection against Bourdieu's claims in The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger. According to Collins, it is only second-rate philosophical thought that shows the influence of socio-political or cultural factors. The kind of non-creative thought that second-rate philosophy represents is too much caught up in political ideologies and anthropomorphic religiosity to be able to make any significant contribution to the discipline. It is oriented towards winning favor among philosophical laymen (politicians, religious leaders, etc.), rather than among one's colleagues and peers. Indeed, the thinkers Bourdieu discusses in the first

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45. Ibid., p. 24.
46. Ibid., p. 25.
47. This rather peculiar accusation was originally presented by the Berlin professor Heinrich von Treitschke; see Bourdieu, Political Ontology, p. 120, footnote.

chapter of his book, namely, Spengler and Jünger, can hardly be considered philosophers in the sense assigned by Collins to the term; not surprisingly, neither of them found his way into The Sociology of Philosophies. Moreover, should Bourdieu then want to place Heidegger alongside the two, he would, to all appearances, commit a methodological error. Doing so, he would not only signal his inability to distinguish between different kinds of discourse (political essayism and professional philosophy in this case), but would also imply misguidedly lumping these together as comparable in the way they have been conditioned or determined by social forces. Bourdieu, in other words, would then here make himself guilty of the same mistake Merton accused Mannheim: that of subsuming different kinds of intellectual products under one and the same concept.

Yet, Bourdieu is, at least methodologically speaking, far too sophisticated to fall prey to such oversights. We cannot, he claims, expect someone like Heidegger to use the vulgar language of politics – a language where social aspirations are openly displayed. Philosophers only deal with political questions insofar as they are able to translate these into their own philosophical idiolect. According to Bourdieu, moreover, this translation, or sublimation, at the same time functions as a censoring instance. The reason why, in Heidegger's thought, the political dimension remained suppressed is that only pure thought is accepted within the philosophical field – thought without any trace of social aspirations. The philosophical dogma according to which thought is independent of social conditions, with philosophy enjoying absolute autonomy, is, Bourdieu claims, a consequence of this censorship function of the philosophical field. More precisely, the process of sublimation that Bourdieu talks of takes place through a process of both conscious and unconscious adaptation to the doxa, illusio, and nomos of the field. These latter are what makes it possible for philosophical ideas to be molded and circulated within the philosophical field. To understand the sublimation of social aspirations within the philosophical field, it is therefore necessary to first understand exactly what these concepts designate, along with their role in the overall scheme of Bourdieu's sociology of philosophy.

4.B. Illusio, Doxa, Nomos

Any engaged participant wishing to succeed within the philosophical field must become (unconsciously) attuned to the stakes of the game in that field. Illusio is Bourdieu's term for the participants' propensity to do so based on their belief in the validity and importance of the game, and for their belief that the possible gains from participating in it are worth pursuing. This "illusio" is an illusion only for those outside of the field. The investment that a philosopher has made in participating in the game, for example in the form of many years of study, may seem incomprehensible to anyone but other participants of the game: why invest one's time and money in a project that generates so little in a material sense? To appreciate the gains of the game one must already have invested in it, and one must already be well on one's way to joining that game. A classic example of how the specific gains of a field may be insufficiently understood is the disagreement between the upper-bourgeoisie father

who wants his son to study jurisprudence or economics and the son who him-self wants to become an artist or a writer.[48] At the same time, for someone who has begun to invest in the game, its problems and issues will seem like a transcendental universe: the arbitrary nature of the game is lost sight of. In-stead, a field-specific disposition will develop, a habitus that is adjusted to the specific demands and requirements of the field. Through it, the importance of the norms and gains of the game is internalized by the participants, becoming then almost taken for granted as a force beyond the field itself.

Whatever those participating in the game of the field might be competing for, no one thus questions the meaningfulness of the struggles involved. The significant investments made in the game will of themselves guarantee its con-tinuation; the illusio, or the belief in the game, never loses its hold. Accord-ingly, the recurrent call in the history of philosophy to renounce philosophy, rather than expressing any drastic intention to declare one's investments worthless, in fact represents nothing more than a strategy adopted within the philosophical field: it is an attempt to increase rather than depreciate one's capital. The logical positivists, for example, had barely managed to formulate their principle of verifiability - a principle purported to deliver a lethal blow against all philosophical speculation – before preoccupying themselves with the problem of whether this principle could be applied to itself or not. In other words, thinking continues for as long as the illusio compels philosophers to invest in the game and defend their interests in it. The only way to renounce philosophy would be to question the philosophical institution itself along with the specific illusio, doxa, and nomos prevailing in the philosophical field. In Bourdieu's own words:

Every attempt to bring philosophy into question which is not bound up with a questioning of the philosophical institution itself still plays the institution's game by merely playing with fire, by rubbing up against the limits of the sa-cred circle, while still carefully refraining from moving outside it.[49]

As long as the philosophical institution is not called into question from any sociological point of view, revolutionary and heterodox strategies within the field will thus amount to nothing of consequence, being merely playing with fire. In a footnote in The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger, Bourdieu argues that Derrida's deconstruction will remain but a "partial revolution" for as long as it does not deal with all the social conditions – illusio, doxa, and nomos – that decide whether a philosopher becomes acknowledged as a phi-losopher.[50] The status of a "philosopher" is in fact only awarded to someone who stays within the holy circle (even if not necessarily at its center: to move towards the outer boundaries of the circle without, however, ever overstepping them is one of the several strategies frequently resorted to within the philo-sophical field). In other words, the prospects for the kind of radical question-ing ascribed to philosophy are limited by one's own membership in as well as

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48. Pierre Bourdieu, Pascalian Meditations (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 2000), p. 97.

49. Pierre Bourdieu, "The Philosophical Institution," in Alan Montefiore, ed., Philoso-phy in France Today (Cambridge UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), p. 517.

50. Bourdieu, Political Ontology, p. 122, footnote.

the censorship within the philosophical field. Mechanisms of social conditioning like these, furthermore, cannot be disclosed simply by mere mental activity, such as, for example, methodological doubt or epochè. Any confidence in the power of reason along these lines can only be blind, no matter how typical of philosophy's understanding of itself.

Every field harbors within itself a set of beliefs or categories, or doxa, that its participants must adopt and master in order to be recognized as legitimate, rather than vulgar or naïve, participants. To be a philosopher at a certain time and in a certain place means embracing the doxa sanctioned by the field as important and relevant. Quite frequently, this doxa consists of pairs of contradictory notions, such as realism/constructivism, determinism/voluntarism, and so forth. Paradoxically, it is these conceptual pairs that unite those fighting over them. Doxa establishes the limits of legitimate discussion and decides what answers are possible at each given point of time. A general acceptance of a particular doxa facilitates the rejection of unanticipated objections and arguments as "trivial" or "absurd." As Addelson has observed, philosophers, for example, often discuss the issue of abortion in terms of conflicting rights: the right of the woman to decide over her own body as opposed to the right of the fetus to its life. This way of putting the problem then rules out alternative approaches looking at abortion from viewpoints other than those focused on rights, as for instance of love, care, or religious belief. Hence, the philosophers' "clarification of the ethical problem," that is, their postulation of the doxa, will simultaneously render any alternative perspective invisible.[51]

Every scientific discipline is also defined by a particular nomos. This notion refers to the specific manner in which the object is construed within each academic field, how the field defines its subject matter as distinct from that of any other field or discipline.[52] If doxa consists of a series of beliefs, nomos may then be understood as a particular perspective. For instance, the nomos of sociology could be formulated as "social events are to be explained by means of the social." Nomos serves as a criterion of relevance that excludes certain approaches as irrelevant or illegitimate. From the nomos of sociology, for instance, it follows that rational choice theory and sociobiology, which do not explain "the social by means of the social," are to be deemed irrelevant for sociological research or theorizing.

The particular nomos of philosophy Bourdieu calls "philosophy of philosophy" [philosophie de la philosophie]. According to him, there is a specifically philosophical, as distinct from sociological, way of understanding the history of philosophy. Philosophers themselves claim this perspective to be more relevant to philosophical research than a sociological or an idea-historical perspective. Accordingly, those who seek entrance into the field of philosophy must, even though not necessarily at a reflexive level, accept that this way of approaching the history of philosophy is (at least for philosophical purposes)

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51. Kathryn Pyne Addelson, "Why Philosophers Should Become Sociologists (and Vice Versa)," in Howard S. Becker, Michael M. McCall, eds., Symbolic Interaction and Cultural Studies (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 128-29.
52. Bourdieu, Pascalian Meditations, p. 97.

more important than the sociological or philosophical-historical one. Philosophers, moreover, also must make use of the style or method which prevails within the tradition to which they belong. It is by doing all this that makes it possible for one to understand and promote oneself as a philosopher authoring philosophical texts within a particular philosophical tradition. Since the texts thus produced can thereby be deemed "philosophical" by definition, they are also to be discussed and respected as such. What anyone, then, wanting to transform such a text into a piece of empirical sociology is doing is in fact violating it. This viewpoint, however, conceals the fact that the insistence of a text to be understood in a specific way is already a form of symbolic violence, coming as it does with socially authorized reading instructions: those willing to make use of a philosophical text, or, say, a work of art, for sociological purposes, are always called upon to explain and justify their infraction.[53] In this way, philosophical texts are immunized beforehand against sociological objectification.

What is the significance of the notions of illusio, doxa, and nomos for our understanding of Heidegger and his sublimation of the political and ethical principles that led him to embrace Nazism? Philosophers not wishing to become marginalized must relate themselves to the doxa of their field (as distinct from political issues of current interest). When developing their own philosophical system, they must therefore do so in close connection with the actual and possible viewpoints that have emerged during the field's history or that may point to its future. It is only in this way that a philosopher will stand a chance of being acknowledged as a philosopher. A sociological understanding of Heidegger's thought must, consequently, link this thought to the philosophical field and its history. Moreover, philosophical positions become politically charged through the functioning of what, above, I characterized as a moral-political sense of direction in the field: only a limited number of philosophical positions are compatible with the political and moral ideas prevailing outside the field. Historians of philosophy far too often forget that important philosophical viewpoints, such as neo-Thomism, neo-Kantianism, and phenomenology, for example, are embodied in a particular lifestyle and in political and moral perspectives which furnish philosophy with a concrete social physiognomy.[54] Philosophical standpoints are developed and evaluated in relation to political-moral notions just as much as they are to a strict philosophical doxa. As a result, the choice of one's philosophical perspective is, in Bourdieu's language, overdetermined:

> There is no philosophical option . . . which does not entail its concomitant academic and political options, and which does not owe to these secondary, more or less unconsciously assumed options, some of its deepest determinations.[55]

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53. Bourdieu, Politial Ontology, p. 89.
54. Ibid., pp. 51–52.
55. Ibid., p. 57.

For this very reason, philosophical standpoints need to be studied by means of a "dual reading" that can demonstrate their twin origination. A central idea in The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger is, for example, that, within the philosophical field, Heidegger's philosophical position shows a relationship to Marxism, neo-Kantianism, and positivism that is similar to that of the conservative revolutionaries (Spengler, Jünger, etc.) to the socialists and liberals within the political field. In the same way, then, also the philosophical field was divided into two camps: a liberal and socialist one on the one hand, and a conservative one on the other hand.

Philosophers, however, must also express their thoughts in a recognized form, in accordance with the nomos of their field. The ones among them who are well-versed in the nomos and doxa of the field – as Heidegger certainly was – will know how to provide their texts with a valid form. What sets Heidegger's Sein und Zeit apart from Jünger's Der Arbeiter, for instance, is that Heidegger was capable of giving a specific philosophical shape to the social aspirations animating his text. Although the resulting philosophical form to a large extent obscures and perhaps even distorts the text's political content, it nevertheless manages to convey it between the lines. One consequence of the nomos typical of the philosophical field is that all those claiming Heidegger's thoughts to harbor an activist-political element will always be met with accusations of vulgar sociology and claims that Heidegger may only be understood in relationship to the pre-Socratics, Aristotle, Husserl, and other such "proper" philosophers. It is quite simply considered inadmissible to establish correspondences between the philosophical and the socio-political field and to claim, for instance, that Heidegger's notions of Eigentlichkeit and Uneigentlichkeit form a structural equivalent of the binary opposition between 'the elite' and 'the masses' that typified the conservative conceptual universe of the 1920s.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to demonstrate that Collins's and Bourdieu's sociologies of philosophy represent an advance over what is generally known as the classical tradition in sociology of knowledge. Differently from Mannheim, who alone represents the classical tradition in this article, Collins and Bourdieu develop general theories concerning the relationship between social being and thought. The main lesson to be drawn from their work is that philosophical thought normally cannot be reduced to socio-political conditions outside what they call, respectively, the attention space and the philosophical field. Should a sociologist of philosophy nevertheless attempt to do this, the analysis will be short-circuited. At least initially, one should look for causal relationships of a more immediate kind. This then leads to focusing on contextual factors rather than socio-political macro-phenomena.[56] It is mainly within the philosophical field that most of that which is of interest to the sociologist of philosophy takes place. However, a Bourdieuan sociologist of philosophy, in contrast to one influenced more by Collins, will also take an interest in the

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56. Cf. Camic and Gross, "The New Sociology of Ideas," pp. 246-47.

indirect connection of philosophy with socio-political conditions. The wider context such conditions represent is important, since philosophy is not wholly autonomous with respect to external factors like cultural influences.

In conclusion to the foregoing discussion, I would argue that the sociology of philosophy needs to be guided by the assumption that philosophical knowledge carries elements of social aspiration and that these are indirectly referable to existing social groups or different kinds of habitus. In society, there are a number of groups and actors, as Frickel and Gross have reminded us, that (at least in principle) have the capability of applying direct or indirect pressure on an academic field.[57] Actors like the state and social movements along with institutions like religion and systems of education, for instance, all have the potential to influence philosophical thought. This influence may be exerted through an ability to bring forth and publicize one's own questions, give expression to group-specific interests or a particular view of the world, contribute to the creation or shaping of a certain kind of habitus or ethos, and so forth. However, the question whether a certain philosophical viewpoint is indeed influenced by socio-political conditions remains first and foremost an empirical one. It is entirely possible that philosophical positions may exist which do not have any counterparts within the political field or in some group-specific ethos. Hence, the indirect connection between philosophy and politics cannot simply be dogmatically postulated, but, instead, needs to be demonstrated in each case. In this article, I have argued that Bourdieu's concepts of nomos, illusio, and doxa provide essential tools that can be used to establish the possible twin origination of philosophical thought in politics and the philosophical field. At the same time, the room that Bourdieu leaves for the influence of what we might term general cultural factors on philosophical thought is significantly broader than Collins's notion of the same. According to the latter, philosophical thinking is normally not affected by the general cultural context in which it develops. Philosophers, in conducting their work, are oriented towards other actors within the attention space, and not towards the political or social public. In this respect, Collins's characterization of philosophers and philosophy resembles Kuhn's description of natural science and the way it operates.[58] In Bourdieu's analysis, however, philosophical thought is indirectly influenced by the cultural conditions that provide its matrix, including the prevailing political ideas, ideals, and values. Given that the philosophical field can only achieve a low degree of autonomy, it can never shield itself from the influence of general cultural factors and circumstances. For the ideas and notions from the broader cultural context (such as those connected to radical conservatism, for example) to find acceptance as legitimate in the field, however, their expression needs to be modulated so that it take place in conformity with the field's own rules, that is to say, in adherence to the field-specific doxa and nomos.

57. Scott Frickel, Neil Gross, "A General Theory of Scientific/Intellectual Movements," American Sociological Review 70 (2005): 209.

58. Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996).

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