Canadian Review of Comparative Literature

Volume XXIV Number 1
March 1997
Distributed by the
University of Toronto Press
for the Canadian Comparative
Literature Association

Volume XXIV Numéro 1
mars 1997
Distributée par les Presses
de l'Université de Toronto
pour l'Association Canadienne
de Littérature Comparée

Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée

Canadian Review of Comparative Literature
Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée

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The STUDY of LITERATURE and CULTURE: SYSTEMS and FIELDS / ÉTUDES LITTÉRAIRES et CULTURELLES. SYSTÈMES et CHAMPS
Edited by Hendrik van Gorp, Anneleen Masschelein, Dirk de Geest, and Koenraad Geldof

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RAKEFET SHEFFY

Models and Habituses: Problems in the Idea of Cultural Repertoires

The notion of models is so integral in the Polysystem theory that research in this framework is hardly conceivable without it. Indicating the more detectable units of which the repertoire, as a whole, is composed, the model has become a key term in analyzing any kind of systemic processes or features. Its vitality notwithstanding, this notion still reveals certain difficulties, both on the conceptual level and on the level of research. In this paper I will discuss some problems related to this notion, supporting the argument by two related concepts, the sociologically oriented notion of *habitus*, on the one hand, and the idea of *cultural models* as developed in cognitive theory, on the other.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS: MODELS AND HABITUSES

In the socio-semiotic conception of polysystems, the notion of models indicates two essential semiotic-functionalist assumptions of sign-systems in general. First, the assumption that human action is *regulative*, and that this regularity is *culturally* determined (not to be confused with other assumed regularities, such as biological or even psychological ones). Second, the assumption that the logic of cultural action and interaction lies not on the level of "observable facts," but rather on the implicit level of their functional interrelations.[1] However, the notion of repertoires breaks with the more mechanistic conception of systems,[2] in that it is designed precisely to amend the inadequate description of cultural

1 In a way, the idea of models in Polysystem theory reveals an integration of the Saussurian notion of the system as "the hidden order or logic" behind the heterogeneity of observable manifestations on the one hand, into Tynjanov's initial idea of multi-layered systems, which Even-Zohar always acknowledges, on the other. Even-Zohar "re-reads" Tynjanov's conception of "functions" as initially applied to "texts" as follows: "For Tynjanov, whom it is fully justified to consider the true father of the systemic approach, I believe that the range of the observables for which the 'literary system' was a valid notion was more or less tightly linked with the idea of 'texts.' Only implicitly does the notion of pre-texts, i.e., 'models,' emerge in his studies in connection with the notion of 'system'" (Even-Zohar 29).

2 Particularly with what is viewed as the rigid applications of Saussure's method, see Even-Zohar 10-11.

Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée
CRCL/RCLC March/mars 1997
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systems simply as "sets of rules" and "elements" (by analogy to "grammar" and "dictionary"), according to which every single cultural action remains an unrealistically discrete and unconditioned act of "selection and combination."[3] In other words, the notion of repertoire indicates that the knowledge of systems people have and use as competent actors in a given culture consists not of objective, fully consistent, rules and particles, but of *matrices*, i.e., *models*, pre-organized options (see Even-Zohar 39-43; 207-18 and his contribution in this issue) that *constrain* people's action in each and every case, given the specific cultural field one is acting in and according to one's position within it.

Certainly, such an approach to systems is amenable to sociological perspectives. Where do people take these models from? What makes these models valid? Why would different people apply certain models and reject others? In these matters, the idea of models becomes more useful when complemented by the sociological notion of the *habitus*. Indeed, even in earlier phases of the Polysystem theory, it was clear that dealing with problems of crystallization, distribution, durability, or change of models is impossible without reflection on the social factors behind them. Gradually, the focus of interest expanded to include these factors, so that it eventually became an integral part of the repertoire-hypothesis to understand, through detailed analysis of models, the socially organized formations which they sustain. Although, historically speaking, the impetus for this sociological phase in the conception of the Polysystem was rendered primarily by Bourdieu's theory of fields, I nonetheless find Norbert Elias's pioneering works on human figurations ([1969] 1983; 1978; 1987; and elsewhere) especially inspiring for repertoire research as presented here. This is, for example, how Elias presents his method of unfolding the web of relations constituting the *court society* through meticulous analysis of court practices:

> It is necessary to show, with the aid of detailed studies and examples, how [the] mechanism of competing power groups functions in practice; we must attempt to observe it directly at work.... To understand how even the routine of getting up in the morning and going to bed at night could serve a king as instruments of power, is no less important for a sociological understanding of this type of "routinized" monopoly rule than it is for a more general insight into the structure of the "royal mechanism." It is only through such paradigmatic details that we can gain a concrete picture of what has been previously formulated theoretically. (1983, 22)

Given this, the idea of habituses is hence vital in that it offers an explanation

3 Such a structural fallacy is echoed even in Jakobson's idea of the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes responsible for the generation of linguistic discourses (see Jakobson).

for the mode of existence of models and for their status.[4] Defined summarily as a mediating mechanism between social webs and the actual practices performed by individual actors,[5] the habitus concept can explain the tendency of people occupying — or aspiring at — similar or proximate social positions to make similar or proximate repertoric choices. In other words, it may explain how cultural models help to maintain social cohesion and interdependencies, as well as social *distinctions*. Moreover, viewed as *internalized* system of dispositions, the habitus is thus taken as "an objective basis for regular modes of behavior, and thus for the regularity of modes of practices" (Bourdieu 1990, 77), on the level of both individual and group action. This point, again, is brought forward very clearly by Elias in his view of the objective of his work: "The problem that ... confronts us has at its center the network of dependence within which scope for individual decision opens to the individual, and which at the same time sets limits to the possible decisions" (1983, 30).

Here, a word of reservation is due: unfortunately, such a conception of habituses as internalized sets of dispositions often implies a one-directional and invariable imprint of social positions on people's action, e.g., the division of eating taste between the classes is analyzed by Bourdieu as directly resulting from economic and technical factors, such as the expenses on food, the amount of time dedicated to cooking, etc. (1984, 185). Further, from Bourdieu's analyses it often emerges that the conversion of social conditions into incorporated schemes, and hence into practices, is viewed as almost "natural," significance-bounded "reflection" (e.g., eating habits are, according to him, in full accordance with the idea of the body held by each class; for instance, fish eating — as opposed to meat eating — is viewed by working class men as *feminine, upper class* by nature, because it requires *restraint* and *delicate* operations (with the front of the mouth, on the tips of the teeth) of small amounts of food (1984, 190)). Accordingly, this might lead to a view of models as consisting of innate, naturally-bounded components, as emerges from the misleading analogy: "just as

4 The discussion of "habitus" in this paper is intended not as a thorough examination of the concept, but only insofar as it contributes to further elaboration of the notion of cultural repertoires. The concept of habitus as such seems to find a most careful theoretical consideration in Bourdieu's theory of fields, certainly owing a great deal to Elias's work (see, e.g., Bourdieu 1984, and elsewhere; Chartier on Elias and the idea of habitus; see also Brubaker; Jenkins; Mahar, Harker and Wilkes). Admittedly, the discussion of this concept often tends to be overcomplicated or too vague (e.g., Bourdieu qtd. in Mahar 35; see Sheffy 1991), to be efficiently applied as a research hypothesis. Nonetheless, all commentators agree that this concept is crucial, at least as a meta-theoretical guideline "designed to focus attention on the kind of conceptual framework that is required of any adequate sociological theory, namely one that incorporates dispositional as well as structural concepts" (Brubaker 760).

5 "the system of internalized dispositions that mediates between social structures and practical activity ... through which social life is sustained and structures are reproduced or transformed" (Brubaker 758).

animals with feathers are more likely to have wings than animals with fur, so the professors of a substantial cultural capital are more likely to be museum-goers than those who lack such capital" (Bourdieu 1985, 727). Such a conception does not allow for the heterogeneity and dynamics of cultural repertoric options, nor for the leeway for individual variations within a given social formation (see Elias 1987, 182), or for the possibility that one individual actor will be able to use various repertoires in relation to the various figurations relevant to his habitus (e.g., family, occupation, ethnicity, etc.). What lacks in this view is the understanding, so integral to the notion of cultural repertoires in the Polysystem theory, of the *conventional* nature, and hence the relative *autonomy*, of repertoric options (subject to the dynamic of models formation, see below), which, once established, may not only endure beyond the social conditions which initiated them, but also *constrain* — or even *initiate* — other social formations.

MODELS FOR ACTION

At any rate, given the idea of repertoires presented here, it becomes clear that it is committed to explaining human *action* rather than human *understanding*. This point is crucial, since it makes this theory essentially distant from attempts at "culture interpretations" which aim at constructing "meanings."[6] More specifically, Polysystem theory's idea of models differs from the way models are discussed in other related fields, where this notion is designed to deal mainly with problems of *perception* and *interpretation*. In these fields, models are perceived as sets of claims about the world, or as basic thematic structures underlying views people have for different areas of life. One such relevant idea of models is suggested by Jurij Lotman and the Soviet semioticians in their

6 This distinction has given rise to a debate, which "has raged among sociologists and anthropologists for several academic generations over defining the term 'culture'" (Swidler 273). Ann Swidler summarizes this debate as follows: "Since the seminal work of Clifford Geertz (1973), the older definition of culture as the entire way of life of a people, including their technology and material artifacts, or that (associated with the name of Ward Goodenough) as everything one would need to know to become a functioning member of a society, have been displaced in favor of defining culture as the publicly available symbolic forms through which people experience and express meaning.... This is not because sociologists really believe in the values paradigm. Indeed, it has been thoroughly criticized. But without an alternative formulation of culture's causal significance, scholars either avoid causal questions or admit the values paradigm through the back door." Swidler thus concludes by proposing an alternative analysis of culture, which "consists of three steps. First, it offers an image of culture as a 'tool kit' of symbols, stories, rituals, and world-views, which people may use in varying configurations to solve different kinds of problems. Second, to analyze culture's causal effects, it focuses on 'strategies of action,' persistent ways of ordering action through time. Third, it sees culture's causal significance not in defining ends of action, but in providing *cultural components that are used to construct strategies of action*" (Swidler 273; my emphasis).

conception of sign-systems. In their view, human systems differ from all other kinds of (non-human) systems in that they are "*modeling* systems," namely, in that they also constitute a global "view of the world." Hence, for them, a model is a signifying *structure*, often no more than a thematic opposition, which frames the sense people can make of the world.[7]

Another prominent idea of cultural models is that offered in the field of cognitive anthropology (see Holland and Quinn).[8] In this field, models are often construed as verbal expressions such as *metaphors* (for instance, "marriage is an ongoing journey" (Quinn))[9]; or as "*folk theories*," i.e., quasi-scientific claims (for example, "emotions have body effects; the physiological effect of anger is heat" (Lakoff and Kövecses)).[10] A central notion developed in this field is that of *schemes*, i.e., a "small number of conceptual objects and their relations to each other" (D'Andrade 112).[11] This concept seems to approximate more closely the idea of models in repertoire research, although even this one is basically focused on the sense people can make of a situation rather than the way they act in it.

Against this background, the concept of model in the Polysystem theory is concerned less with formulating people's interpretation of the world than with how their activity in it is generated.[12] Consequently, it is by no means reducible to a thematic paraphrase, but rather perceived as an imaginary *set of instructions* for generating any number of items (behaviors or products) appropriate in a given situation. Accordingly, a poetical model will more probably be contained in the components and sequence of a text composition rather than in its thematic

7 For instance, the "world" of the dead in Western Christian culture is schematically perceived as triangularly structured, with heaven, hell and purgatory; by contrast, in medieval Russian culture, the world of the dead is binary, consisting only of heaven and hell (Lotman 1985).

8 "Cultural models are presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared (although not necessariiy to the exclusion of other, alternative models) by the members of society and that play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behavior in it" (Holland and Quinn 4). It should be noted, however, that in this field of empirical research a more careful attention is paid to the internal arrangement of the model and to the way it is inferred from its manifestations (albeit usually by way of reduction, unfortunately, to what people *say*).

9 Other examples may be, "marriage is an investment" (Quinn); "the body is a container of emotions," "anger is fire" (Lakoff and Kövecses).

10 Another example would be, "home heat control operates as a feedback mechanism" (Kempton).

11 D'Andrade cites the famous example of the scheme, or "cultural model" as he calls it, of buying, as formulated by Rumelhart, which includes a purchaser, a seller, a merchandise, a price, a sale, and money.

12 I do not mean, however, that this theory rejects the validity of this concept from the opposite perspective, namely, its applicability to cultural activities such as interpretation, evaluation, or the like. Yet, all these activities are treated to a far lesser extent in most research conducted within this framework, and remain at the level of possible inference.

structure; similarly, the model for a meal will be closer to the recipe for its preparation rather than to its description as an end product.

These premises, however, complicate the issue regarding the question of how (if at all) models for actions differ from models for interpretation, in terms of both their representation and the way they relate to actual observables. Trying to trace models and describe them, the confusion is always there: What is it exactly that is being described? Can one and the same model be proposed for both what people do and what they know, or, what can be assumed about the conversion from the one to the other?

Furthermore, approaching the subject this way does not rescue the discussion from a more basic puzzlement which forms a serious weakness of any discussion of human, or "natural," models whatsoever, and that is regarding the ever indeterminate nature of models (i.e., the impossibility to decide on their exact content and demarcation as related to their varied manifestations).[13] In what follows I therefore touch mainly upon the following two points of ambiguity: 1) how models for action relate to models of interpretation; and 2) how models, as generative formulas, relate to observables.

GENERATIVE VERSUS DECLARATIVE MODELS

If we think of the repertoire employed by a person or a group as habitus-dependent, then it becomes apparent that it consists of models for both action and interpretation interdependently: the scope (and limits) for the possible choices open to an individual or a group necessarily also includes their scope for possible interpretations. Now, regarding schemes of interpretation, the discussion often tends to be reduced to problems of categorization and evaluation. This is apparently also the case in Bourdieu's notion of habitus, which comprises schemes both for producing practices and for their judgment and classification: "It is in the relationship between the two capacities which define the habitus, the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste), that the represented social world, i.e., the life style, is constituted" (1984, 170). Yet, from Bourdieu's formulations it emerges that a distinction between generative and classificatory schemes is not critical: these schemes appear in his formulations as one and the same, since classifications are "built-in" in every cultural practice,

13 What, if anything, determines the content, demarcation, or internal order of a model? Is there 1) a quantitative condition (i.e., necessary and sufficient components which are repeated); or 2) a hierarchical scaling (i.e., a list of indispensable and marginal components) which constrain the ability to understand a set of observables as deriving from a certain model? These questions (treated neither by the notion of repertoires nor by that of habituses) are addressed by cognitive anthropologists, yet the solutions suggested are problematic, in that they are static and focused exclusively on problems of understanding.

as much as practices, in turn, generate classifications: "The habitus is both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the systems of classification ... of these practices" (1984, 170).

Although this may be very convincing in principle, as a useful working hypothesis it seems to be deficient. For, often, the *distinction* between models for action and models for interpretation appears as a crucial hypothesis for explaining how repertoires are organized, how people learn to use models and how models are adapted or transferred. This distinction contributes to the discussion of the following three points:

1) The level of codification of models. As a rule, models in the Polysystem theory are intended as *practical* models, i.e., the *implied* instructions which people are inclined to deduce and follow most "naturally," either consciously or unconsciously, as competent actors in a given culture, in all areas of life, from the formal public behavior to the unnoticed intimate daily routines. As such, this idea actually corresponds with Bourdieu's conception of *dispositional schemes*, a central aspect of which is that they are *incorporated, conditioning action which the actor is not necessarily able to report.* As Bourdieu insists, the habitus accounts for the "practical logic" which is only vaguely *sensed*, through the constantly improvised performances, as a fluctuating idea of "what one can allow oneself to do or feel" without intention (1985, 728): "The schemes of thought and expression [the agent] has acquired are the basis of the *intentionless invention* of regulated improvisation. ... The habitus is the universalizing mediation which causes an individual agent's practices, without either explicit reason or signifying intent, to be nonetheless "sensible" and "reasonable" (1990, 79).

Admittedly, for many practices, such as using language, playing games, cooking, driving, or even manners, not to mention practices which are codified by law, there actually exist formulated instructions (in the form of various texts, manuals, courses, etc.). Yet, according to Bourdieu, these formulations of routines are hardly relevant to the performance of practices: even in those cases where they exist, he argues, the actual behavior of people tends to follow a *practical logic* rather than a formalized one (1990, 77).[14] What is than the function of formal instructions? Apparently, explicit formulation of practices, even when their depletion is obvious, may often serve as means of judgment and classification. This seems to be true with regards to etiquette manuals as well as to cookery books. Most often, the central function of cookery books is to legitimize a style of cooking, to give labels to exemplary dishes, or to indicate the use of certain distinguishing ingredients, rather than actually to teach people

14 "In the French army they used to teach you ... how to take a step forward; it's clear that nobody would be able to walk or march if they had to conform to the theory of how to take a step in order to walk" (Bourdieu 1990, 77).

how to cook.

2) The incompatibility between the competence to generate and the competence to classify. In any event, the gap between generative and classificatory models need not be connected to a weak codification. It can also be a matter of incompatibility between two different kinds of cultural competence, that to perform practices, on the one hand, and that to interpret (i.e., to classify, evaluate and describe) them, on the other. This issue is brought forward, for instance, by the idea of "folk models" developed in the field of cognitive anthropology (see, e.g., D'Andrade). In this field, an inconsistency has already been observed between "knowledge of" and "knowledge how":

> Most informants do not have an organized view of the entire model. They *use* the model but they cannot produce a reasonable *description* of the model. In this sense, the model is like a well-learned set of procedures one knows how to carry out rather than a body of facts one can recount. This difference corresponds to the distinction made in artificial intelligence circles between "procedural" knowledge, such as knowing how to ride a bicycle, and "declarative" knowledge, such as knowing the history of France.... (D'Andrade 114)

It should be stressed, however, that the issue here is not the sheer motoric capacity of riding bicycles or playing football, but rather the acquisition of *culturally signalizing and distinguishable models* to do so. The point is that the models accounting for the knowledge to produce such practices are different — and often more complex — than those accounting for the knowledge to interpret them. D'Andrade's analysis of the folk model of a football game focuses eventually on how people *understand* what happens during the game. Hence, he observes that people use inter-subjectively shared models, the prominent features of which are 1) that the interpretation of the practices they generate is experienced as an "obvious fact" of the world; 2) that a great part of the information associated with them can remain tacit (113). However, such characterization would be inadequate if we had to analyze how people *act* during the game. For, in producing practices, the actor necessarily makes active choices (however unconsciously) in all levels of the repertoire, to the last detail, including those details that are overlooked in models for interpretation.

In this connection, it should be noted, that the idea of modeling includes two different aspects which are often confused: a) *replication* : in this sense, the model is a detailed abstract pattern equally repeated in any number of concrete copies,[15] and b) *aspiration* : in this sense, the model consists of certain

15 The illustrative (however rather problematic) metaphor for this kind of modeling will be that of industrial production (e.g., cars, shoes), and its most overt manifestation is the fact that the abstraction of the infinite number of items is represented in a sketch. Indeed, the tendency to allow for "models" in this sense is in an inverse ratio to the canonicity of the material

exemplary items serving as a source for imitation, without rendering a consistent pattern to be fully realized in all its manifestations.

Certainly, this latter sense of modeling (which is close to the notion of prototypes in cognitive theory),[16] can be easily observed in models of interpretation: certain components and occurrences in the arena are sufficient to signalize the events of the football game, just as certain kinds of pasta, or the use of certain spices, exemplify people's knowledge of Italian cookery. Yet the problem is that there is no systematic way to verify that these classificatory "folk models" can be effectively converted to, and replicated as, models for action, since, as I mentioned before, active performance of these practices inevitably demands the application of a lot more particular sets of instructions, the greater part of which remain implicit.

This bears on both the way models are appropriated or used by people in the culture as well as the way models may be detected in research. The problem is well illustrated by Carlo Ginzburg's analysis of "The Morelli Method" suggested for distinguishing original paintings from fakes. The idea is that the authenticity of the master's works reveals itself precisely through minor, peripheral details, instead of the most obvious ones (e.g., ear lobes, fingernails or toes, instead of "the central figure's eyes raised to heaven" or the smiles of women). All in all, this argument shows that the role of details in the appropriation, or the construction, of models is neither predetermined from the observables, nor equally deployed in classificatory and generative models. More specifically, it implies, first, that models for interpretation are, as a rule, more general and crude than generative models, that is, the final product encapsulates a lot more minute and complex cultural distinctions indispensable for analyzing how it was produced than to how it is interpreted.[17] Further, it also shows that often only by focusing on details *that are not included in the classifying model* the actual

discussed. The more the field of study is viewed as "popular" (i.e., for this matter, a field of "production" as opposed to "creation"), the greater the tendency to discuss "models" (with reference to the "industrial production" metaphor). In these fields "production" is biased as supposedly devoid of "personal choice," "originality" or "richness," which according to people's prejudices is characteristic of exclusive cultural provinces only (such as, notably, "literature" and "the arts"); see, e.g., Sheffy 1992.

16 For instance, "the most representative members of a category": the model determines people's understanding of real-world experience in that it "frames ... a simplified world in which prototypical events unfold" (Holland and Quinn 23). Holland and Quinn's summary refers to a significant body of research, notably made by Rosch, Filmore, Berlin and Kay; Kay and McDaniel.

17 Ginzburg's argument, too, is not only concerned with reduction of information. His analysis of a "hunter's detection" suggests that reconstructing the process of production out of surviving traces involves not only the filling-in of omitted information, but also its unfolding as a sequence which assumedly is secretly encapsulated in the "final evidence."

inscriptive model may be revealed: the elements on which one relies for distinguishing a professor from a businessman are not identical with those needed for authentically acting as either of them in all the possible situations that condition their conduct.

It follows, further, that it is in fact impossible to deduce generative instructions from classificatory models. The analytical scheme of a blues song will apparently be insufficient as instructions for performing one, just as a grammar book tells us very little about how people actually use the language. And not only because they are official, representative descriptions, nor simply because they are too reductive in terms of the amount of the information conveyed. The classificatory models they offer eventually fail to account for the improvisational nature which is "built-in" in models for action, i.e., the sequence of possible choices in a variety of possible situations, which would be more adequately perceived of as a "flow chart" rather than merely as a cluster of claims.[18]

3) The historical discrepancy between classificatory and generative models. Finally, juxtaposing "knowing to ride a bicycle" or "knowing to cook" with "knowing to report about these faculties" would be revealing in quite another direction. Another reason for the inconsistency between the two may be that the actor employs a *ready-made* formula for *identifying and describing* the practice, which may be determined not so much by his bare capacity to perform it, or by his actual habits, as by his attitude towards the practice. That is, an actor may employ a declarative model which he acquired in a different way and from different sources than the relevant generative one. In any case, this model may be innate and obligatory in the actor's habitus to no lesser extent than the practical model.

This point will be better clarified with reference to other practices, which are more obviously loaded with "ideology," such as the way people report their professional ethics, their conduct with children, their linguistic habits, or their taste in reading, in music or in art, etc. (see Bourdieu 1984). Evidently, one's actual way with one's mate and the way one evaluates and describes romantic or marital relationship, for all possible inconsistencies, both pertain to the same person's habitus. Still they function differently, without necessarily excluding each other (e.g., the one would pertain to dispositions the person acquires "at home" while the other would pertain to those acquired from "education": books, schooling, magazines, etc.).

Now, this co-existence of incongruous models can be the result of - and can

18 For instance, instead of "using slang pertains to unofficial cultural strata, hence it is marked as vulgar and offensive," the flow-chart would be: "in an official meeting, using slang is improper, unless it comes from the senior person, if the meeting prolongs, as means of creating a sense of familiarity; it is, however, inconceivable if ladies are present," etc.

serve as means for — cultural change. This point is therefore critical to the conception of both repertoires and habituses, since it allows for the *dynamics* of cultural models, an aspect which other theories normally tend to neglect. And a central aspect of this dynamics is precisely the tendency to *institutionalize*, which introduces to the discussion the possibility that models are not uniformly "orchestrated" with respect to the social formations which they sustain. Some of them may be consolidated as "cultural entities" to the extent that they appear to have "lives of their own,"[19] whereas others may be noticeable (if at all) only as fuzzy and *ad hoc* entities (see Barsalou). Hence, under certain conditions, certain classificatory models may become established as authorized interpretations, to the extent that they appear as "characterizing" the group, and, enduring modifications in the actual performances of the relevant practices, they may eventually be superimposed on other practical models which persist in different fields or by different groups regardless of their initial classifications (for instance, this is how "the worship of nature," which stemmed from French seventeenth-century court culture and from English poetry, was embraced by eighteenth-century German bourgeois intelligentsia to be finally attributed to the German "indigenous" national ethos).[20] In short, it suggests that models are constantly constructed by groups as a combination of generative and classificatory patterns deriving from different sources, as means of maintaining cultural *figurations*. Classifications (i.e., patterns of perception and judgment) established as part of certain life styles can be appropriated in other cultural scenes and through the right social processes can be assimilated to more amorphous practices which originated and are activated elsewhere. This observation, which is a major element thoroughly

19 The tendency to institutionalize (at the expense of corresponding with the variability and fluidity of "society") is also put forward as crucial by Elias in his discussion of human "figuration": "The facts that the figurations formed by people often change far more slowly than the people forming them, and that therefore young people can take up the positions vacated by older ones; the fact, in short, that the same or similar figuration can frequently be formed over an extended period by different individuals, make it appear as if these figurations have a kind of 'existence' outside individuals" (Elias 1983, 26).

20 For other examples, consider the appropriation of ideologically loaded characteristics of avant-garde trends in fashion, music, etc., by the "mass" industry and market. One such paradigmatic example is Bogatyrëv's analysis of the practice of wearing galoshes in Russian villages during the prewar period (as a rule, his works are rich in such observations): "in the city the dominant function of galoshes was to protect the feet from moisture and mud; in the village, however, the dominant function was aesthetic" (Bogatyrëv 76). Were we to formulate Bogatyrëv's insight in terms of repertoric choices, we might say, for instance, that in the former case the inscription was something like: "for a respectable appearance use regularly — under the requiring conditions — appropriate items intended to maintain health, hygiene, convenience and tidiness, such as umbrella, gloves, galoshes, etc."; whereas in the latter case it would more probably be something like: "for signalizing sophistication and extravagance, or for festivity, put on a (probably rare and precious) non-traditional (urban) item, such as galoshes" (Bogatyrëv 76).

elaborated in repertoire research, is also an important implication of Bourdieu's conception of the habitus:

> Because agents apprehend objects through the schemes of perception and appreciation of their habitus, it would be naive to support that all practitioners of the same sport (or any other practice) confer the same meaning on their practice or even, strictly speaking, that they are practicing the same practice. It can easily be shown that the different classes do not agree on the profits expected from sport.... And though there are cases in which the dominant function of the practice is reasonably clearly designated, one is practically never entitled to assume that the different classes expect the same thing from the same practice. ... Only a methodical analysis of the variations in the function and meaning conferred on the different sporting activities will enable one to escape from abstract, formal "typologies" based (it is the law of the genre) on universalizing the researcher's personal experience; and to construct the table of the sociologically pertinent experience in terms of which the agents (consciously or unconsciously) choose their sports. (1984, 209-11)

Tel Aviv University

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