

CADERNOS EBAPE.BR

Cadernos EBAPE.BR

ISSN: 1679-3951

Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Escola Brasileira de
Administração Pública e de Empresas

LESSA, BRUNO DE SOUZA; LOPES, FERNANDO DIAS; CAREGNATO, CÉLIA ELIZABETE

Reflexivity as a mediating element - The case of Francisco Milanez

Cadernos EBAPE.BR, vol. 19, no. 1, 2021, January-March, pp. 152-164

Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas

DOI: 10.1590/1679-395120200027x

Available in: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=323266357012>

- How to cite
- Complete issue
- More information about this article
- Journal's webpage in redalyc.org

UABEM
redalyc.org

Scientific Information System Redalyc

Network of Scientific Journals from Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and
Portugal

Project academic non-profit, developed under the open access initiative

Reflexivity as a mediating element – The case of Francisco Milanez

BRUNO DE SOUZA LESSA ¹

FERNANDO DIAS LOPES ²

CÉLIA ELIZABETE CAREGNATO ³

¹ UNIVERSIDADE DE FORTALEZA (UNIFOR) / PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO, FORTALEZA – CE, BRAZIL

² UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL (UFRGS) / PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO, PORTO ALEGRE – RS, BRAZIL

³ UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL (UFRGS) / PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO, PORTO ALEGRE – RS, BRAZIL

Abstract

This article aimed to discuss how Pierre Bourdieu's concept of reflexivity was conceived, and how it influenced and was developed by Bernard Lahire's in his sociology. To operationalize the way the concept is articulated, but emphasizing its development by Lahire, this paper presents as an empirical case how reflexivity was engendered in José Francisco Bernardes Milanez' biographical trajectory, a historical environmental activist from the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. The central argument we defend is that the Bourdieusian-inspired concept of reflexivity has a certain objectivist and structuralist weight, which gives a secondary role to individuals' reflection capacity and agency. Despite this weight, reflexivity acts as a mediator between structures and their individual agency within actors' social lives. In this sense, reflexive capacities can be better understood and analyzed by considering the ways individuals connect their daily practices, dialectically and concomitantly, with reflexive processes. This article emphasizes that sociological analyses at the individual level can be potentially more substantive if they consider structure, agency, and reflexivity in an integrated way. Finally, we argue that the conceptual and argumentative association of elements from the two authors helps to avoid false antinomies.

Keywords: Reflexivity. Bourdieu. Lahire. Agapan. Brazil.

A reflexividade como elemento de mediação – O caso de Francisco Milanez

Resumo

Este artigo teve como objetivo debater a forma como o conceito de reflexividade é concebido por Pierre Bourdieu, e como se desenvolve e influencia a sociologia, no nível dos indivíduos, de Bernard Lahire. Para operacionalizar a forma como o conceito é trabalhado pelos autores, porém enfatizando seu desenvolvimento por Lahire, esse trabalho apresenta como caso empírico o desenvolvimento da reflexividade na trajetória biográfica de José Francisco Bernardes Milanez, ativista histórico do movimento ambiental do estado brasileiro do Rio Grande do Sul. O argumento central que defendemos é que o conceito de reflexividade de inspiração bourdieusiana tem um determinado peso objetivista e estruturalista, o qual secundariza a capacidade de reflexão e agência dos indivíduos, porém apesar desse peso, no âmbito da vida social dos atores a reflexividade atua como elemento mediador entre estruturas e agência individual. Nesse sentido, as capacidades reflexivas podem ser melhor entendidas e analisadas se forem consideradas as maneiras como os indivíduos articulam dialética e concomitantemente suas práticas cotidianas e seus processos reflexivos. Enfatiza-se tanto na escrita deste artigo, quanto nas suas conclusões, que as análises sociológicas no nível dos indivíduos podem ser potencialmente mais substantivas ao considerarem estrutura, agência e reflexividade de forma integrada, algo que a associação de elementos conceituais e argumentativos específicos desses dois autores centralmente destacados habilita, evitando, assim, falsas antinomias.

Palavras-chave: Reflexividade. Bourdieu. Lahire. Agapan. Brasil.

La reflexividad como elemento de mediación – El caso de Francisco Milanez

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es discutir cómo el concepto de reflexividad es concebido por Pierre Bourdieu, y cómo la sociología de Bernard Lahire se desarrolla e influye a nivel de los individuos. Con el fin de operacionalizar la forma en que los autores trabajan el concepto, pero enfatizando su desarrollo por Lahire, este trabajo presenta como caso empírico el desarrollo de la reflexividad en la trayectoria biográfica de José Francisco Bernardes Milanez, activista histórico del movimiento ambientalista del estado brasileño de Río Grande do Sul. El argumento central que defendemos es que el concepto de reflexividad de inspiración bourdieusiana tiene un cierto peso objetivista y estructuralista, que relega la capacidad de reflexión y agencia de los individuos pero, a pesar de este peso, en el ámbito de la vida social de los actores la reflexividad actúa como elemento mediador entre las estructuras y la agencia individual. En este sentido, las capacidades reflexivas pueden entenderse y analizarse mejor si se consideran las formas en que los individuos articulan la dialéctica y, concomitantemente, sus prácticas diarias y procesos reflexivos. Tanto en el desarrollo de este artículo como en sus conclusiones se destaca que los análisis sociológicos a nivel de los individuos pueden ser potencialmente más sustanciales al considerar la estructura, la agencia y la reflexividad de manera integrada, algo que la asociación de elementos conceptuales y argumentales específicos de esos dos autores centralmente destacados permite, evitando así falsas antinomias.

Palabras clave: Reflexividad. Bourdieu. Lahire. Agapan. Brasil.

Article submitted on February 02, 2020 and accepted for publication on August 26, 2020.

[Original version]

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1679-395120200027x>

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to scrutinize the analytical potentialities of Pierre Bourdieu and Bernard Lahire's conceptual apparatuses to understand the role of reflexivity in individual trajectories. As these apparatuses were being gradually reassembled, their potential to comprehend issues concerning social actors' subjectivity became clearer, especially regarding the reflexive processes individuals articulate to give their actions cohesion throughout the different relationships they build in their social lives.

By recognizing the analytical potential as well as by problematizing the approximation between these two authors and their epistemo-theoretical-methodological contributions, we introduce the study of part of Francisco Milanez's biographical trajectory. Francisco is a historical Brazilian environmentalist and member of the *Gaúcha* Association for the Natural Environment Protection¹ (Agapan, in Portuguese), one of the oldest in Latin America. In addition to his Agapan participation, Francisco has also been a militant in many social initiatives in the field of education and environmental protection, causes in which he has championed for decades and developed in different action lines.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to highlight this paper does not focus on the description of Francisco's life, but in the analysis of his trajectory through the Bourdieusian-Lahirean theoretical lens. To achieve such goal, it articulates two main movements. The first one remounts Bourdieu and Lahire's sociologies and stresses the role of reflexivity in these authors stressing their epistemic emphasis. Moreover, in this epistemo-theoretical segment, we critically underline both the neo-objectivism facet and the weight of structures in the Bourdieusian theoretical constructions (Alves, 2016; Correa, 2015; Peters, 2013), which turn out reverberating in Bernard Lahire's contributions (Caetano, 2011, 2012, 2013; Vandenberghe, 2013).

In this sense, we argue that, on the one hand, Bourdieu presents the habitus as a system of structured and structuring dispositions of perception, appreciation, and action constructed and embodied in a particular social and historical context (Bourdieu, 2007). On the other hand, in Lahire this underlying idea of a past that has been incorporated through socialization processes largely remains. Although the second author diverges from the notion that the habitus would confer unity to social actors' practices, the structures embodied in the past continue to update in the present and they end up still conditioning practices according to the contextual frame in which they operate.

Nonetheless, Lahire (1997, 2002, 2004) defends the embodied past would not be unified by features such as economic class or profession. Thus, the habitus would emerge as a stock of heterogeneous dispositions built upon the course of distinct socialization processes. Therefore, Lahire indeed manages to fulfill a gap in Bourdieu's theoretical edifice concerning the plurality of socializations and their incorporation within individuals, but the idea embodied structures update and impact individuals' possibilities for reflexivity remains.

Afterwards, the second movement presents, through analyzing Milanez's sociological biography, the elucubrations exposed in the first moment by employing the authors' conceptual apparatuses in the analysis of part of Francisco Milanez's social trajectory. Methodologically, we resorted to the construction of a sociological biography to employ the conceptual elements allowing us to analyze his social trajectory (Coutinho, 2015; Elias, 1995; Lahire, 2010; Setton, 2015). The analyses and interpretations presented here were only made possible due to oral accounts, writings and documents provided by Francisco himself during a research process that lasted for approximately two years. In this regard, relying on Bourdieu and Lahire's structural and constructional perspectives, we performed an interpretive analysis, which adopts an inherent dialectical stand, in the sense it explores the contradictions enabling the reflexive processes the biographed actor underwent throughout his social trajectory.

In order to achieve its purposes, this paper is structured in the following way. After this introduction, the second section provides a concise contextualization of Pierre Bourdieu's sociological endeavor. The third section then explains this author's theoretical contributions, focusing on presenting how the concept of habitus fits into his epistemological edifice. Afterwards, the fourth and fifth sections introduce the manner the notion of reflexivity is fostered and engendered within Bourdieu's sociology. Later, the sixth section moves on to develop how Bernard Lahire reflected on the Bourdieusian

¹ The association is one of the first organizations in Brazil to take part in the struggle for the environmental cause, being founded in April 1971. The association pioneered, for instance, the struggles for the advancement of agroecology as well as the defense of the Amazon and Atlantic Forests. It also produced the first Brazilian law against pesticides in 1982. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/family-farming/network/network-detail/en/c/170832/>. More complete information about it can also be found at: <http://www.agapan.org.br/>

concepts and the advances this author has suggested for them. The next section introduces the methodological procedures underlying the operationalization of this work. The eighth scrutinizes Francisco Milanez's social trajectory, by employing the reflections and concepts based on Bourdieusian-Lahirean theoretical lenses presented. Finally, the last section offers our concluding remarks.

THE ATTEMPT TO SOLVE FUNDAMENTAL CONTROVERSIES

Bourdieu's research efforts intended to mitigate, if not solve, some major antinomies underpinning Social Sciences in his days, namely, structure vs. agency, objectivism vs. subjectivism and theoretical vs. empirical work (Alves, 2016; Caetano, 2011, 2013; Peters, 2013, 2017; Vandenberghe, 2013). In this sense, Wacquant (1992) emphasizes that Bourdieu was primarily concerned with the first two, as they implied in two grave errors.

On the one hand, Bourdieu criticized scholars who followed an excessively structural and objectivist view, depicting social agents as bearers of structures that would fit mechanically and thoughtlessly within these agents. These objectifiable historical relations, i.e., the structures, existed as an imperious, reified and hypostatized way to these criticized scholars, who pushed such structures into agents, making them act according to a certain previous assumed conduct. For example, agents belonging to a particular class structure would exhibit practices in an expected pattern for that class, whether it was bourgeois or proletarian (Alves, 2016; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Peters, 2013, 2017a; Vandenberghe, 2013).

On the other hand, Bourdieu formulated a solid critique to the subjectivist error, which was to grant full rationality, reflexivity and agency to agents over the social world, disregarding historically incorporated social relations as well as the spaces where such interactions occur. In other words, the subjectivist error neglected (or even ignored) the transmutation of social organization, history, and social positions into individuals' mental schemes of appreciation, evaluation and action. Thus, endowed with total rationality, agents would be able to legislate upon and fully accomplish their choices (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Lahire, 2004, 2005).

Returning to the third controversy, i.e., the division between theoretical and empirical work, the Bourdieusian critique stated this separation would be fallacious. Bourdieu's migration from Philosophy to Sociology as well as the conduction of his ethnographic research in Algeria and Bearn consolidated the prerogative of performing both theoretical and empirical moments in Bourdieu's epistemology. Furthermore, he reached a similar conclusion considering the existence of the objectivist and subjectivist instances in the making of social research, that is, these instances would be inseparable from one another (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Peters, 2017b).

Bourdieu's solution drew on Gaston Bachelard's scientific rationalism, linking it to Ernst Cassirer's relational perspective of the social world (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Peters, 2013, 2017b). Therefore, the different instances and levels of reality could not be thought casuistically in a timely manner and it would be imperative to produce theoretical and empirical research relationally. The habitus is the theoretical brainchild of this epistemological endeavor.

THE HABITUS AS A MEDIATING INSTRUMENT

The habitus is pivotal to understand the role of practices in Bourdieusian theory, insofar as it allows unifying structure and agency as well as objectivism and subjectivism. This generating principle of practices is built (and builds) upon a chain of mediation and it engenders a multiplicity of actions in social spaces through the consolidation of embedded perception and evaluation schemes. Hence, Bourdieu takes the conceptual leap towards a sociology of perceptive and cognitive possibilities still situating agents in structurally situated positions. Furthermore, the French author brings forth that agents' bodies influence their objectified practices and signals to the mandatory interaction between individuals and social spaces to engender such practices (Alves, 2016; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Caetano, 2011, 2013; Correa, 2015; Peters, 2013, 2017a; Vandenberghe, 2013).

The variability resulting from differences between socio-historical contexts and the different positions agents occupy exert a structural constraint on individuals' representations (Peters, 2013, 2017b). Such variability is the first sign of the reflexive processes showing the habitus is not a static concept. The construction of the habitus' constituent elements and the social world are essential for Bourdieusian research, which is why the investigation of the sociogenesis of practical dispositions and interpretative schemes (as well as of the field in which they interact) demonstrate they are related to each other.

In addition, the alleged antinomy subjectivism and objectivism or between agency and structure are inseparable in the concept of the habitus. Being incorporated history, the habitus never ceases to be updated, carrying with it elements of socio-historical continuity and new experiences from contemporary times (Alves, 2016; Caetano, 2011, 2013; Correa, 2015). Furthermore, the articulation between macro and microsociological dimensions takes place through a relational sociology engendered in the theoretical and empirical spheres simultaneously.

However, Peters (2013) and Caetano (2011, 2013) intelligently pointed out that for Bourdieu the embedded past might have an overwhelming weight over individuals' practices as they are ontologically articulated with a specific field. Even though Bourdieu deviates from Levi-Straussian or Althusserian objectivism, he falls short on a sort of neo-objectivism expressed by the pressure of incorporated structures in the habitus (Peters, 2013). Moreover, when analyzed at individual level, the situations agents experience become activating elements of these incorporated structures, thus, leaving limited space for reflexive capabilities (Caetano, 2011, 2012, 2013).

REFLEXIVITY WITH AND AGAINST ITSELF

Bourdieu warned that all individuals are bound to the conditioning assumptions related to their structural position. In this regard, it is essential to employ methods of analysis against ourselves to escape the epistemic pitfalls linked to our conditioned unconscious and such processes, different than the ones we are used to, would also need to be applied, specially to scientists (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

To perform this reflexive turn, Bourdieu proposes three movements. First, the social conditions of production of the objectified subject must be themselves objectified, thus, the agent is delineated from the standpoint of a class, a genre and the interests that tend to connect with him. Second, the reflexive analysis turns itself to the institutional dimension, i.e., the field in which the individual finds himself; this moment links the agents to the relative position he occupies in the social world, integrating macro and microcosms. Third, the researcher aims at himself, in a process called participatory objectification, to uncover the mental schemes that lead him to observe the universe in which he finds himself (Bourdieu, 2004a, 2004b; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

This reflexive turn is seminal since social agents are immersed in an idiosyncratic partiality of the lived world, and it is the scientist's function to build the virtual structures that unveil the conditions of possibility for these microcosms. The centrality of this reflexive turn also relies on the scientist's recollection of his own social trajectory and his position in the field, inasmuch as it is then when he can find himself subject to the conditions he assigns to others (Bourdieu, 2004b). By following these procedures, Bourdieu uses the authority of science as the main alternative to acknowledge the conditions weighing over agents. Moreover, the degrees of freedom for actions are deemed based on the recognition of determined social structures, and it is the social scientist's projective position that can provide objective meaning to agents' practices (Correa, 2015; Peters, 2017a).

Therefore, Bourdieu accentuates the privileged role of social sciences and their prominence for analyzing realities. Although on the level of interactions agents may believe they are reflexive beings, in fact, when they think about themselves and their conditions, their reflections tend to be drawn back to structural and symbolic conditionings implicit to their position in the social space (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Without the scientific work and its reflexive turn, reflexivity itself turns out linked to the objective social conditionings that were intended to be unveiled at first (Bourdieu, 2004a, 2004b; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Correa, 2015; Peters, 2017a).

THE WEIGHT OF THE OBJECTIVE WORLD

Regarding the density of objectivism in Bourdieu's work, Peters (2013) brings forward that for the French author the individual actor would not have an autonomous causal power to transform the pillars sustaining the social space. According to Crossley (2001), the rarity of great events that could give rise to reflexivity also puts Bourdieu's view of the social agent in check. In this sense, although it is true individuals are not endowed with total rationality as well as they cannot act in the social world regardless of historical relational structures, it is also not empirically possible to state individual reflexive processes can take place only in overwhelming situations.

In this regard, both Peters (2013) and Caetano (2011, 2013) argue that, for Bourdieu, there is not only a methodological, but also an ontological precedence of objectivity over the subjective element of social reality. This conception is present in Bourdieu whereas he asserts it would be only in the breakdown of ontological complicity between structures and dispositions (the *hysteresis* effect) that agents would be capable of reflexive resolutions (Bourdieu, 1989). Hence, the reverse process in which the conscious exercise of reflexivity could lead the social actor to rupture partially or totally with such ontological complicity is denied.

However, bringing Lahire closer to Bourdieu, Caetano (2012, 2011, 2013) emphasizes that even though Lahire states the multiple socialization processes individuals undergo compel them to a larger number of potentially reflexive situations, in neither the authors social actors' reflexivity would be the focus of a research agenda. In a smaller degree, Lahire winds up reproducing the Bourdieusian objectivist scheme insofar as the stock of dispositions within Lahire's plural actor continues to be activated by stimuli coming from contextual frameworks. The plurality and heterogeneity of dispositions and contexts are indeed much more patent to Lahire than they are to Bourdieu, but the embodied past (in the *habitus*) and the objective world (in the contexts) still carry an undeniable influence over individuals' reflexive capacities in Lahirean sociology.

REFLEXIVITY FOR BERNARD LAHIRE – CONCEPTS AND POSSIBILITIES

Although individuals' dispositions are intertwined and built upon past socializations, they are also exposed to the processes of social change inherent to societies. Individuals can be reflexive insofar as they are capable of thinking about themselves and their conditions in the social world. In the Bourdieusian-Lahirean dispositionalist theory, reflexivity is directly related to social conditions of possibility external to individuals. Hence, there is a pressure of the objective world over individual reflexive processes in Bernard Lahire's theoretical-methodological propositions, which comes about, in broad terms, due to the onto-epistemological proximity between Lahire and Bourdieu.

Nevertheless, even though we hold a reflexive stand about it in this work, we also acknowledge and employ Lahire's theoretical framework to operationalize the concept of reflexivity, starting with the assumption that social actors relate to their dispositions in multiple ways. In this perspective, Lahire defends individuals have different degrees of reflexivity in accordance with the plural contextual frameworks in which they have interacted throughout their social trajectories. The assumption of such plurality enables the researcher to treat each person as a socialized subject holding an individuality going beyond characteristics such as social class. However, such assumption does not deem the individual as completely autonomous in the interactions he lives in different social spheres (Caetano, 2011, 2012, 2013; Lahire, 2002; Vandenberghe, 2013). In our daily lives, the logic of practice derived from Bourdieu's practical sense (Bourdieu, 1991a) and reflexive processes happen in systematic and continuous articulation. Thus, it is not possible to affirm people would act solely guided by customs or routines, nor it would be plausible to consider that actors would live oriented by full rational choices (Caetano, 2012).

In this sense, Lahire (2002, 2006, 2015) asserts social actors do not abandon their conditions of agents constituted by social and historical conditions. Thus, processes of socialization are essential for us because they enable the progressive incorporation of social structures in the form of dispositional schemes, i.e., modes of thinking, acting and feeling. Dialectically, such schemes are preponderant to the way individuals confer meaning and co-construct the social space itself.

Nonetheless, the author is also critical about Bourdieu's influence on his own work (Vandenberghe, 2013). For example, Lahire considers the plural actor as a derivative of diverse influences, subject to a society with intense internal differentiation. Elements such as the development of the cultural industry, and the greater social division of labor offer increasingly heterogeneous socializing instances, so that individuals would internalize a stock of equally heterogeneous dispositions. In this sense, the greater or lesser internal coherence of an actor would be related to a historically inconstant array of different socializing forces (Lahire, 2002, 2012).

Moreover, the multiplicity of socialization matrices makes it impossible to establish the ontological priority of one context over others. Accordingly, individuals' actions are constructed precisely by the diversity of social experiences to which people have been subjected. In addition to this stock of internalized experiences, actors also gain a practical sense and reflexive capabilities enabling them to have some degree of awareness about the appropriateness and relevance of their dispositional schemes when embedded in specific contextual frameworks (Lahire, 2015; Vandenberghe, 2013).

As a result of those elucubrations, Lahire's notion of practical sense differs conceptually from the Bourdieusian one (Caetano, 2012). On the one hand, the two notions are similar as they are both the product of learning trajectories that turn out making practices spontaneous, naturalizing them in our social lives. They also assume that practices occur as a pre-reflexive as well as semi-conscious mode of action (Bourdieu, 1991a, 1991b). On the other hand, Lahire (2004, 2005) confronts the idea of such pre-reflexive adjustment to contexts by empirically demonstrating that in the use of writing, for example, there are mnemonic, organizing, planning, and reflexive functions rupturing with the practical sense. There is a whole set of practices going beyond pre-reflexive actions, i.e., such practices were considered, reasoned and controlled in individuals' lives.

Notwithstanding the relevance of Lahire's contributions, Caetano (2013) highlights a pertinent gap in the sociologist's theorizations. Even though Lahire concedes that social agents are plural actors, they would be so due to the social and historical effects of their past socializations plus the width of the ones taking place the present, along with the logic of practice pervading their biographies. In other words, the more plural individuals' socializations are, the more heterogeneous these social actors tend to be. The emerging issue is that such actors become defined primarily by the material conditions of possibility coming from the different social contexts in which they had been formed. Taking this critique to its limits, there would be nothing internal to people that could not be sought and explained externally.

Despite the relevance of Caetano's (2013) problematization, this objectivist weight is justifiable in the Lahirean research program. By emphasizing the enduring power of socialization processes through the study of social trajectories, Lahire seeks the understanding on how and why actors make decisions and live their lives. Furthermore, by remounting the metaphor of the social world folded in individuals, Lahire encompasses the distinct social fields and positions present within the actors themselves. Therefore, the crises leading to reflexivity tend to be more common in his works than in Bourdieu's, since the agonistic logic of social fields comes into existence within people (Vandenberghe, 2013).

To comprehend individuals' reflexive capabilities, one must also understand their material conditions of existence and that is where the Lahire's interpretative tools prove to be contributive (Lahire, 1997, 2002, 2004). For instance, the notion of contexts of interaction (or contextual frameworks) allows to integrate external aspects to agents' behaviors, which are also enabled by their positions in the social space. In addition, these contexts give rise to different levels of reflection and it is also in the course of social interactions that individuals can reflect, with the presence of others, about problems, goals, plans and intentions, elucidating their own possibilities and limitations (Caetano, 2013). Furthermore, the interconnection between social factors and reflexivity has a double meaning. First, it considers the effects resources and contexts have on how individuals see themselves. Second, it takes into account the causal effectiveness of reflexivity in contextual frameworks and in the material conditions of existence (Caetano, 2012).

Underlying such interconnection, there is also a temporal dimension. Insofar as each person's ability to reflect refers to external circumstances, it will also vary in distinct ways according to the contextual frameworks lived in the present time. In this sense, Lahire's work helps to recall that the situations of crises with the most frequent practical meaning in daily life are not only structural ones. Therefore, the more an actor engages in a practice in a particular context, the more likely he is to distance himself and reflect about it (Caetano, 2013; Lahire, 1997, 2002, 2004).

As a form of providing an empirical understanding to its analytical implications and to recognize the epistemological potential coming from these conceptual apparatuses, we present the case of José Francisco Bernardes Milanez, a historical environmental activist and current president of the *Gaúcha* Association for the Natural Environment Protection (Agapan).

METHODOLOGY

In a sociological biography such as the one brought forward here, to the same extent as a sociological analysis on an individual level, the dispositions of a subject are inferred based on the facts underpinning the social actor's trajectory as it was narrated. Since no narrative is constituted without taking a specific perspective, but rather social processes, the researcher needs to be parsimonious in reconstructing the autobiographical narrative, as it is common for the biographed to design a more coherent version of himself, creating the phenomenon Bourdieu (2005) famously referred to as the biographical illusion. Such phenomenon might be witnessed, for example, on the differentiated attention the person gives to a certain context of practice or the emphasis he gives to a specific set of coherent events. This is how the interviewee fosters the elements that best depicts his "favorite" version of himself (Coutinho, 2015; Lahire, 2010; Lima, 2015).

At the time of the interviews, awareness became seminal in order to avoid two methodological mistakes. Firstly, in the course of the interview, the interviewer did not tie in the questions and descriptions the interviewee posed, nor did he cling to selections and situations. Regarding such, the researcher asked open questions to which the interviewee did not necessarily have prompt answers, as these questions would provide the best material for a truly sociological construction once they better incorporate the principle that social actors are not always conscious of the motives conditioning their practices. Secondly, during the analysis, it was imperative to pay close attention to the traces of the dispositions in the processes that could be extracted from important moments of the interview, which the actors themselves mostly ignore. Because the interviewee might be unable to assume he is not always aware of his motivations, the social scientist strives to acquire some surplus of vision, which enables him to analyze the information beyond the elements the actor is actually aware (Lahire, 2004, 2010). Consequently, the non-structured interviews held open questions, which did not follow a previously devised structure, but rather asked about and considered processes based on accounts about the interviewee's childhood/teenage years, his school/ academic trajectory, his professional life or his political career, depending on the narrative path he wished to track and following a similar approach to the one employed by Coutinho (2015) and Lima (2015).

Furthermore, aiming to identify synchronic and diachronic variations of dispositions, an important part of each interview was devoted to commenting on moments of crisis and change, as these are considered the ones that potentially unveil the reflexive transformations in the stocks of dispositions. Most frequently, it is when the objective conditions of existence change that certain dispositions may be actualized (Lahire, 2004).

In addition, following the possibilities for data collection in interpretative qualitative research, the operationalization and consequent construction of this sociological biography also resorted to the use of documental research (Stake, 2011). According to this the author, when applied to qualitative studies, documental research has the power to provide complementarity to the information that respondents give about themselves, thus, they are essential to elaborate a quality investigation. Moreover, such complementarity supplies greater legitimacy, validity and richness to the analysis itself.

Therefore, in accordance with this perspective, sources such as photos, newspaper articles, videos about the activities of the biographed and some of his personal documents were also employed. This documental research, which proved itself to be fundamental, occurred organically, as it was considered methodologically bounded to the theoretical lenses underlying this research (Stake, 2011).

The research process began in June 2017, when the possibility to make Milanez's biography started to be drawn. As mentioned in other sections, Milanez was chosen not only for this singular trajectory and importance in the Brazilian environmental preservationist movement, but also for his role in Agapan, where he served as president in different terms and has always been a close militant. The whole research process lasted for two years, being concluded in about June 2019, which accounted with numerous informal conversations, meetings, academic and non-academic events. In this regard, the interviewer had the opportunity to deepen into the interviewee's professional and personal lives during those two years.

Furthermore, critical moments and the consequential transformations in dispositional stocks were regarded to be endowed with an instrumentality that, in turn, permitted the identification of diachronic variations in these stocks. From this standpoint, another strategy was to ask the interviewee in which situations he believed he had not behaved according to the general patterns with which he normally aligned himself. By asking in what situations a person does not behave in coherence with

his or her most idiosyncratic behaviors provides the possibility of destabilizing the “normal” course of the interview, hence, permitting the identification of the contexts in which the actor sustained contradictory dispositions (Coutinho, 2015; Lima, 2015).

Moreover, it must be made clear that the density and length of a sociological biography bears no relation to the naive illusion that an actor’s life story can be exhausted in descriptive detail (Bourdieu, 2004). Nevertheless, a sociological biography is not a method without limitations, given that like a sociological portrait, it contains the same restraints of any narrative, meaning that it is always hostage of the perspective from which it was reconstructed (Lahire, 2010).

FRANCISCO MILANEZ’S REFLEXIVE TRAJECTORY

This analysis brings to light the reflexive elements of Francisco Milanez’s trajectory by employing the theoretical-methodological apparatuses presented thus far. For such, we aim to intersect macro and microsociological elements, namely, the objective, subjective structures and reflexive processes that constitute individuals’ biographical trajectories (e.g. Coutinho, 2015; Elias, 1995; Lahire, 2010; Setton, 2015).

Thus, we begin by stressing that Milanez’s trajectory is intertwined by specific central axes of socialization with distinct weights at different times (Lima, 2015). In this regard, it is patent that family life, school, the formal world of labor, his political militancy and environmental activism are enmeshed and indivisible in his trajectory, being impossible to write exclusively about one without touching the other. Moreover, the background of Milanez’s trajectory denotes his positions in the social spaces where the related socializations occurred, the people who participated in these processes as well as the accounts that permitted seemingly contingent events to be united in a coherent narrative. In Milanez’s trajectory, the articulations giving a degree of coherence to his biography are result of the reflexive conciliation coming from processes happening in specific contextual frameworks. In this regard, these reflexive processes mediate the cohesion and adequacy between structured, structuring structures and his individual capacity for agency.

Furthermore, one important feature in Milanez’s biography is his social class, which also intertwines with the other elements mentioned above. Correspondingly, this category is also relevant as it affected the practices Milanez engaged throughout his life and influenced his choices, whether openly conscious or not. For Bourdieu (2007), the class influence is significant because this category operates as a mediator, shaping individuals’ interests of material order. Such mediation connects individuals’ practices, the broader historical economic context and the events which directly impacted their lives. In addition, social class still appears in contemporary Bourdieusian studies as an important factor influencing people’s actions, such as their religious practices and educational results (e.g. Alves, 2016; McKinnon, 2017; Stahl, 2016).

In a preliminary attempt, one could describe Francisco Milanez’s trajectory by stating that he was born in Porto Alegre in 1956 and is the youngest son of a middle-class family of five children, made up of his older brother, the firstborn, and the three sisters that precede Milanez. His parents are already deceased as are his older brother and one of his sisters. One could also present his life by introducing he has two children from his first marriage, three grandchildren and lives with his current partner in Porto Alegre. Although it would seem an appropriate description when placed in this linear way, this narrative would stray very far from the analysis of reflexivity. If written in such linear way, Francisco’s trajectory would exhibit a homogenizing coherence that would not be sustained whenever the reflexive processes essential for updating his dispositions were analyzed, which reverberated recursively in his own biographical trajectory. Furthermore, those processes are fundamental since they have been the ones enabling him to integrate objective and subjective instances of his social life.

As Lahire (1997, 2005, 2015) emphasizes, socialization contexts are plural, heterogenous and hold a structural weight on individuals’ delineation of their trajectories. However, this phenomenon does not happen mechanically. This statement can be observed in Francisco’s life when, for example, his father’s death in 1967, when Milanez was 11 years-old, propelled him towards a series of socializations typical of older teens or even adult men. The head of the household’s dying became a matrix problem (Lahire, 2010) with different repercussions not only on his responsibilities, but also on those of his mother, older brother and sisters. Correspondingly, there were crucial reflexive processes at this moment, as he gradually left the position of youngest child to also start occupying another, namely, the most important second male figure in the family, holding the position’s related responsibilities.

In this sense, the moment of crisis engendered by his father's death induced the roles of each family member to change systematically and dynamically, requiring constant reflexive efforts that, in turn, reconfigured the family internal sociability and affected those who surrounded them. In other words, the role each one held in the middle-class family structure did not change linearly, for example, with the eldest son taking on the duties that belonged to the late father. Those duties (e.g. family provider and establishment of certain rules) were fragmented between family members to an extent, being exercised in different ways in distinct temporalities by each one of them. Nonetheless, the reflexivity mediating these position takings were grounded, as Lahire points out, by relational processes established inseparably from the way these individuals interacted with the greater social structures as well as they were underpinned by the temporality and the positions these individuals occupied in the social space (Lahire, 1997, 2002, 2004). For example, the reflexive processes affecting Milanez's political and academic trajectories were relationally influenced by the experiences lived during the period his father was alive. According to Milanez's accounts, even though his father was a man with a traditional mindset, he had always defended progressive ideas such as reduction of inequalities and the strengthening of social welfare networks. Ideas that Milanez has also defended throughout his biography either as a political leadership or as a researcher.

The set of socializations generated by this critical event led Francisco to other series of experiences connected with approximations and detachments from authority figures in the course of his school life. Furthermore, Milanez's socializations began to move towards a more direct political involvement, fact that resonates his socialization with his father, who had held a moderate public life and had been well-known among some political figures in his hometown, Canoas. Moreover, Francisco's trajectory has been continuously articulated with a degree of political militancy, which has been also systematically intertwined by concerns related to environmental protection. The interweaving between contextual frameworks and temporality can be objectified by reporting that Milanez joined Agapan when he was only fifteen years old, and the Association itself had been recently founded in 1971 by José Lutzenberger² and other environmentalists. Milanez has been an activist in the organization since then, he was its president in the 1990s, the decade in which he also began his formalized political militancy mediated by his affiliation to the Workers' Party. Regarding his position as president of Agapan, he occupied it from 2011 to 2013 and, in 2017, he was elected again, a position held until June 2019.

The dispositions and reflexive processes articulated from the experiences with the environmental movement are fundamental to understand the academic choices Milanez made. At the time of his university studies, he also took the opportunity to join the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul student movement, bringing to the agenda of his militancy part of the activism he had developed in the environmental cause. Regarding his academic choices as well as the relationship between these choices and his dispositions, they objectively link in Milanez's trajectory to the fact that he obtained a degree in Architecture in 1983 and another in Biology in 1985, both at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, where he also got a master's degree in Science Education, later, moving on to a PhD in the same area. The reflexive processes that led him to these choices are inseparable from the dispositions and competences for teaching that Milanez had been mobilizing since his teens, when he became a private tutor for subjects such as Chemistry and Mathematics. This work as a tutor was part of a strategy to make ends meet, after his father's passing and also to become financially independent from the rest of his middle-class family.

Thus, although they seem random or even contradictory, these choices were reflexively aligned with the ascribed cohesion and coherence that Milanez as a social actor has had about himself, namely, someone who is connected with the world of natural sciences and environmental causes, but has a network of relationships built upon an intense political life at the same time. Following the conjugation of structures, individual agency and reflexive processes, Milanez's trajectory draws on those elements to reconfigure and update his set of dispositions inasmuch as the current contextual frameworks he lives dynamically change. There are indeed social structures conditioning his possibilities, yet they leave space for his personal agency and the mediation between these two instances happens through the exercise of his reflexive capabilities. For instance, these capabilities were expressed in the articulation between his practices, his past

² José Lutzenberger (1926-2002) was a well-known Brazilian environmentalist, being one of pioneers in the struggles against the use of pesticides and for the defense of the Amazon Forest. After a thirteen-year career in a chemical company, Lutzenberger changed his trajectory in 1971 and along with other environmentalists founded Agapan. He was its first president and occupied the position until 1983 (Dreyer, 2004).

experiences and social class position, influenced by the context at the time, being essential for his academic choices as well as for the considerably coherent political trajectory he has been leading. In this perspective, these contexts of his life have been integrated by practices linked to the preservation of the natural environment, agroecology and the reduction of social inequalities.

Francisco's political participation occurred mainly via student movements and through Agapan in the period before the Brazilian redemocratization in 1985, but, afterwards, this participation started to take place through a political party (the Workers' Party) as democratic institutions and structures developed over time. In the 1990s, for instance, he joined the party and was candidate for mayor of Canoas, a city in the metropolitan region, in 1992. Furthermore, he was an environmental advisor to the mayor Raul Pont in Porto Alegre from 1997 to 2000, accumulating the duties of coordinator of the *Guaíba Vive* Program, an initiative to protect the city river, and at the Interinstitutional Commission of the Porto Alegre waterfront planning. Analytically speaking, this set of events do not only express the formalization and mediation that socializations in the political party had in Milanez's trajectory, they can also be interpreted as a direct result of the redemocratization process that was being consolidated in Brazil. Once again, the contextual framework and the possibilities for individual agency are dialectically connected, but it is possible to argue that the former preceded the choices emerging in the latter, articulated with his stock of dispositions and the reflexive processes required to adapt his objective reality to his expectations and subjective will.

Therefore, Francisco's reflexive processes were essential to reconcile the contradictions emerging in his socializations, coming about in the most diverse contextual frameworks. From this perspective, in a depiction unveiling his own impressions of himself, Milanez reported that even though he has been born in a middle-class family that he qualified as politically conservative, studied in upper-middle class schools, and had become a businessman (holding a position of substantive representation in one of the leading associations of this class in the late 1980s); since his adolescence, however, he has also maintained a patent inclination to political ideas related to groups identified with the Brazilian left.

As such, he has articulated different positions as well as position takings in social movements and organizations that follow a progressive ideological matrix in Rio Grande do Sul. The clashes and struggles in distinct contexts and with people with opposite dispositions from his own led him to reflect and mobilize specific practices, which seemed the most appropriate to the context in which he was situated at a given time. Furthermore, according to Milanez's accounts and to documents he provided, the social capital he accumulated greatly enabled him to engage and be successful in different endeavors, such as the positive path he has been able to track in the agroecological movement until now. In this sense, his reflexive processes, as well as the actions they generated, were also made possible due to past and structural elements of his social life mediated by his social class position, the historical context and their related societal structures.

As a complementary effort of theoretical-empirical synthesis, it is important to point out that this analysis for his trajectory advances and contributes, by establishing a dialectical relation between the conceptual apparatuses of its two supporting authors, to progress with the analysis and understanding of the role of individuals' stocks of dispositions in the development of particular practices taking place in different contexts of action. In this regard, this contribution asserts the heterogeneity of such dispositional stock. It also emphasizes that individuals are plural actors who undergo their trajectories in different contexts of action, thus, insofar as they are plural socially heterogeneous, individuals develop dispositions that are also heterogeneous in both inter and intradispositional terms. Furthermore, this contribution points out to the interface between the macro and microsociological perspectives, enacted in a complementary way to one another.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper focused on providing theoretical and empirical remarks on how the concept of reflexivity can be understood in Pierre Bourdieu's sociology, as well as on the way it reverberated and was developed in Bernard Lahire's sociology at the level of individuals. In the empirical moment, our efforts were to make the analytical articulation between the epistemo-theoretical-methodological apparatuses from the two authors and part of José Francisco Bernardes Milanez's biographical trajectory, who was chosen for being a prominent actor in the Brazilian environmental movement.

The argument made here was that Bourdieu's concept of reflexivity has a rather objectivist facet, which ultimately delegates a secondary status to individual agency and reflexive capabilities. Nevertheless, these capabilities can be better understood and investigated by considering the ways in which individuals mobilize dialectically and concomitantly their reflexive processes with their everyday practices. In order to understand this second argument, which can be seen empirically in Milanez's trajectory, we gave centrality to the form Bernard Lahire criticizes and advances with how Bourdieu delimits social actors' reflexive possibilities.

In addition, it is important to highlight that both for the production of this research and for its conclusions that sociological studies in general can be imminently more substantive if they consider structure, agency and reflexivity in an integrated way, movement allowed by aggregating conceptual and argumentative elements from these two authors. Hence, the proposal presented here contributes to an advance towards the escape of the false antinomy between structure and agency that eventually appears in different social sciences. Milanez's trajectory makes explicit that structure, agency and reflexivity are inseparable elements and act relationally with each other.

We initially stressed the importance of Bourdieu's theoretical constructions, when it was necessary to bring to light the social gravity of the structures on individuals' practices. From this standpoint, the way socializations are established in the historicity of individual experiences are incorporated and carried by the agents, being constantly updated in a process of permanent actualization. The historical relations inculcated in the matrix of mental schemes of perception, evaluation and action continue to weigh in the social world, but such matrix is not static, mechanical and immutable even in Bourdieu's work.

This way of conceiving the habitus was further questioned and reformulated by Bernard Lahire when he observed individuals' daily practices. The author revealed that the habitus is not a matrix or a set, but rather a stock of dispositions, the dialectic result of interactions with the most varied social actors and contextual frameworks we inevitably come across throughout our biographical trajectories. Moreover, we considered such interpretation here tends to give more prominence to the weight of structures in relation to individual agency, and may eventually give a secondary role to the reflexive capacities people have, which are endowed, to some extent, with and by the way these capacities are practically articulated. Nonetheless, it is also up to the scientist to exercise an epistemological surveillance in the sense of advancing analytically with these conceptual apparatuses, paying attention to the empirical evidence that corroborates (or not) with possible theoretical and methodological assumptions. Following the epistemological line defended by both Bourdieu and Lahire, theory cannot serve as a deadlock to analyses and interpretations.

In conclusion, Human Sciences are a lively and poignant field. Therefore, it has much to gain by rescuing and focusing on the reflexive discussions regarding some false antinomies that still linger in academic debates and analytical procedures. For such, it becomes imperative to discuss theoretical and methodological tools enabling the in-depth investigation of the most diverse reflexive processes and their dynamics. We are able to do so by studying, problematizing and writing with and against classical as well as contemporary epistemologies and authors, further approaching or distancing potential contributions whenever possible.

REFERENCES

- Alves, A. R. C. (2016). Dos habitus de classe aos patrimônios individuais de disposições: reflexões sobre a prática em Pierre Bourdieu e Bernard Lahire. *Sociologias*, 18(42), 294-327.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991a). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991b). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2004a). *Os usos sociais da ciência: por uma sociologia clínica do campo científico*. São Paulo, SP: Unesp.
- Bourdieu, P. (2004b). *Science of science and reflexivity*. London, UK: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2005). *Razões práticas: sobre a teoria da ação*. Campinas, SP: Papirus.
- Bourdieu, P. (2007). *A distinção: crítica social do julgamento*. Porto Alegre, RS: Zouk.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Caetano, A. (2011). Para uma análise sociológica da reflexividade individual. *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, 66, 157-174.
- Caetano, A. (2012). A análise da reflexividade individual no quadro de uma teoria disposicionalista. In J. T. Lopes (Org.), *Registos do actor plural: Bernard Lahire na sociologia portuguesa* (pp. 15-29). Porto, Portugal: Edições Afrontamento.
- Caetano, A. (2013). *Vidas reflectidas: sentidos, mecanismos e efeitos da reflexividade individual* (Doctoral Dissertation). Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal, Lisboa.
- Correa, D. S. (2015). *Anjos de fuzil: uma etnografia das relações entre tráfico e Igreja na favela Cidade de Deus* (Doctoral Dissertation). Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ.
- Coutinho, P. (2015). *"Meu sonho era maior que eu": biografia sociológica de uma trãsfuga de classe* (Doctoral Dissertation). Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ.
- Crossley, N. (2001). The phenomenological habitus and its construction. *Theory and society*, 30(1), 81-120.
- Dreyer, L. (2004). *Sinfonia inacabada: a vida de José Lutzenberger*. Porto Alegre, RS: Vidicom Audiovisuais.
- Elias, N. (1995). *Mozart: sociologia de um gênio*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Jorge Zahar Ed.
- Lahire, B. (1997). *Sucesso escolar nos meios populares: as razões do improvável*. São Paulo, SP: Editora Ática.
- Lahire, B. (2002). *O homem plural: os determinantes da ação*. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes.
- Lahire, B. (2004). *Retratos Sociológicos: Disposição e variações individuais*. São Paulo, SP: Artmed.
- Lahire, B. (2005). Patrimônios individuais de disposições: para uma sociologia à escala individual. *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, 49, 11-42.
- Lahire, B. (2006). *A cultura dos Indivíduos*. São Paulo, SP: Ed. Artmed, 2006.
- Lahire, B. (2010). *Franz Kafka: Éléments pour une théorie de la création littéraire*. Paris, France: La Découverte.
- Lahire, B., & Amandio, S. (2012). Do Homem Plural ao Mundo Plural. *Análise Social*, 202, 195-208.
- Lahire, B. (2015). A fabricação social dos indivíduos: quadros, modalidades, tempos e efeitos de socialização. *Educação e Pesquisa*, 41(spe), 1393-1404.
- Lima, P. R. M., Jr. (2013). *Evasão do ensino superior de Física segundo a tradição disposicionalista em sociologia da educação* (Doctoral Dissertation). Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS.
- McKinnon, A. (2017). Religion and social class: Theory and method after Bourdieu. *Sociological Research Online*, 22(1), 161-173.
- Peters, G. (2013). Habitus, reflexividade e neo-objetivismo na teoria da prática de Pierre Bourdieu. *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais*, 28(83), 47-71.
- Peters, G. (2017a). A ciência como sublimação: o desafio da objetividade na sociologia reflexiva de Pierre Bourdieu. *Sociologias*, 19(45), 336-369.
- Peters, G. (2017b). De volta à Argélia. A encruzilhada etnossociológica de Bourdieu. *Tempo Social*, 29(1), 275-303.
- Setton, M. G. J. (2015). A escolha e o reconhecimento pela educação: o caso de Antônio. *Educação e Pesquisa*, 41(spe), 1405-1418.
- Stahl, G. (2016). Doing Bourdieu justice: thinking with and beyond Bourdieu. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37(7), 1091-1103.
- Stake, R. E. (2011). *Pesquisa qualitativa: estudando como as coisas funcionam*. Porto Alegre, RS: Penso.
- Vandenbergh, F. (2013). A sociologia na escala individual: Margaret Archer e Bernard Lahire. *Cadernos do Sociófilo*, 4, 70-112.

Bruno de Souza Lessa

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1696-394X>

Ph.D. in Administration from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (PPGA/UFRGS); Scholarship by the National Postdoctoral Program (PNPD-Capes) at the University of Fortaleza (Unifor). E-mail: brunolessa85@yahoo.com.br

Fernando Dias Lopes

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0037-0135>

Ph.D. in Administration from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (PPGA/UFRGS); Associate Professor IV at UFRGS School of Administration. E-mail: fernando.lopes@ufrgs.br

Célia Elizabete Caregnato

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9326-590X>

Ph.D. in Education from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS); Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). E-mail: celia.caregnato@gmail.com