Social field, domains of knowledge and informational practice

Denise Morado Nascimento
School of Architecture, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and
Regina Maria Marteleto
School of Information Sciences, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to understand the information phenomenon through the means of informational practice – the way of acting that gives identity to a group – in a social field and knowledge domain.

Design/methodology/approach – By relating Pierre Bourdieu’s sociology of culture to the domain analysis approach of Birger Hjørland, the intention was to achieve a comprehensive interpretation of the structure which generates the discourse communities and, also, of the social structure from which they are derived. All of these form the conditions for understanding the efforts, objectives and interests of the actors in the social field that causes them to develop determined informational practices. The field of architecture was elected for analysis.

Findings – The conclusions show that both the products and subjects of a domain of knowledge, inserted in social fields, are expressions of their informational practice.

Research limitations/implications – The authors believe the theoretical model based on Bourdieu and Hjørland’s concepts, here built to analyze the architecture domain, may be used to analyze other domains.

Originality/value – Domain analysis is employed as an approach to the study of the information aspects but here supported by the sociological concepts of Bourdieu. Thus, it is possible to understand what, how and why the informational practices are constituted inside a domain of knowledge, and, fundamentally, interpret the historical, cultural, and social dimensions that influence the construction of information.

Keywords Information management, Information strategy, Communities, Group theory

Introduction
The purpose of this article is to understand the information phenomenon through the means of informational practice – the way of acting that gives identity to a group – in a social field and a knowledge domain. In such point of view, information is not merely a “thing” to be physically seen or systematised.

This informative way of acting is, more than anything else, social, since it occurs between subjects in institutional and interactive spaces. If this is so, we cannot understand the social subjects as isolated or alienated agents in relation to the surrounding, territory or social space. The informational problem of a given domain of knowledge must be contextualised by the:
From these initial considerations, the running thread of this article is established: how to analyse a domain of knowledge (from the point of view of information science) and its construction as a social practice?

We take as a first challenge to apply another way of looking on the product that results from the mode of production of a knowledge domain. Our intention is to reach the sense and meaning of the product as an expression of the informative way that the subject relates with the world and with other subjects – the informational practice of the domain. Starting from this point, we ask:

- What dictates the informational practice?
- Who are and how the subjects act giving identity to the social field?
- How is the information in the knowledge domain built?

To theoretically guide our arguments, we turn to the vision of Birger Hjørland, who proposes to understand information starting from its social, historical and cultural dimensions. For this purpose, he presents domain analysis as a prolific possibility for this reorientation of the studies of information.

This approach to the subjects’ way of acting is sustained by the cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. His social theory and concepts of field, capital and habitus, aid in our capacity to understand the product of a knowledge domain as an expression of the informational practice of the domain. We have chosen the domain of architecture for analysis.

The domain analysis approach

The theory presented by Hjørland and Albrechtsen (1995), in their article entitled “Toward a new horizon in information science: domain-analysis”, is seen as the most effective alternative to an information science reorientation towards understanding information through the social paradigm (Ørom, 2000). Hjørland and Albrechtsen (1995) propose that domain analysis offers the possibility to examine information in its social, historical and cultural dimensions.

Although Hjørland and Albrechtsen (1995) were the first to formulate an explicit point of view of domain analysis, Shera (1971) had already considered information to be determined by the social and cultural context. It is perceived that this window remained open in information science, awaiting its fundamental and essential facet of social science to be adopted. For Shera (1971) the study of information should be based on the trinity of:

1. atomism, meaning the technological operation;
2. content, being that which is transmitted; and
3. context, as social and cultural environment, which defines the characteristics of the first two aspects.
Domain analysis is a counterpoint to the approaches of cognitivism and of information systems, which are geared toward, respectively, psychological and technological processes. Primarily, the theory is proposed (Hjørland and Albrechtsen, 1995; Hjørland, 1997) through the affirmation that the unit of analysis in information science is formed by the collective fields of knowledge, or domains of knowledge, concerning their discourse communities. These communities are not autonomous entities, but distinct social constructions undertaken by individuals synchronised in thought, language and knowledge, integral parts of modern society.

A discourse community is identified by Hjørland (1997) as scientific, academic or professional. It presents structured communication and publication, document typology, specific terminology and unique information structures, information systems, literature and relevant criteria.

The discourse community and its members recognise the produced information structures since they reveal the discursive forms, the influences and restrictions related to the content, the choice of style and the intended audience (Swales, 1990). A discourse community is a community in which an organised communication process occurs (Abrahamsen, 2003). This means that the information structures are constructed, reproduced and transformed by the collective action of the subjects in the discourse communities and not by the individuals that compose it in an isolated matter.

Domain analysis recognises that the discourse communities are composed of agents with different points of view, individual knowledge structures, predispositions, subjective pertinent criteria, and particular cognitive styles. However, the individual and social levels reveal themselves in the “give and take” between the domain structures and individual knowledge. The individual’s history, inserted into a collective history, presents its variables and differences, and these are what characterise the possibility of different perceptions, trajectories, purposes and appreciation in each knowledge domain.

According to Hjørland (1997), it is important to distinguish the approaches of Information Science keeping their different levels of questioning in perspective, amongst diverse categories, such as: holistic or atomistic; individual or social; subjective or objective; formalist or content determined; historical or situational; symbolic or connective; dynamic or static (Hjørland, 1997). But the investigation of domains and work groups, disciplines or discourse communities, as opposed to the individual knowledge structures, allows us to hypothesise that, in this way, methodological influences from social sciences in the information science are inevitable.

What was presented here so far provides us with an understanding of information through Hjørland’s socialised scope, where the studies of information structures belonging to discourse communities of a knowledge domain organise the culturally and socially constructed informational practices.

**Bourdieu’s concepts**

Guided by the established vision by Hjørland about information and understanding it as constructed in a cultural and social environment, one may turn to the vision of Bourdieu to understand the social conditions of its production.

Bourdieu’s sociological work is centred by dialectical relations between theory and practice, actor and structure, social agent and society, objective structures and
subjective dispositions which allow understanding the specific sociological dilemmas of the modern world. His social theory is anchored by the concepts of field, habitus and capital.

The notion of field came from Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990) perception of the social world’s transformations, followed by a process of differentiation and self-determination made up of differentiated groups. Each field is a system of social positions with its own investments, objects, and specific interests (literary field, scientific, university, political, corporate, journalistic, religious, fashion related, sport related, etc). The fields are micro cosmos or social spaces structured by the set of actions, representations, interactions and social forces, power relationships, attractions or repulsions that the subjects experience. To Bourdieu (1988, p. 11), field is “the locus of a struggle to determine the conditions and the criteria of legitimate membership and legitimate hierarchy, that is, to determine which properties are pertinent, effective and liable to function as capital so as to generate the specific profits guaranteed by the field”.

The comprehension of constitutive structures of such social space permits not only the recognition of the social place occupied by the subject, but also his (or her) attitude towards himself (or herself), the other and the world. This Aristotelian notion of ethos is revised by Bourdieu (1998) when he uses the concept of habitus: “a unifying and generating principle” to explain the unifying set of personal choices, possession of goods and of society’s practices.

Habitus is what the subject has incorporated in terms of language, cultural biography and individual history, essentially shaped by his (or her) social trajectory within family, through its moral system (primary habitus) and by the cultural heritage and educational formation of school (secondary habitus). It is a system of “shared social conditions and cognitive structures” which generates perceptions, appreciations and actions (Bourdieu, 1977). As such, the “effects produced by the structural necessity of the field can be accomplished only through personal relationships, based on the apparent contingency of socially expressed coincidences of mutual encounter and acquaintance and on the sympathies and antipathies inspired by a shared habitus” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2).

To Bourdieu (1988), the habitus is determined by the accumulated knowledge of the subject – capital, and is related to the possession of its different types. The cultural capital is made up of the set of symbolic goods that relate, on the one hand, to acquired knowledge that presents itself in incorporated state (for example, being competent in a certain domain of knowledge, being cultivated, dominating the language, knowing and recognising oneself in the social world and its codes). On the other hand of the cultural material achievements which incorporate the subjects in institutionalised state (through titles, diplomas, success, prestige).

The social capital is related to the set of contacts, relationships, knowledge, friendships which allows the subject to extend to some degree his (or her) network of social relations, and to exercise a rather significant power to act in function of the quantity and quality of his connections.

The capital, not only cultural and social, but also professional, political, economical, linguistic, symbolic, informational, represents the individual’s position in the field of the dominant (maximum capital) or the dominated (minimum capital). To the access to opportunities to obtain capital and to the capacity to impose capital, together with a
social system of sanctions and rewards, Bourdieu (1989) gives the name of symbolic violence. It is not a physical force, but an imposition of categories of thought and perception exercised upon a social agent.

The discourse strategies – or the exercise of symbolic power – of the different social agents depend on the specific interest and the differential trumps which can be guaranteed by his (or her) position in the invisible social relation system established between different fields set up by themselves (Bourdieu, 1989).

Such social system is produced by the habitus; it governs the practice and interconnects the fields. Besides, its conditions of production guarantee the conformity and practice reproduction in time. As such, the field, as an objective structure, defines the social conditions of habitus production.

Bourdieu (1999) reminds us that, effectively, the social space connects to the physical space; the first it is closely linked to the possession of the different species of capital and to the structure of the distribution of species of capital, but also depends on the physical distance regarding property or service.

The concept of field helps us to see information as a cultural and social manifestation of subjects positioned by the structure; but also linked to the possession of and to the possibility of access to the informational capital.

**Walking through Hjørland and Bourdieu**

Although recent, the applicability of Bourdieu’s concepts to the study of Information Science is not new. Selden (1999, p. 282) in his thesis “Capital and career: information seeking in everyday scholarly practice” stated: “the concepts, empirical findings and distinctions developed by Bourdieu were found more appropriate, relational, reflexive, and generative for the development of new concepts” focusing on the “information seeking careers” of researchers and doctoral students. Commenting on this thesis, Savolainen (1999, p. 18) affirmed that “the innovative application of Bourdieu’s concepts opens new possibilities to conceive the processes of information seeking and use as phenomena which are deeply social and cultural”.

Budd (2003, p. 19) believes the Bourdieu’s social theory can contribute to understand “frameworks, groundings and contexts” of library and information science which could answer the “numerous serious and complex questions facing librarianship and the information professions”. Also Widen-Wulff and Ginman (2004) and Johnson (2004) attempted to use the concept of social capital in the field of information behaviour in organisations.

In his proposal on the study of the structures and institutions of communication by using domain analysis, Hjørland (2002) suggests that it should be inspired by the sociological theories. Following this line of investigation, Sundin (2003) has investigated the conflicts within and between the domains of professional knowledge by means of the approach of domain analysis. But he explains that Hjørland’s theory does not set out directive norms about information needs, information relevance and the practice of knowledge organisation which can be studied like expressions of interests amongst conflicting groups. In his methodological substantiation of the nursing domain, Sundin (2003) returns to the theory of the professions as methodological support.

In the present proposal, domain analysis is employed as an approach to the study of the information aspects of a knowledge domain, but maintained by the sociological
concepts of Bourdieu. Thus, it becomes possible to understand how and why informational practice (as social practice) is constituted within a domain of knowledge, and, above all, interpret the historical, cultural, and social dimensions that influence the construction of information. It can be said that this possibility relates to what Budd (2003, p. 29) believes to be the challenge of information science: “to look at information not so much as objects without attachments to social space but as discursive acts”.

Bourdieu’s concepts of field, capital and habitus extend Hjørland’s concept of discourse communities since they allow us to look at information as discursive acts. The field differs from the domain because it is a system of objective relations, an integral part of the space of competition that it forms with other fields, revealing that structural and functional homologies between them exist (Bourdieu, 1996). Understanding the operation and tensions of the discourse communities through the cultural and social conditions of production of the habitus and of the different forms of capital, it is possible to understand who the subjects that manifest and produce informational practice are in the field. Habitus is descriptive; “it represents both the action of a group and the underlying social-linguistic reasons or rationales for action and belief” (Budd, 2003, p. 27).

By relating Bourdieu’s sociology of culture to the domain analysis approach of Hjørland, one can achieve a comprehensive interpretation regarding the generating structure of the discourse communities and, also, of the social structure from which they are result of. These are conditions for understanding the investments, products and interests of the actors in the field, and what cause them to develop determined informational practices.

In the search for this understanding, we built the “theoretical model of field information analysis, based on the concepts of Hjørland and Bourdieu” (Figure 1).

In order to understand the “theoretical model” we begin by affirming that a knowledge domain comprises its discourse communities. Those communities build information, considering its cultural and social conditions of existence, which in turn organise those discourse communities. Such conditions of existence (social, cultural, and inevitably historical, material and symbolic) limit the habitus, which constitutes the subjects, and the capital, which distinguishes the subject, revealing that “objective possibilities and impossibilities” added to the “subjective liberties and needs” of the subject are what shape the habitus.

The discourse communities, a result of the action and interaction of the subjects, create information structures fostered by the knowledge domain, structured and reconstituted in the social fields. By means of terminology, of the representation of knowledge, and of standards of communication, the information structures give light to the needs, experiences, struggles and the logic of the field, which go beyond the recording of its products of knowledge. The information structures make explicit an informational practice which, at that time, expresses their products in light of a disciplinary context that is a product of persuasion, influences and social alliances of the field.

Thus the information structure reconstructs the structure of the field in which the discursive acts occur and in which the social actors are situated – “the point of the social space from which his vision of the world was formed” (Bourdieu, 1996).
It seems clear to us that, to the degree that we constitute the logic of the operation of informational practice, the field tends to become more and more the unifying and generating principle (and, therefore, explanatory) of all practice (Bourdieu, 1991).

**Revista Pampulha – architectural magazine as information structure**

Hjørland (2002) considers the formal published sources of information (books, newspaper) and unpublished (thesis, reports), informal sources (lectures and conferences) and formatted sources (data centres) as information structures of a domain.

Hence, we have:

- The professional-scientific communication structure forms one of the relevant areas of research that is coherent with the domain analysis approach.
- The information structure brings to light the visions of world and the social manifestations from the subjects of a field.
- The information structure is made by the subjects who are active participants of the field through their intrinsic actions and their collective social structures.
A magazine is an information structure from a professional, and not academic, discourse community of a knowledge domain with a communication structure. It is important to recognise that a “magazine has the capacity to reaffirm the identity of specific groups’ interests, often working as a sort of membership card” (Scalzo, 2003, p.50). Segawa et al. (2003) claim that, in the knowledge domain of architecture, magazines cannot be characterised as “scientific and technical journals”; this distinguishes them from printed vehicles of knowledge in other domains.

Our empirical corpus is formed by the 12 editions of Pampulha Magazine (PM) (Revista Pampulha) which can be characterised as an professional information structure belonging to the discourse community of the architectural domain in Belo Horizonte, the capital of the state Minas Gerais, Brazil. The PM editions were published by a group of architects from Belo Horizonte, between the years of 1979 and 1984. The editorial body did not succeed on publishing the magazine furthermore: some editorial body’s members say the reason was lack of money; others affirm that a selfish and bitter posture of prominent members caused the ideological rupture of the whole editorial body.

The magazine title – Pampulha – was an obvious reference to the principal sign of the Brazilian modernism built in Minas Gerais, designed by Oscar Niemeyer in 1939. PM represented the restore of communication between architects who lived through the military coup of 1964 and the following years of culture, politics and social repression in Brazilian life. By the end of 1970’s, Belo Horizonte was living the amnesty political campaign, but also was responsible for impressive cultural manifestations, including PM. As an independent magazine, PM unified common interest and practices not linked to the architectural models from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, represented respectively by the Architects Oscar Niemeyer and Vilanova Artigas.

This time reflected the intense conceptual transformations in architecture, which amounted to an ideological rupture. Architectural critics considered PM as a “fresh air in the vicious debate” or the “initial start for the publication of architectural projects from Minas Gerais”.

In such a scenario, the PM editions can be considered an important information structure of the architectural field in Belo Horizonte at that time, since the social position of their idealisers in the social space guaranteed the command of the whole social structure.

The publication was organised and realised by a group of active architects, all graduated in the Architecture School of Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (EAUFMG) between the years of 1965 and 1983. They were all friends aligned, not by an ideology or architectural “ism”, but by the access of informational capital. Their main goal was stated in the first edition: to create an informational encounter gate, to promote cultural and social diversity and to establish the third facet of the architectural debate beyond Rio and São Paulo.

Architects, students or anyone interested in architecture, art and the built environment were the target audience. The first edition was launched in the X Brazilian Congress of Architecture (X Congresso Brasileiro de Arquitetos), in Brasília, in 1979. The 12 editions of PM circulated in 69 cities of 17 Brazilian states and in three different countries, with 2,000 to 2,500 prints each edition.
Methodological aspects
According to the publication frequency and purpose of each section of the magazine the empirical corpus was defined:

- Editorial – 12 editions, 13 pages (M1 to M12, S1).
- News – brief information about architecture, arts and local and national cultural manifestations, sent by any collaborator or friend; 12 editions, 42 pages (M1 to M12; S2).
- Interview – with national or international personality from architecture, arts or design areas; ten editions, 51 pages (M1 to M8, M10; S3).
- Informative – news from the representative institution (Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil) or the City Hall; nine editions, 18 pages (M1, M2, M4 to M7, M9 to M11; S4).
- Letters – to the editors; nine editions, 13 pages (M2 to M4, M7 to M12; S5).
- Report and “Fence” – texts about architecture, arts or design written by students or experts; four editions, 15 pages (M1, M4, M6, M12; S6).
- Architecture in Minas – images of projects or buildings from active architects from Minas Gerais; not considered.
- Publicity – space for advertising; not considered.
- Design/art leaflets – only articles about design/art; not considered.
- Cartoon or Poetry – space for cartoon or poetry; not considered.
- Cooking – cookbook; not considered.
- 3a and 4a cover: marketing campaigns or special tributes; not considered.

Interviews were also carried out with three members of the editorial body with the main aim to collect historical and technical data about the editorial and graphic project and the needs, objectives, audience, writing and editing aspects of the PM.

To answer the initial questions of this article we turned for methodology to thematic analysis, used as a technique of content analysis. It was not our intention to identify or count thematic or strategic issues, authors and their characteristics, editing, distribution, marketing issues or inferences. The results were interpreted with the main objective of studying the affirmations, motivations, opinions, attitudes, beliefs present in the magazines in order to find units of speech or of communication meaning which would denote the reference values and the behaviour model in the discursive acts (de Minayo, 2000).

The unities of speech (analysis categories) were defined from the correspondence between the empirical and theoretical level. This means that the analysis model is not normative or prescriptive. The categories emerged in an inductive and deductive manner based on the observation of existing aspects, circumstances, patterns in the empirical corpus, resulting from the recognition that:

- The product of the architecture domain is an expression of its informational practice emerged as a function of the imposed conditions by informative devices which are reinterpreted from the subjects’ experiences and possibilities of acquiring capital. Thus, the information transmitted by PM generate forms in which the discourse community sees, perceives and accesses the world.
• The architect is the main subject between the various agents in the architectural field and he (or she) feeds the shared habitus. Thus, the information transmitted by PM make explicit dispositions related to past legacy and present identity revealing potential tendencies to govern the actions and practices of the subjects;

• The socialised scope of Hjørland showed the information structure organises the informational practice which is limited by the conditions of existence. Thus, the information transmitted by PM shows the inter-relation of circumstances that reveal the structuring, reproduction and renewal of the field.

The informational practice analysis is dictated by the conditions of existence: corporative and intellectual forms, dispositions of legacy and identity, and political, economic, academic and institutional circumstances.

### Analysis of architecture as a domain

Since we regard architecture as located in the social sciences it would be natural to link collective or society’s concepts to architectural ones. On contrary, architecture is not receptive to the social contribution even though the field recognises it is necessary to answer the social problems:

The functionalism and an irresponsible scientific language uncommitted to the social and symbolic expenses have dominated architects (M11S5).

The architects need, want and hope to be able to create mechanisms that contribute to the much needed and desired approach to society, but that is an attempt that is not effective:

A fundamental change seems to lack: an architect who is able to understand the social context in which he lives (M7S3).

PM reveals the low priority given to social matters but also indicates that the architects’ incapacities and restrictions are an indirect consequence of the action of other fields.

Actually, architecture leaves an opening so that other fields – economic, cultural, political, academic, exercise their powers by means of the imposition of their rules and practices. The political field shows that the imposition of its capital incapacitates the architects from participating as transforming agents of the architectural field. Brazilian Architecture was:

[...] swallowed by an alienated professional period imposed to the architects by rules and systems from politics, technocracy and society – all indifferent to our work (M8S3).

The architect becomes a mere executor of decisions taken by the State – a “good and obeying servant of power” (M10S1), revealing that the field does not possess sufficient autonomy to impose its political action. This is the case either because of the professionals’ inability to organise themselves, manifest and participate, or due to the absence of a relationship between politicians and architects.

There is a passivity feeling in relation to the possible and necessary political and social changes in the country:

[...] our eyes keep closed – because of incompetence or of convenience (M1S2).
Such affirmation reveals a lack of class conscience and collective participation of the architects who are anchored by “individual postures” (M1S6). The architectural renovation is claimed by the PM as a possibility of new horizons but function of the individual capacity of each architect: “depends on the quality of one architect […] to contribute to something new” (M1S3).

Referring to the economic field, PM recognises that Architecture acquired “the common qualities of merchandise harming its value of use” (M1S6). Concerning the cultural field, PM accuses “cultural and research institutions” (M7S4) and “press vehicles” (M6S4) to not appraise the architectural production.

It is not surprising to see that the economic field has structured not only the architectural field but so also many others. What is unexpected is the extent of subordination of the architects to the economic field in such a way as to limit their professional practice to merely lessening the chronic and latent problems of urban chaos, distancing themselves from any catalyzing and participatory function:

There is a direct submission of architecture to the economic rhythm and processes (M7S4). The architect, while co-responsible for the task of building the city, distances himself from the operation of the capitalist and political reality.

The absence of that understanding explains the submission of the field to the rules of the real estate market. In this context, their products are expressed in different ways, the quality of production of those architects that possess greater economic capital, confirming their ties, and submission, to mass production. On the contrary, the architects with greater intellectual capital articulate the language of rupture, but the drawings become more important than the construction of the buildings or restricted production.

References to the academic field are also made through the impressions about the architect education:

[...] an elaborator of merchandise (M7S3).

[...] a simple producer of merchandise (M7S4).

[...] no school gives to the architect the consciousness about what architecture is (M1S3).

As for the academy, the field sees it in four different forms, characterising it as a realm where the give and take of interests and tensions are present:

- A significant part of the problems faced by the field is the responsibility of the university, which preserves the relations of complicity and powers between students and faculty, not permitting the necessary and requested transformations to occur:
  
  [...] the most part of it [the university] would not worry about enlarging didactic knowledge or studying new references (M1S6).

- The academic renewal depends on the necessary insertion of students with greater intellectual capital:
  
  [...] the architect is a professional, for example, who does not read (M7S3).

- The absence of a social commitment to the pedagogical and political bases of the architecture program feeds the absence of political commitment of its participants and the deficiency in understanding society’s demands:
the political conversation is incomplete and fragmented (M4S6).

- The university expects the student to know something, but equally to be something – it is the action of the habitus plus intellectual capital:

  […] in general [the architect] is a professional who can not dialog, discuss or change ideas (M7S3).

The university is the potential space for building the social and political capital and changing the secondary habitus:

  […] the architectural schools must serve as a surpass tool of the present stage (M2S4).

This implies that the educational creators need to understand, effectively, society and the social relations between subjects, the operation of capitalism and the political arena. Perhaps what is most important is to direct the production of interdisciplinary knowledge by means of bringing architecture closer to other areas – the social and political sciences, for example.

The editorial body was worried with the professional architects’ responsibilities if we analyze the present questions launched to the readers:

- What are the professional activities which architects have been taking? Under which working relations the architect develops their professional work? (M1S4).

- What kind of world we want to the children, our children and the children of our children? How can we contribute and build cities which respond to the humankind needs and not to the economic, political and military powers? (M5S3).

The crisis exists because the field constructs itself through individual attitudes, and it is incapable of understanding the world collectively:

  […] a crisis is the best thing to wake us up (M1S1).

  […] alone architects can do nothing. The architect, even with the best intentions, will not be able to solve a social problem (M5S3).

But why the architect is unable to do what is expected to? To PM the problem is also linked to the extreme utilisation of “intuition, imagination and guessing capacity” (M7S3) instead of a conscientious and rational use of the architect intelligence. “Each architect wants to do his own discourse” (M1S3).

“Unconscientiously the architect has being a victim of the role that society has been drawing to him (or her): a merchandise maker” (M7S3). The field is incapable of building or controlling the economic and the intellectual capitals or others impeding the desired restructuring. Proof of that verification is the immaturity of the field in accepting criticism of projects made by the information structure of the PM, which would be able to promote the theorisation of the field, as well as enabling the emergence of other capitals suitable to it. The editorial body was obligated to explain the necessity of criticism to the readers:

  […] it exists in order to create a dialog between diverse thoughts and positions which can be taken to enrich the discussion about our own criticism to the class and the architectural paths offered to us (M7S5).
The discourse community maintains itself hostage to the individuality of each architect, even when it can formulate common objectives and languages. As such, the shared habitus, determined by the capital, feeds the field by means of that individuality, compromising the collective actions in function of the inefficiency and incapacity of class actions.

The ideas and opinions of PM are based in the past. Exemplars of some architects (Joaquim Guedes, João Filgueiras Lima, Carlos Lemos, Siegbert Zanettini in Brazil and Louis Khan, Mario Botta, Aldo Rossi, Agustin Goytisolo, Bob Krier, Le Corbusier, Brunelleschi, Villard de Honnecourt, Antonio Gaudi in the international scenario, for example) are considered in order to set up opinions, confirm possibilities and indicate the truth: it is necessary to “well know the past and take from it the lessons for the future. Without it, we can fall in awful and fashionable ‘isms’ which are already around us as an aggression to our sensitivity” (M12S6).

But also questions were present in the PM revealing the architects were interested in “renewal and discussion” (M11S5):

Its time to rebuild our ideas and our country […] to forget the elitist and stylistic lessons from the university (M10S1).

The years of the 1980s were important to the architecture in Belo Horizonte, but also to the nationally and internationally. The modernists who dominated the field were found vulnerable to the possibilities of new languages, concepts and proposals. In such structural fragility, the subordinate architects in the architectural field, who desired to abandon such a position, saw the possibility of confronting the dominant view.

In the international arena, the deconstruction principles of Jacques Derrida were the answer for a group of architects who wanted to set up themselves in the field; Peter Eisenman being their main representative. In Brazil, the structural vulnerability of the field was also present. The idealisers and founders of Pampulha Magazine represented a vanguard group, ideologically armed with propositions and postures that were used to confront the Brazilian modernists and, specifically, those from Rio and São Paulo.

The so-called post-modernity movement in Belo Horizonte embraced a valuable intellectual (symbolic) capital although not universally accessed or inherited by the whole group of architects involved in the PM. Besides, or because of that, the post-modern movement in Belo Horizonte has not conceptually or historically been confirmed as a changing structure within the field.

However we cannot deny that the architects from PM have questioned the functionalist proposals of the modernism movement. The important objectives to explicit, divulgate and promote their products reflected the group effort in imposing on the field their intellectual capital through information. Being in the PM, as a member of the discourse community of the architectural field, meant that the intellectual and economic capitals could be raised.

Thus the economic and intellectual capitals set up the shared habitus of the field that governs the informational practice. The products of the architecture field equally attach economic and intellectual values; they are feed by individual practices and experiences that are manifested by words, attitudes and behaviour – the constructed information which forms the product. The constructed information is consequence of the daily existence and of the way of being which sustain the shared habitus.
The PM reconstructed the social space structure in which it was produced and the social subjects, who are constituted by the social structures. The informational structure of PM functioned as a mechanism, in its time, of professional growth for the people involved, bringing about a relative change in their positions in the social space. This did not amount, however, to a change in the shared habitus or to the reconstruction or renewal of the field.

Conclusions
This article is intended to show that the analysis of the information structure of a discourse community elucidates the informational practice of the field, making its understanding possible. If the information communicated by the information structure reveals informative nature of the field, and its action, its products construct themselves as expressions of the practices and interactions of the agents.

By linking the concepts of Hjørland – guided by the social paradigm of information to comprehend the informational mechanisms that direct the actions and representations of the discourse communities acting in determined domains – to Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, field and capital, we perceive that the agents situated in determined fields, as in architecture, represent and incarnate points of convergence between objective limitations and subjective determinations – strategies devised by the agents in function of their habitus and whose purposes tend to coincide with the immanent purposes to the field.

The diverse social conditions of production of each agent’s habitus reveal the oppositions and conflicts, subjectivities, relations of strength and power, interests, contradictions and tensions that historically and progressively feed the social fields, such as architecture.

Upon extracting for analysis a determined historical moment in the process of validating and self-determination of the architectural field in Belo Horizonte, and the relations of competition or “jockeying for position” between its agents, expressed by means of a communicational and informational vehicle – the Pampulha Magazine – the intent of this article is also to stress the epistemological, methodological and practical validation which the concepts extracted from the social theory lend to matters of information. In other words, informational problems are above all cultural and social and, to understand them, it is necessary to gain a comprehension of the motivations, needs and interests of the social actors, without which the information becomes merely a given phenomenon, naturalised, acting randomly on the structures and social representations.

References


Further reading


Corresponding author
Regina Maria Marteleto can be contacted at: regina.mar@terra.com.br

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