

2 The Social Space and Its Transformations

If the research had stopped at this point it would probably not raise great objections, so self-evident is the idea of the irreducibility of artistic taste. However, as has already been shown by the analysis of the social conditions of the aesthetic disposition, the dispositions which govern choices between the goods of legitimate culture cannot be fully understood unless they are reintegrated into the system of dispositions, unless 'culture', in the restricted, normative sense of ordinary usage, is reinscribed into 'culture' in the broad, anthropological sense and the elaborated taste for the most refined objects is brought back into relation with the elementary taste for the flavours of food. The dual meaning of the word 'taste', which usually serves to justify the illusion of spontaneous generation which this cultivated disposition tends to produce by presenting itself in the guise of an innate disposition, must serve, for once, to remind us that taste in the sense of the 'faculty of immediately and intuitively judging aesthetic values' is inseparable from taste in the sense of the capacity to discern the flavours of foods which implies a preference for some of them. The abstraction which isolates dispositions towards legitimate culture leads to a further abstraction at the level of the system of explanatory factors, which, though always present and active, only offers itself for observation through those elements (cultural capital and trajectory in the case analysed below) which are the principles of its efficacy in the field in question.

The consumption of the most legitimate cultural goods is a particular case of competition for rare goods and practices, whose particularity no doubt owes more to the logic of supply, i.e., the specific form of compe-

tion between the producers, than to the logic of demand and tastes, i.e., the logic of competition between the consumers. One only has to remove the magical barrier which makes legitimate culture into a separate universe, in order to see intelligible relationships between choices as seemingly incommensurable as preferences in music or cooking, sport or politics, literature or hairstyle. This barbarous reintegration of aesthetic consumption into the world of ordinary consumption (against which it undlessly defines itself) has, *inter alia*, the virtue of reminding us that the consumption of goods no doubt always presupposes a labour of appropriation, to different degrees depending on the goods and the consumers; or, more precisely, that the consumer helps to produce the product he consumes, by a labour of identification and decoding which, in the case of a work of art, may constitute the whole of the consumption and gratification, and which requires time and dispositions acquired over time.

Economists, who never jib at an abstraction, can ignore what happens to products in the relationship with the consumers, that is, with the dispositions which define their useful properties and real uses. To hypothesize, as one of them does, that consumers perceive the same decisive attributes, which amounts to assuming that products possess objective or, as they are known, 'technical' characteristics which can impress themselves as such on all perceiving subjects, is to proceed as if perception only seized on the characteristics designated by the manufacturers' brochures (and so-called 'informative' publicity) and as if social uses could be derived from the operating instructions. Objects, even industrial products, are not objective in the ordinary sense of the word, i.e., independent of the interest and tastes of those who perceive them, and they do not impose the self-evidence of a universal, unanimously approved meaning. The sociologist's task would be much easier if, when faced with each relationship between an 'independent variable' and a 'dependent variable', he did not have to determine how the perception and appreciation of what is designated by the 'independent variable' vary according to the classes determined by the 'independent variable', or, in other words, identify the system of pertinent features on the basis of which each of the classes of agents was really determined.² What science has to establish is the objectivity of the object which is established in the relationship between an object defined by the possibilities and impossibilities it offers, which are only revealed in the world of social uses (including, in the case of a technical object, the use-or-function for which it was designed) and the dispositions of an agent or class of agents, that is, the schemes of perception, appreciation and action which constitute its objective utility in a practical usage.³ The aim is not, of course, to reintroduce any form of what is called 'lived experience', which is most often merely a thinly disguised projection of the researcher's 'lived experience';⁴ but to move beyond the abstract relationship between consumers with interchangeable tastes and products with uniformly perceived and appreciated properties to the relationship between tastes which vary in a necessary way according to their

social and economic conditions of production, and the producers on which they confer their different social identities. One only has to ask the question, which economists strangely ignore, of the economic conditions of the production of the dispositions demanded by the economy, i.e., in this case, 'the question of the economic and social determinants of tastes, to see the necessity of including in the complete definition of the producer the differential experiences which the consumers have of it as a function of the dispositions they derive from their position in economic space. These experiences do not have to be felt in order to be understood with an understanding which may owe nothing to lived experience, still less to sympathy. The habitus, an objective relationship between two objectivities, enables an intelligible and necessary relation to be established between practices and a situation, the meaning of which is produced by the habitus through categories of perception and appreciation that are themselves produced by an observable social condition.

Class Condition and Social Conditioning

Because it can only account for practices by bringing to light successively the series of effects which underlie them, analysis initially conceals the structure of the life-style characteristic of an agent or class of agents, that is, the unity hidden under the diversity and multiplicity of the set of practices performed in fields governed by different logics and therefore inducing different forms of realization, in accordance with the formula: [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice. It also conceals the structure of the symbolic space marked out by the whole set of these structured practices, all the distinct and distinctive life-styles which are always defined objectively and sometimes subjectively in and through their mutual relationships. So it is necessary to reconstruct what has been taken apart, first by way of verification but also in order to rediscover the kernel of truth in the approach characteristic of common-sense knowledge, namely, the intuition of the systematic nature of life-styles and of the whole set which they constitute. To do this, one must return to the practice-unifying and practice-generating principle, i.e., class habitus, the internalized form of class condition and of the conditionings it entails. One must therefore construct the *objective class*, the set of agents who are placed in homogeneous conditions of existence imposing homogeneous conditionings and producing homogeneous systems of dispositions capable of generating similar practices; and who possess a set of common properties, objectified properties, sometimes legally guaranteed (as possession of goods and power) or properties embodied as class habitus (and, in particular, systems of classificatory schemes).⁵

VARIABLES AND SYSTEMS OF VARIABLES In designating these classes (classes of agents or, which amounts to the same thing in this context, classes of conditions of existence) by the name of an occupation, one is

merely indicating that the position in the relations of production governs practices, in particular through the mechanisms which control access to positions and produce or select a particular class of habitus. But this is not a way of reverting to a pre-constructed variable such as 'socio-occupational category'. The individuals grouped in a class that is constructed in a particular respect (that is, in a particularly determinant respect) always bring with them, in addition to the pertinent properties by which they are classified, secondary properties which are thus smuggled into the explanatory model.⁷ This means that a class or class fraction is defined not only by its position in the relations of production, as identified through indices such as occupation, income or even educational level, but also by a certain sex-ratio, a certain distribution in geographical space (which is never socially neutral) and by a whole set of subsidiary characteristics which may function, in the form of tacit requirements, as real principles of selection or exclusion without ever being formally stated (this is the case with ethnic origin and sex). A number of official criteria in fact serve as a mask for hidden criteria: for example, the requiring of a given diploma can be a way of demanding a particular social origin.

One needs to examine what the list of the criteria used by the analyst derives from the state of the struggle between the groups separated by these criteria, or more precisely from the capacity of groups defined by these criteria, to get themselves recognized as such. There would be less likelihood of forgetting that unskilled workers are to a large extent women and immigrants if groups based on sex or nationality of origin had constituted themselves as such within the working class. Furthermore, the fallacy of the apparent factor would not be so frequent if it were not the simple retransposition onto the terrain of science of the legitimating strategies whereby groups tend to put forward this or that legitimate property, the overt principle of their constitution, to camouflage the real basis of their existence. Thus the most selective groups (a concert audience or the students of a grande école) may doubly conceal the real principle of their selection: by declining to announce the real principles of their existence and their reproduction, they are obliged to rely on mechanisms which lack the specific, systematic rigour of an explicit condition of entry and therefore allow exceptions (unlike clubs and all 'elites' based on co-option, they cannot vet the whole set of properties of the elect, i.e., the total person).

The members of groups based on co-option, as are most of the corps protected by an overt or covert *numerus clausus* (doctors, architects, professors, engineers etc.) always have something else in common beyond the characteristics explicitly demanded. The common image of the professions, which is no doubt one of the real determinants of vocations, is less abstract and unequal than that presented by statisticians: it takes into account not only the nature of the job and the income, but those secondary characteristics which are often the basis of their social value (prestige or discredit) and

which, though absent from the official job description, function as tacit requirements, such as age, sex, social or ethnic origin, overtly or implicitly guiding co-option choices, from entry into the profession and right through a career, so that members of the corps who lack these traits are excluded or marginalized (women doctors and lawyers tending to be restricted to a female clientele and black doctors and lawyers to black clients or research). In short, the property emphasized by the name used to designate a category, usually occupation, is liable to mask the effect of all the secondary properties which, although constitutive of the category, are not expressly indicated.

Similarly, when one is trying to assess the evolution of a social category (identified by occupation), crude errors are inevitable if, by considering only one of the pertinent properties, one ignores all the substitution effects in which the evolution is also expressed. The collective trajectory of a social class may be manifested in the fact that it is becoming 'feminized' or 'masculinized', growing older or younger, getting poorer or richer. (The decline of a position may be manifested either in 'feminization'—which may be accompanied by a rise in social origin—or in 'democratization' or in 'aging'.) The same would be true of any group defined by reference to a position in a field—e.g., a university discipline in the hierarchy of disciplines, a title of nobility in the aristocratic hierarchy, an educational qualification in the academic hierarchy.

The particular relations between a dependent variable (such as political opinion) and so-called independent variables such as sex, age and religion, or even educational level, income and occupation tend to mask the complete system of relationships which constitutes the true principle of the specific strength and form of the effects registered in any particular correlation. The most independent of 'independent' variables conceals a whole network of statistical relations which are present, implicitly, in its relationship with any given opinion or practice. Here too, instead of asking statistical technology to solve a problem which it can only displace, it is necessary to analyse the divisions and variations which the different secondary variables (sex, age etc.) bring into the class defined by the main variable, and consider everything which, though present in the real definition of the class, is not consciously taken into account in the nominal definition, the one summed up in the name used to designate it, or therefore in interpreting the relationship in which it is placed.

Typical of the false independence between so-called independent variables is the relationship between educational qualification and occupation. This is not only because, at least in some areas of social space (to which educational qualifications give some degree of access), occupation depends on qualification, but also because the cultural capital which the qualification is supposed to guarantee depends on the holder's occupation, which may presuppose maintenance or increase of the capital acquired within the family or at school (by and for promotion) or a diminishing of this capital (by

'de-skilling' or 'de-qualification'). To this effect of occupational condition—in which one has to distinguish the specific effect of the work which, by its very nature, may demand a more or less great, more or less constant investment of cultural capital, and therefore more or less continuous maintenance of this capital, and the effect of the possible career which encourages or excludes cultural investments likely to assist or legitimate promotion—must be added the effect of occupational milieu, i.e., the reinforcement of dispositions (especially cultural, religious or political dispositions) by a group that is homogeneous in most of the respects which define it. Thus one would have to examine in each case to what extent occupational conditions of existence assist or hinder this effect, which would mean taking into account the characteristics of the work (uselessness etc.), the conditions in which it is performed—noise, or silence permitting conversation etc.—the temporal rhythms it imposes, the spare time it allows, and especially the form of the horizontal or vertical relations it encourages at the workplace—during work or in rest periods—or outside.

This effect no doubt explains a number of differences between office workers (ledger clerks, bank clerks, agency clerks, typists) and commercial employees (mainly shop assistants), which are not entirely accounted for either by differences linked to class fraction (office workers are rather more often the children of farmers: commercial employees the children of small employers) or by differences in educational capital (the first more often have the BEPC, the second a CAP).

The commercial employees and the office workers, who are distributed in much the same way as regards sex, age and income, are separated by important differences in dispositions and practices. Office workers are more ascetic—they more often expect their friends to be conscientious or well brought up, more often prefer a neat, clean and tidy interior and like Brel, Guitary, Mariano, the *Hungarian Rhapsody*, *L'Artisiana*, Raphael, Warreau and Leonardo. By contrast, commercial employees more often look for friends who are sociable, bons vivants, amusing and stylish, for a comfortable, cosy interior, and prefer Brassens, Ferré, Françoise Hardy, the *Tullio of the Gods*, the *Four Seasons*, *Rhapsody in Blue*, Utrillo or Van Gogh.

Among the effects which the relationship between class fraction and practices simultaneously reveals and conceals, there is also the effect of the position in the distribution of the secondary properties attached to a class. Thus, members of the class who do not possess all the modal properties—e.g., men in a strongly feminized occupation or a worker's son at ENA—have their social identity deeply marked by this membership and the social image which it imposes and which they have to situate themselves in relation to, whether by acceptance or rejection.

Similarly, relationships such as those between educational capital, or age, and income mask the relationship linking the two apparently independent variables. Age determines income to an extent which varies according to educational capital and occupation, which is itself partly determined by educational capital and also by other, more hidden factors such as sex and inherited cultural or social capital. In another case, one of the variables is to a degree merely a transformed form of the other. Thus, scholastic age (i.e., age at a given educational level) is a transformed form of inherited cultural

capital, and lost years are a step towards relegation or elimination. More generally, the educational capital held at a given moment expresses, among other things, the economic and social level of the family of origin. (This results from a long process which is no way a mechanical relationship, since initial cultural capital may be only partially converted into educational capital or may produce effects irreducible to those of educational qualification, as one finds whenever social origin distinguishes individuals whose qualifications are identical.)

Likewise, in every relationship between educational capital and a given practice, one sees the effect of the dispositions associated with gender which help to determine the logic of the reconversion of inherited capital into educational capital, that is, the 'choice' of the type of educational capital which will be obtained from the same initial capital; more often literary for girls, more often scientific for boys. Again, the relationship of a given practice to age may conceal a relationship to educational capital when age is in fact the key to different modes of access to the position—by qualification or internal promotion—and different school generations and different chances of access to the educational system (the oldest agents have lower educational capital than the youngest), or to social class, by virtue of the different social definitions of precociousness or backwardness in the various areas, particularly in schooling.

In fact, the change in chances of access is only one aspect of a more systematic change which also involves the very definition of competence, and tends to make comparisons between the generations increasingly difficult. The conflicts between holders of competences of different ages and different educational levels—old school-certificate holder versus new *baccalier* (baccalaureate-holder)—centre precisely on the definition of competence, with the old generation complaining that the new generation does not possess the competences formerly defined as elementary and basic: 'They can't spell nowadays', 'They can't even add up'.

And finally, the variations in cultural practice by size of town of residence cannot be ascribed to the direct effect of spatial distance and the variations in the supply of culture, until it is confirmed that the differences persist after discounting the effect of the inequalities in educational capital concealed (even in the occupational category) by geographical distribution. The opposition between Paris and the provinces needs to be analysed in a way similar to that used for the notion of 'educational level'. Relationships involving the 'variable' place of residence manifest not only the effect of cultural supply, linked to the density of objectified cultural capital and so to the objective opportunities for cultural consumption and the related reinforcement of the aspiration to consume, but also all the effects of the unequal spatial distribution of properties and their owners (e.g., possessors of high educational capital), in particular the circular reinforcement each group performs on itself, for example, intensifying cultural practice if it is cultivated, discouraging it by indifference or hostility if it is not.

When, as often happens, the analysis is conducted variable by variable, there is a danger of attributing to one of the variables (such as sex or age, each of which may express in its own way the whole situation or trend of

a class) the effect of the set of variables (an error which is encouraged by the conscious or unconscious tendency to substitute generic alienations, e.g., those linked to sex or age, for specific alienations, linked to class). Economic and social condition, as identified by occupation, gives a specific form to all the properties of sex and age, so that it is the efficacy of the whole structure of factors associated with a position in social space which is manifested in, the correlations between age or sex and practices. The naivety of the inclination to attribute the differences recorded in relation to age to a generic effect of biological ageing becomes self-evident when one sees, for example, that the ageing which, in the privileged classes, is associated with a move to the right, is accompanied, among manual workers, by a move to the left. Similarly, in the relative precocity of executives, measured for example by the age at which they reach a given position, one sees in fact the expression of everything which divides them, despite the apparent identity of condition at a given moment, namely their whole previous and subsequent trajectory, and the capital volume and structure which govern it.

CONSTRUCTED CLASS Social class is not defined by a property (not even the most determinant one, such as the volume and composition of capital) nor by a collection of properties (of sex, age, social origin, ethnic origin—proportion of blacks and whites, for example, or natives and immigrants—income, educational level etc.), nor even by a chain of properties strung out from a fundamental property (position in the relations of production) in a relation of cause and effect, conditioner and conditioned; but by the structure of relations between all the pertinent properties which gives its specific value to each of them and to the effects they exert on practices. Constructing, as we have here, classes as homogeneous as possible with respect to the fundamental determinants of the material conditions of existence and the conditionings they impose, therefore means that even in constructing the classes and in interpreting the variations of the distribution of properties and practices in relation to these classes, one consciously takes into account the network of secondary characteristics which are more or less unconsciously manipulated whenever the classes are defined in terms of a single criterion, even one as pertinent as occupation. It also means grasping the principle of the objective divisions, i.e., divisions internalized or objectified in distinctive properties, on the basis of which the agents are most likely to divide and come together in reality in their ordinary practices, and also to mobilize themselves or be mobilized (in accordance with the specific logic, linked to a specific history, of the mobilizing organizations) by and for individual or collective political action.

The principles of logical division which are used to produce the classes are of course very unequally constituted socially in pre-existing social classifica-

tions. At one extreme, there is the simple existence of the name of a trade or 'social category', the product of classification by a governmental agency, such as INSEE (Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques), or of the social bargaining which leads to industrial 'collective agreements'; and at the other extreme, there are groups possessing a real social identity, recognized spokesmen and institutionalized channels for expressing and defending their interests etc. The secondary principles of division (such as country of origin or sex), which are likely to be ignored by an ordinary analysis until they serve as a basis for some form of mobilization, indicate potential lines of division along which a group socially perceived as unitary may split, more or less deeply and permanently. Because the different factors in the system of determinations constituting a class condition (which can function as real principles of division between objectively separate or actually mobilized groups) vary greatly in their functional weights and therefore in their structuring force, these principles of division are themselves set in a hierarchy: groups mobilized on the basis of a secondary criterion (such as sex or age) are likely to be bound together less permanently and less deeply than those mobilized on the basis of the fundamental determinants of their condition.

To account for the infinite diversity of practices in a way that is both unitary and specific, one has to break with *linear thinking*, which only recognizes the simple ordinal structures of direct determination, and endeavour to reconstruct the networks of interrelated relationships which are present in each of the factors. The structural causality of a network of factors is quite irreducible to the cumulated effects of the set of linear relations, of different explanatory force, which the necessities of analysis oblige one to isolate, those which are established between the different factors, taken one by one, and the practice in question; through each of the factors is exerted the efficacy of all the others, and the multiplicity of determinations leads not to indeterminacy but to over-determination. Thus the superimposition of biological, psychological and social determinations in the formation of socially defined sexual identity (a basic dimension of social personality) is only a particular, but very important, case of a logic that is also at work in other biological determinations, such as ageing.

It goes without saying that the factors constituting the constructed class do not all depend on one another to the same extent, and that the structure of the system they constitute is determined by those which have the greatest functional weight. Thus, the volume and composition of capital give specific form and value to the determinations which the other factors (age, sex, place of residence etc.) impose on practices. Sex is a lemon is from its acidity; a class is defined in an essential respect by the place and value it gives to the two sexes and to their socially constituted dispositions. This is why there are as many ways of realizing femininity as

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there are classes and class fractions, and the division of labour between the sexes takes quite different forms, both in practices and in representations, in the different social classes. So the true nature of a class or class fraction is expressed in its distribution by sex or age, and perhaps even more, since its future is then at stake, by the trend of this distribution over time. The lowest positions are designated by the fact that they include a large—and growing—proportion of immigrants or women (unskilled and semi-skilled workers) or immigrant women (charwomen).¹⁰ Similarly, it is no accident that the occupations in personal services—the medical and social services, the personal-care trades, old ones like hair-dressing, new ones like beauty care, and especially domestic service, which combine the two aspects of the traditional definition of female tasks, service and the home—are practically reserved for women.

Nor is it accidental that the oldest classes or class fractions are also the classes in decline, such as farmers and industrial and commercial proprietors; most of the young people originating from these classes can only escape collective decline by reconverting into the expanding occupations. Similarly, an increase in the proportion of women indicates the whole trend of an occupation, in particular the absolute or relative devaluation which may result from changes in the nature and organization of the work itself (this is the case with office jobs, for example, with the multiplication of repetitive, mechanical tasks that are commonly left to women) or from changes in relative position in social space (as in teaching, whose position has been affected by the overall displacement of the profession resulting from the overall increase in the number of positions offered).

One would have to analyse in the same way the relationship between marital status and class or class fraction. It has been clearly shown, for example, that male celibacy is not a secondary property of the small peasantry but an essential element of the crisis affecting this fraction of the peasant class. The breakdown of the mechanisms of biological and social reproduction brought about by the specific logic of symbolic domination is one of the mediations of the process of concentration which leads to a deep transformation of the class. But here too, one would have to subject the commonsense notion to close analysis, as has been done for educational level. Being married is not opposed to being unmarried simply as the fact of having a legitimate spouse to the fact of not having one. One only has to think of a few limiting cases (some much more frequent than others), the housewife, the artist supported by his wife, the employer or executive who owes his position to his father-in-law, to see that it is difficult to characterize an individual without including all the properties (and property) which are brought to each of the spouses, and not only the wife, through the other—a name (sometimes a distinguished 'de' as well), goods, an income, 'connections', a social status (each member of the couple being characterized by the spouse's social position, to different

degrees according to sex, position and the gap between the two positions). The properties acquired or possessed through marriage will be omitted from the system of properties which may determine practices and properties if, as usually happens, one forgets to ask oneself who is the subject of the practices or, more simply, if the 'subject' questioned is really the subject of the practices on which he or she is questioned.

As soon as the question is raised, it can be seen that a number of strategies are concretely defined only in the relationship between the members of a domestic group (a household or, sometimes, an extended family), which itself depends on the relationship between the two systems of properties associated with the two spouses. The common goods, especially when they are of some economic and social importance, such as the apartment or furniture, or even personal goods, such as clothing, are—like the choice of a spouse for son or daughter in other societies—the outcome of these (denied) power relations which define the domestic unit. For example, there is every reason to suppose that, given the logic of the division of labour between the sexes, which gives precedence to women in matters of taste (and to men in politics), the weight of the man's own taste in choosing his clothes (and therefore the degree to which his clothes express his taste) depends not only on his own inherited cultural capital and educational capital (the traditional division of roles tends to weaken, here and elsewhere, as educational capital grows) but also on his wife's educational and cultural capital and on the gap between them. (The same is true of the weight of the wife's own preferences in politics: the effect of assignment by status which makes politics a man's business is less likely to occur, the greater the wife's educational capital, or when the gap between her capital and her husband's is small or in her favour.)

SOCIAL CLASS AND CLASS OF TRAJECTORIES But this is not all. On the one hand, agents are not completely defined by the properties they possess at a given time, whose conditions of acquisition persist in the habitus (the hysteresis effect); and on the other hand, the relationship between initial capital and present capital, or, to put it another way, between the initial and present positions in social space, is a statistical relationship of very variable intensity. Although they are always perpetuated in the dispositions constituting the habitus, the conditions of acquisition of the properties synchronically observed only make themselves visible in cases of discordance between the conditions of acquisition and the conditions of use, i.e., when the practices generated by the habitus appear as ill-adapted because they are attuned to an earlier state of the objective conditions (this is what might be called the Don Quixote effect). The statistical analysis which compares the practices of agents possessing the same properties and occupying the same social position at a given time but separated by their origin performs an operation analogous to ordi-

nary perception which, within a group, identifies the parvenus and the déclassés by picking up the subtle indices of manner or bearing which betray the effect of conditions of existence different from the present ones or, which amounts to the same thing, a social trajectory different from the modal trajectory for the group in question.

Individuals do not move about in social space in a random way, partly because they are subject to the forces which structure this space (e.g., through the objective mechanisms of elimination and channelling), and partly because they resist the forces of the field with their specific inertia, that is, their properties, which may exist in embodied form, as dispositions, or in objectified form, in goods, qualifications etc. To a given volume of inherited capital there corresponds a band of more or less equally probable trajectories leading to more or less equivalent positions (this is the *field of the possibles* objectively offered to a given agent), and the shift from one trajectory to another often depends on collective events—wars, crises etc.—or individual events—encounters, affairs, benefactors etc.—which are usually described as (fortunate or unfortunate) accidents, although they themselves depend statistically on the position and disposition of those whom they befall (e.g., the skill in operating 'connections' which enables the holders of high social capital to preserve or increase this capital), when, that is, they are not deliberately contrived by institutions (clubs, family reunions, old-boys' or alumni associations etc.) or by the 'spontaneous' intervention of individuals or groups. It follows from this that position and individual trajectory are not statistically independent, all positions of arrival are not equally probable for all starting points. This implies that there is a strong correlation between social positions and the dispositions of the agents who occupy them, or, which amounts to the same thing, the trajectories which have led them to occupy them, and consequently that the modal trajectory is an integral part of the system of factors constituting the class. (The more dispersed the trajectories are—as in the *petite bourgeoisie*—the less are practices reducible to the effect of synchronically defined position.)

The homogeneity of the dispositions associated with a position and their seemingly miraculous adjustment to the demands inscribed in it result partly from the mechanisms which channel towards positions individuals who are already adjusted to them, either because they feel 'made' for jobs that are 'made' for them—this is 'vocation', the *prolepse*—assumption of an objective destiny that is imposed by practical reference to the modal trajectory in the class of origin—or because they are seen in this light by the occupants of the posts—this is co-option based on the immediate harmony of dispositions—and partly from the dialectic which is established, throughout a lifetime, between dispositions and positions, aspirations and achievements. Social ageing is nothing other than the slow renunciation or disinvestment (socially assisted and encouraged) which leads agents to adjust their aspirations to their objective chances, to espouse their condition, become what they are and make do with what

they have, even if this entails deceiving themselves as to what they are and what they have, with collective complicity, and accepting bewavement of all the 'lateral possibles' they have abandoned along the way.

The statistical character of the relationship between initial capital and present capital explains why practices cannot be completely accounted for solely in terms of the properties defining the position occupied in social space at a given moment. To say that the members of a class initially possessing a certain economic and cultural capital are destined, with a given probability, to an educational and social trajectory leading to a given position means in fact that a fraction of the class (which cannot be determined a priori within the limits of this explanatory system) will deviate from the trajectory most common for the class as a whole and follow the (higher or lower) trajectory which was most probable for members of another class.¹² The trajectory effect which then manifests itself, as it does whenever individuals occupying similar positions at a given time are separated by differences associated with the evolution over time of the volume and structure of their capital, i.e., by their individual trajectories, is very likely to be wrongly interpreted. The correlation between a practice and social origin (measured by the father's position, the real value of which may have suffered a decline concealed by constant nominal value) is the resultant of two effects (which may either reinforce or offset each other): on the one hand, the inculcation effect directly exerted by the family or the original conditions of existence; on the other hand, the specific effect of social trajectory,¹³ that is, the effects of social rise or decline on dispositions and opinions, position of origin being, in this logic, merely the starting point of a trajectory, the reference whereby the slope of the social career is defined. The need to make this distinction is self-evident in all cases in which individuals from the same class fraction or the same family, and therefore presumably subject to identical moral, religious or political inculcations, are inclined towards divergent stances in religion or politics by the different relations to the social world which they owe to divergent individual trajectories, having, for example, succeeded or failed in the reconversion strategies necessary to escape the collective decline of their class.

This trajectory effect no doubt plays a large part in blurring the relationship between social class and religious or political opinions, owing to the fact that it governs the representation of the position occupied in the social world and hence the vision of its world and its future. In contrast to upwardly mobile individuals or groups, 'commoners' of birth or culture who have their future, i.e., their being, before them, individuals or groups in decline endlessly reinvent the discourse of all aristocracies, essentialist faith in the eternity of nature, celebration of tradition and the past, the cult of history and its rituals, because the best they can expect from the future is the return of the old order, from which they expect the restoration of their social being.¹⁴

This blurring is particularly visible in the middle classes and especially

in the new fractions of these classes, which are grey areas, ambiguously located in the social structure, inhabited by individuals whose trajectories are extremely scattered. This dispersion of trajectories is even found here at the level of the domestic unit, which is more likely than in other classes to bring together spouses (relatively) ill matched not only as regards social origin and trajectories but also occupational status and educational level. (This has the effect, among other things, of foregrounding what the new vulgate calls 'the problems of the couple', i.e., essentially, the problems of the sexual division of labour and the division of sexual labour.)

In contrast to the effect of individual trajectory, which, being a deviation from the collective trajectory (that may have a zero slope), is immediately visible, the effect of collective trajectory may not be noticed as such. When the trajectory effect concerns a whole class or class fraction, that is, a set of individuals who occupy an identical position and are engaged in the same collective trajectory, the one which defines a rising or declining class, there is a danger of attributing to the properties synchronically attached to the class, effects (e.g. political or religious opinions) which are in reality the product of collective transformations. The analysis is complicated by the fact that some members of a class fraction may have embarked on individual trajectories running in the opposite direction to that of the fraction as a whole. This does not mean that their practices are not marked by the collective destiny. (It is questionable, for example, whether craftsmen or farmers whose individual success seems to run counter to the collective decline cease to be affected by that decline.)¹⁵ But here too one must avoid substantialism. Thus, some of the properties associated with social class which may remain without efficacy or value in a given field, such as ease and familiarity with culture in an area strictly controlled by the educational system, can take on their full force in another field, such as high society, or in another state of the same field, like the aptitudes which, after the French Revolution, enabled the French aristocracy to become, in Marx's phrase, 'the dancing-masters of Europe'.

CAPITAL AND THE MARKET But everything would still be too simple if it were sufficient to replace a factor, even a particularly powerful one such as socio-occupational category, which derives a major part of its effects from the secondary variables it governs, by a system of factors fundamentally defined by its structure.¹⁶ In fact, what is determinant in a given area is a particular configuration of the system of properties constituting the constructed class, defined in an entirely theoretical way by the whole set of factors operating in all areas of practice—volume and structure of capital, defined synchronically and diachronically (trajectory), sex, age, marital status, place of residence etc. It is the specific logic of the field, of what is at stake and of the type of capital needed to play for it, which

governs those properties through which the relationship between class and practice is established.

If this double correlation of each explanatory factor is not performed, every sort of error is likely, all of them resulting from ignoring the fact that what is 'operative' in the factor in question depends on the system it is placed in and the conditions it 'operates' in; or, more simply, from failing to raise the question of the real principle of the efficacy of the 'independent variable', by proceeding as if the relationship found between the factor—designated by what is usually no more than an indicator of it (e.g. educational level)—and this or that practice (e.g. the rate of response to political questions, or the capacity to adopt the aesthetic disposition, or museum-going etc.) did not itself have to be explained.

To understand why the same system of properties (which determines and is determined by the position occupied in the field of class struggles) always has the greatest explanatory power, whatever the area in question—and why, simultaneously, the relative weight of the factors which constitute it varies from one field to another—educational capital being most important in one area, economic capital in another, and so on—only has to see that, because capital is a social relation, i.e., an energy which only exists and only produces its effects in the field in which it is produced and reproduced, each of the properties attached to class is given its value and efficacy by the specific laws of each field. In practice, that is, in a particular field, the properties, internalized in dispositions or objectified in economic or cultural goods, which are attached to agents are not all simultaneously operative; the specific logic of the field determines those which are valid in this market, which are pertinent and active in the game in question, and which, in the relationship with this field, function as specific capital—and, consequently, as a factor explaining practices. This means, concretely, that the social rank and specific power which agents are assigned in a particular field, depend firstly on the specific capital they can mobilize, whatever their additional wealth in other types of capital (though this may also exert an effect of contamination).

This explains why the relationship which analysis uncovers between class and practices appears to be established in each case through the mediation of a factor or particular combination of factors which varies according to the field. This appearance itself leads to the mistake of inventing as many explanatory systems as there are fields, instead of seeing each of them as a transformed form of all the others; or worse, the error of setting up a particular combination of factors active in a particular field of practices as a universal explanatory principle. The singular configuration of the system of explanatory factors which has to be con-

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structured in order to account for a state of the distribution of a particular class of goods or practices, i.e., a balance-sheet, drawn up at a particular moment of the class struggle over that particular class of goods or practices (caviar or avant-garde painting, Nobel prizes or state contracts, an enlightened opinion or a chic sport), is the form taken, in that field, by the objectified and internalized capital (properties and habitus) which defines social class and constitutes the principle of the production of classified and classifying practices. It represents a state of the system of properties which make class a universal principle of explanation and classification, defining the rank occupied in all possible fields.

A Three-Dimensional Space

Endavouring to reconstitute the units most homogeneous from the point of view of the conditions of production of habitus, i.e., with respect to the elementary conditions of existence and the resultant conditions, one can construct a space whose three fundamental dimensions are defined by volume of capital, composition of capital, and change in these two properties over time (manifested by past and potential trajectory in social space).

The primary differences, those which distinguish the major classes of conditions of existence, derive from the overall volume of capital, understood as the set of actually usable resources and powers—economic capital, cultural capital and also social capital. The distribution of the different classes (and class fractions) thus runs from those who are best provided with both economic and cultural capital to those who are most deprived in both respects (see figure 5, later in this section). The members of the professions, who have high incomes and high qualifications, who very often (52.9 percent) originate from the dominant class (professions or senior executives), who receive and consume a large quantity of both material and cultural goods, are opposed in almost all respects to the office workers, who have low qualifications, often originate from the working or middle classes, who receive little and consume little, devoting a high proportion of their time to car maintenance and home improvement, and they are even more opposed to the skilled or semi-skilled workers, and still more to unskilled workers or farm labourers, who have the lowest incomes, no qualifications, and originate almost exclusively (90.5 percent of farm labourers, 84.5 percent of unskilled workers) from the working classes.

The differences stemming from the total volume of capital almost always conceal, both from common awareness and also from 'scientific' knowledge, the secondary differences which, within each of the classes defined by overall volume of capital, separate class fractions, defined by different asset structures, i.e., different distributions of their total capital among the different kinds of capital.

Overall Capital
Capital

Among the difficulties which this model aims to account for in a unitary and systematic way, the most visible is the observation, which others have often made (e.g., C.S. VII), that the hierarchies, both in the dominant class, between the executives and the employers, and in the middle class, between the junior executives and the craftsmen or shopkeepers, vary according to the activity or asset in question. This effect seems to support the relativistic critique of the social classes until it is seen that there is a relationship between the nature of these activities or assets, for example, theatre-going or possession of a colour TV, and the structure of each group's capital.

Once one takes account of the structure of total assets—and not only, as has always been done implicitly, of the dominant kind in a given structure, 'birth', 'fortune' or 'talents', as the nineteenth century put it—one has the means of making more precise divisions and also of observing the specific effects of the structure of distribution between the different kinds of capital. This may, for example, be symmetrical (as in the case of the professions, which combine very high income with very high cultural capital) or asymmetrical (in the case of higher-education and secondary teachers or employers, with cultural capital dominant in one case, economic capital in the other). One thus discovers two sets of homologous positions. The fractions whose reproduction depends on economic capital, usually inherited—industrial and commercial employers at the higher level, craftsmen and shopkeepers at the intermediate level—are opposed to the fractions which are least endowed (relatively, of course) with economic capital, and whose reproduction mainly depends on cultural capital—higher-education and secondary teachers at the higher level, primary teachers at the intermediate level.

The industrialists, who are grouped with the commercial employers in surveys by representative sample because of their small number, declare considerably higher incomes than the latter (33.6 percent say they earn more than 100,000 French francs, as against 14.5 percent of the commercial employers). Those classified as industrialists in the INSEE survey (C.S. I) are much closer to the new bourgeoisie than are the commercial employers: many more of them declare salaries and investment income, many fewer declare industrial, commercial or non-commercial profits. For the working classes, who are strongly ranked by overall capital volume, the data available do not enable one to grasp the differences in the second dimension (composition of capital). However, differences such as those between semi-skilled, educationally unqualified, provincial factory workers of rural origin, living in an inherited farmhouse, and skilled workers in the Paris region who have been in the working class for generations, who possess a 'trade' or technical qualifications, must be the source of differences in life-style and religious and political opinion.

Capital
Capital
Capital
Capital

Given that, as one moves from the artists to the industrial and commercial employers, volume of economic capital rises and volume of cultural capital falls, it can be seen that the dominant class is organized in a rurel capital structure. To establish this, it is necessary to use various indicators borrowed from a survey which has the advantage of distinguishing between public-sector and private-sector executives (C.S. V) to examine, successively, the distribution of economic capital and the distribution of cultural capital among the fractions; the structures of these distributions must then be correlated.

Although it is self-evident when one considers indicators of wealth (as will be done later), the hierarchy of the class fractions as regards possession of economic capital, running from industrial and commercial employers to teachers, is already less visible when, as here, one is only dealing with indicators of *consumption* (cars, boats, hotels) which are neither entirely adequate nor entirely unambiguous (see table 6). The first (cars) also depends on the type of professional activity, and the other two depend on spare time, which, as one learns in other ways, varies inversely with economic capital. Home ownership also depends on stability in the same place of residence (lower among executives, engineers and teachers). Incomes are very unevenly underestimated (the rate of non-declaration may be considered an indicator of the tendency to under-declare) and very unequally accompanied by fringe benefits such as expense-account meals and business trips (which are known to rise as one moves from teachers to private-sector executives and employers).

As regards cultural capital, except for a few inversions, which reflect secondary variables such as place of residence, with the corresponding supply of culture, and income, with the means it provides, the different fractions are organized in an opposite hierarchy (see table 7). (Differentiation according to the type of capital possessed, literary, scientific or economic and political, is mainly seen in the fact that engineers show more interest in musical and 'intellectual' games such as bridge or chess than in literary activities—theatre-going or reading *Le Figaro Littéraire*.)

These indicators no doubt tend to minimize the gaps between the different fractions. Most cultural consumption also entails an economic cost: theatre-going, for example, depends on income as well as education. Moreover, equipment such as FM radios or hi-fi systems can be used in very different ways (e.g., classical music or dance music), whose values, in terms of the dominant hierarchy of possible uses, may vary as much as the different types of reading-matter or theatre. In fact, the position of the different fractions ranked according to their interest in the different types of reading-matter tends to correspond to their position when ranked according to volume of cultural capital as one moves towards the rarer types of reading, which are known to be those most linked to educational level and highest in the hierarchy of cultural legitimacy (see table 8).

One also finds (C.S. XIV, table 215a) that the over-representation of teachers (and students) in the audience of the different theatres steadily de-

Table 6 Some indicators of economic capital in different fractions of the dominant class, 1966.^a

Indicators of economic capital	Teachers (higher and secondary)	Public-sector execs.	Professions	Engineers	Private-sector execs.	Industrial employers	Commercial employers
Homeowner	51%	38%	54%	44%	40%	70%	70%
Luxury car owner	12%	20%	28%	21%	22%	34%	33%
Boat owner	8%	8%	14%	10%	12%	14%	13%
Hotel holidays	15%	17%	23%	17%	21%	26%	32%
Median annual income (thousands of francs)	33	32	41	36	37	36	33
Rate of undeclared income	6	8	27	9	13	28	24

Source: C.S. V (1966).

a. In each row the italic figures indicate the strongest tendency.

clines and the over-representation of the other fractions (employers, senior executives and members of the professions, unfortunately not distinguished in the statistics) increases as one moves from avant-garde or reputedly avant-garde theatre to classical theatre and especially from classical to boulevard theatre, which draws between a third and a quarter of its audience from the least 'intellectual' fractions of the dominant class.

Having established that the structure of the distribution of economic capital is symmetrical and opposite to that of cultural capital, we can turn to the question of the hierarchy of the two principles of hierarchization (without forgetting that this hierarchy is, at all times a stake in struggles and that, in certain conjunctures, as in present-day France, cultural capital may be one of the conditions for access to control of economic capital). We may take as an indicator of the state of the power relation between these two principles of domination the frequency of intergenerational movements between the fractions.

If we use as indices of the rarity of a position (or, which amounts to the same thing, its degree of closure) the proportion of its occupants who originate from the dominant class as a whole and from the fraction in question, we find that the resulting hierarchy corresponds fairly exactly, for both indices, to the hierarchy by volume of economic capital (see table 9). The proportion of members of each fraction who originated from the dominant class, and the proportion of individuals who originated from the fraction to which they now belong, decline in parallel as one moves from the industrial employers to the teachers, with a clear break between the three higher-ranking fractions (industrial and commercial employers and the professions) and the three lower-ranking fractions (engineers, public-sector executives and teachers).

The use of these indicators may be contested on the grounds that the different fractions have very unequal control over the conditions of their social reproduction, so that the high proportion of endogenous employers may express nothing other than the capacity of these fractions (or at least of a proportion of their members) to transmit their powers and privileges without mediation or control. Indeed, this capacity is itself one of the rarest privileges, which, by giving greater freedom vis-à-vis academic verdicts, reduces the necessity or urgency of making the cultural investments which cannot be avoided by those who depend entirely on the education system for their reproduction. The fractions richest in cultural capital do in fact tend to invest in their children's education as well as in the cultural practices likely to maintain and increase their specificity: the fractions richest in economic capital set aside cultural and educational investments in favour of economic investments—industrial and commercial employers more so, however, than the new bourgeoisie of private-sector executives, who manifest the same concern for rational investment both in economic and in educational matters. The members of

Table 9 Social origin of members of the dominant class, by class fraction (%), 1970.^a

Father's class fraction	Son's class fraction					
	Industrial employers	Commercial employers	Professions	Engineers	Public-sector executives	Teachers (higher and secondary)
Industrial employers	33.5	2.8	2.3	6.1	4.4	1.5
Commercial employers	1.9	31.0	0	1.8	5.0	0.8
Professions	0.6	0.9	20.0	0.9	2.4	7.6
Engineers	0	0	6.4	6.7	2.3	4.6
Public-sector executives	1.9	3.3	9.9	13.2	14.2	7.6
Teachers (higher and secondary)	0.6	0	2.9	2.7	0.3	6.1
Whole class	38.5	38.0	41.5	31.4	28.7	28.2

Source: C.S. II (1970).

a. In each row the italic figure indicates the strongest tendency.

the professions (especially doctors and lawyers), relatively well endowed with both forms of capital, but too little integrated into economic life to use their capital in it actively; invest in their children's education but also, and especially in cultural practices which symbolize possession of the material and cultural means of maintaining a bourgeois life-style and which provide a social capital, a capital of social connections, honourability and respectability that is often essential in winning and keeping the confidence of high society, and with it a clientele, and may be drawn on, for example, in making a political career.

Given that scholastic success mainly depends on inherited cultural capital and on the propensity to invest in the educational system (and that the latter varies with the degree to which maintained or improved social position depends on such success), it is clear why the proportion of pupils in a given school or college who come from the culturally richest fractions rises with the position of that school in the specifically academic hierarchy (measured, for example, by previous academic success), reaching its peak in the institution responsible for reproducing the professional corps (the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*). In fact, like the dominant class which they help to reproduce, higher-education institutions are organized in accordance with two opposing principles of hierarchy. The hierarchy dominant within the educational system, i.e., the one which ranks institutions by specifically academic criteria, and, correlatively, by the proportion of their students drawn from the culturally richest fractions, is diametrically opposed to the hierarchy dominant outside the educational system, i.e., the one which ranks institutions by the proportion of their students drawn from the fractions richest in economic capital or in power and by the position in the economic or power hierarchy of the occupations they lead to. If the offspring of the dominated fractions are less represented in the economically highest institutions (such as ENA or HEC) than might be expected from their previous academic success and the position of these schools in the specifically scholastic hierarchy, this is, of course, because these schools refuse to apply purely scholastic criteria, but it is also because the scholastic hierarchy is most faithfully respected (so that the science section of the ENS is preferred to Polytechnique, or the Arts faculty to Sciences Po), by those who are most dependent on the educational system. (Blindness to alternative ranking principles is most nearly complete in the case of teachers' children, whose whole upbringing inclines them to identify all success with academic success.)

The same chiasmic structure is found at the level of the middle classes, where volume of cultural capital again declines, while economic capital increases, as one moves from primary teachers to small industrial and commercial employers, with junior executives, technicians and clerical workers in an intermediate position, homologous to that of engineers and executives at the higher level. Artistic craftsmen and art-dealers, who earn their living from industrial and commercial profits, and are close in

those respects to other small businessmen, are set apart from them by their relatively high cultural capital, which brings them closer to the new petite bourgeoisie. The medical and social services, drawn to a relatively large extent from the dominant class,¹⁹ are in a central position, roughly homologous to that of the professions (although slightly more tilted towards the pole of cultural capital); they are the only ones who receive not only wages or salaries but also, in some cases, non-commercial profits (like the professions).

It can immediately be seen that the homology between the space of the dominant class and that of the middle classes is explained by the fact that their structure is the product of the same principles. In each case, there is an opposition between owners (of their own home, of rural or urban property, of stocks and shares), often older, with little spare time, often the children of industrial or agricultural employers, and non-owners, chiefly endowed with educational capital and spare time, originating from the wage-earning fractions of the middle and upper classes or from the working class. The occupants of homologous positions, primary teachers and professors, for example, or small shopkeepers and commercial entrepreneurs, are mainly separated by the volume of the kind of capital that is dominant in the structure of their assets, i.e., by differences of degree which separate individuals unequally endowed with the same scarce resources. The lower positions—and, correlatively, the dispositions of their occupants—derive some of their characteristics from the fact that they are objectively related to the corresponding positions at the higher level, towards which they tend and pre-tend. This is clearly seen in the case of the wage-earning petite bourgeoisie, whose ascetic virtues and cultural good intentions—which it manifests in all sorts of ways, taking evening classes, enrolling in libraries, collecting stamps etc.—very clearly express the aspiration to rise to the higher position, the objective destiny of the occupants of the lower position who manifest such dispositions.

To reconstruct the social conditions of production of the habitus as fully as possible, one also has to consider the social trajectory of the class or class fraction the agent belongs to, which, through the probable slope of the collective future, engenders progressive or regressive dispositions towards the future; and the evolution, over several generations, of the asset structure of each lineage, which is perpetuated in the habitus and introduces divisions even within groups that are as homogeneous as the fractions. To give an idea of the range of possibilities, it need only be pointed out that an individual's social trajectory represents the combination of the lifelong evolution of the volume of his capital, which can be described, very approximately, as increasing, decreasing or stationary; the volume of each sort of capital (amenable to the same distinctions), and therefore the composition of his capital (since constant volume can conceal a change in structure);

and, in the same way, the father's and mother's asset volume and structure and their respective weights in the different kinds of capital (e.g., father stronger in economic capital and mother in cultural capital, or vice versa, or equivalence); and therefore the volume and structure of the capital of both sets of grandparents.

To account more fully for the differences in life-style between the different fractions—especially as regards culture—one would have to take account of their distribution in a socially ranked geographical space. A group's chances of appropriating any given class of rare assets (as measured by the mathematical probability of access) depend partly on its capacity for the specific appropriation, defined by the economic, cultural and social capital it can deploy in order to appropriate materially or symbolically the assets in question, that is, its position in social space, and partly on the relationship between its distribution in geographical space and the distribution of the scarce assets in that space.²⁰ (This relationship can be measured in average distances from goods or facilities, or in travelling time—which involves access to private or public transport.) In other words, a group's real social distance from certain assets must integrate the geographical distance, which itself depends on the group's spatial distribution and, more precisely, its distribution with respect to the 'focal point' of economic and cultural values, i.e., Paris or the major regional centres (in some careers—e.g., in the postal banking system—employment or promotion entails a period of exile).²¹ Thus, the distance of farmers from legitimate culture would not be so vast if the specifically cultural distance implied by their low cultural capital were not compounded by their spatial dispersion. Similarly, many of the differences observed in the (cultural and other) practices of the different fractions of the dominant class are no doubt attributable to the size of the town they live in. Consequently, the opposition between engineers and private-sector executives on the one hand, and industrial and commercial employers on the other, partly stems from the fact that the former mostly live in Paris and work for relatively large firms (only 7 percent of private-sector executives work in firms employing from 1 to 5 people, as against 34 percent in medium-sized firms and 40 percent in firms employing more than 50 people), whereas the latter mainly run small firms (in the 1966 survey by SOFRES [Société française d'enquêtes par sondages]—C.S. V—6 percent of the industrialists had from 1 to 5 employees; 70 percent, 6 to 49; 24 percent, more than 50; in commerce, the corresponding figures are 30 percent, 42 percent and 12 percent) and mostly live in the provinces and even in the country (according to the 1968 census, 22.3 percent of the industrialists and 15.5 percent of the commercial employers lived in a rural commune, 14.1 percent and 11.8 percent in communes of less than 10,000 inhabitants).

The model which emerges would not be so difficult to arrive at if it did

أسهل اجتماعياً في المساحة

not presuppose a break with the common-sense picture of the social world, summed up in the metaphor of the 'social ladder' and suggested by all the everyday language of 'mobility', with its 'rises' and 'falls'; and a no less radical break with the whole sociological tradition which, when it is not merely tacitly accepting the one-dimensional image of social space, as most research on 'social mobility' does, subjects it to a pseudo-scientific elaboration, reducing the social universe to a continuum of abstract strata ('upper middle class', 'lower middle class' etc.),²² obtained by aggregating different forms of capital, thanks to the construction of indices (which are, par excellence, the destroyers of structures).²³ Projection onto a single axis, in order to construct the continuous, linear, homogeneous, one-dimensional series with which the social hierarchy is normally identified, implies an extremely difficult (and, if it is unwitting, extremely dangerous) operation, whereby the different types of capital are reduced to a single standard. This abstract operation has an objective basis in the possibility, which is always available, of converting one type of capital into another, however, the exchange rates vary in accordance with the power relation between the holders of the different forms of capital. By obliging one to formulate the principle of the convertibility of the different kinds of capital, which is the precondition for reducing the space to one dimension, the construction of a two-dimensional space makes it clear that the exchange rate of the different kinds of capital is one of the fundamental stakes in the struggles between class fractions whose power and privileges are linked to one or the other of these types. In particular, this exchange rate is a stake in the struggle over the dominant principle of domination (economic capital, cultural capital or social capital), which goes on at all times between the different fractions of the dominant class.

Reconversion Strategies

Reproduction strategies, the set of ourwardly very different practices whereby individuals or families tend unconsciously and consciously, to maintain or increase their assets and consequently to maintain or improve their position in the class structure, constitute a system which being the product of a single unifying, generative principle, tends to function and change in a systematic way. Through the mediation of the disposition towards the future, which is itself determined by the group's objective chances of reproduction, these strategies depend, first, on the volume and composition of the capital to be reproduced; and, secondly, on the state of the instruments of reproduction (inheritance law and custom, the labour market, the educational system etc.), which itself depends on the state of the power relations between the classes. Any change in either the instruments of reproduction or the state of the capital to be reproduced therefore leads to a restructuring of the system of reproduction.

Against a linear type of approach.

One of the difficulties of sociological discourse lies in the fact that, like all language, it unfolds in strictly linear fashion, whereas, to escape oversimplification and one-sidedness, one ought to be able to recall at every point the whole network of relationships found there. That is why it has seemed useful to present a diagram which has the property, as Saussure says, of being able to 'present simultaneous complications in several dimensions', as a means of grasping the correspondence between the structure of social space—whose two fundamental dimensions correspond to the volume and composition of the capital of the groups distributed within it—and the structure of the space of the symbolic properties attached to those groups. But this diagram does not aim to be the crystal ball in which the alchemists claimed to see at a glance everything happening in the world; and like mathematicians who also treat what they call 'imagery' as a necessary evil, I am tempted to withdraw it in the very act of presenting it. For there is reason to fear that it will encourage readings which will reduce the homologues between systems of differences to direct, mechanical relationships between groups and properties; or that it will encourage the form of voyeurism which is inherent in the objectivist intention, putting the sociologist in the role of the lame devil who takes off the roofs and reveals the secrets of domestic life to his fascinated readers.

To have as exact an idea as possible of the theoretical model that is proposed, it has to be imagined that three diagrams are superimposed (as could be done with transparent sheets). The first (here, figure 5) presents the space of social conditions, as organized by the synchronic and diachronic distribution of the volume and composition of the various kinds of capital; the position of each group (class fraction) in this space is determined by the set of properties characteristic in the respects thus defined as pertinent. The second (figure 6) presents the space of life-styles, i.e., the distribution of the practices and properties which constitute the life-style in which each of these conditions manifests itself. Finally, between the two previous diagrams one ought to insert a third, presenting the theoretical space of habitus, that is, of the generative formulae (e.g., for teachers, aristocratic asceticism) which underlie each of the classes of practices and properties; that is, the transformation into a distinct and distinctive life-style of the necessities and facilities characteristic of a condition and a position. The figures presented here are not plane diagrams, or correspondence analyses, although various such analyses were drawn on in order to construct them, and although a number of these are organized in accordance with a similar structure (including the analyses of the survey data which are presented below).

Among the limitations of such a construct, the most important are due to the lacunae in the statistics, which are much better at measuring consumption or, at best, income (setting aside secondary and hidden profits) and property than capital in the strict sense (especially capital invested in the economy); others are due to the inadequacies of the analytical categories. These are very un-

equally homogeneous even as regards the pertinent criteria and, in the case of the industrial and commercial employers, make it impossible, for example, to identify the holders of a capital that can exert power over capital, i.e., big business. (For lack of rigorous indicators of the dispersion of the different categories, the economic and cultural dispersion of the most heterogeneous categories—farmers, industrial and commercial employers, craftsmen and shopkeepers—has been indicated by writing the corresponding names vertically between the extreme limits defining the group.) It has to be remembered that the position marked by the names always represents the central point in a space of variable extent which may in some cases be organized as a field of competition.

In the absence of a survey (perhaps impossible to carry out in practice) that would provide, with respect to the same representative sample, all the indicators of economic, cultural and social wealth and its evolution which are needed in order to construct an adequate representation of social space, a simplified model of that space has been constructed, based on information acquired through earlier research, and on a set of data taken from various surveys, all done by INSEE and therefore homogeneous at least as regards the construction of the categories (see appendix 3). From the INSEE survey of 1967 on leisure activities (tables relating to men) I have taken indicators of spare time such as length of the working week (C.S. IV); from the 1970 survey on vocational training (tables relating to men) I have taken data on the father's occupational category (social trajectory), the father's educa-

tional level (inherited cultural capital) and the subject's educational level (scholastic capital) (C.S. II); from the 1970 survey on incomes, I have taken information on total incomes, rural and urban property, shares, industrial and commercial profits, wages and salaries (economic capital) (C.S. I); from the 1972 survey on household consumption, data on the total amount spent, possession of a washing-machine and telephone, forms of tenancy of main and second residence (C.S. III); and from the 1968 census, data on the size of the town of residence.

For each of the groups represented, I have also indicated, firstly, the distribution of the occupants of each group according to the social trajectory which has brought them there, with histograms showing the proportion of each group having come from each of the different classes. For the sake of legibility, these histograms are reproduced only for a few illustrative categories. They suffice to show that the proportion of individuals from the dominant class (black) rises strongly, while the proportion from the working classes (white) declines, as one moves up the social hierarchy. (The histogram for the 'semi-skilled' workers, not reproduced here, is intermediate between those of the unskilled and skilled workers.) For the upper and middle classes at least, one really needs to be able to give the distribution by fraction of origin.

Secondly, I have indicated the history of the group as a whole. This is shown by the arrows, pointing up, down or horizontally, which indicate that between 1962 and 1968 the group in question expanded (by at least 25 percent), contracted or

Figure 5 (shown in black)

The space of social positions.

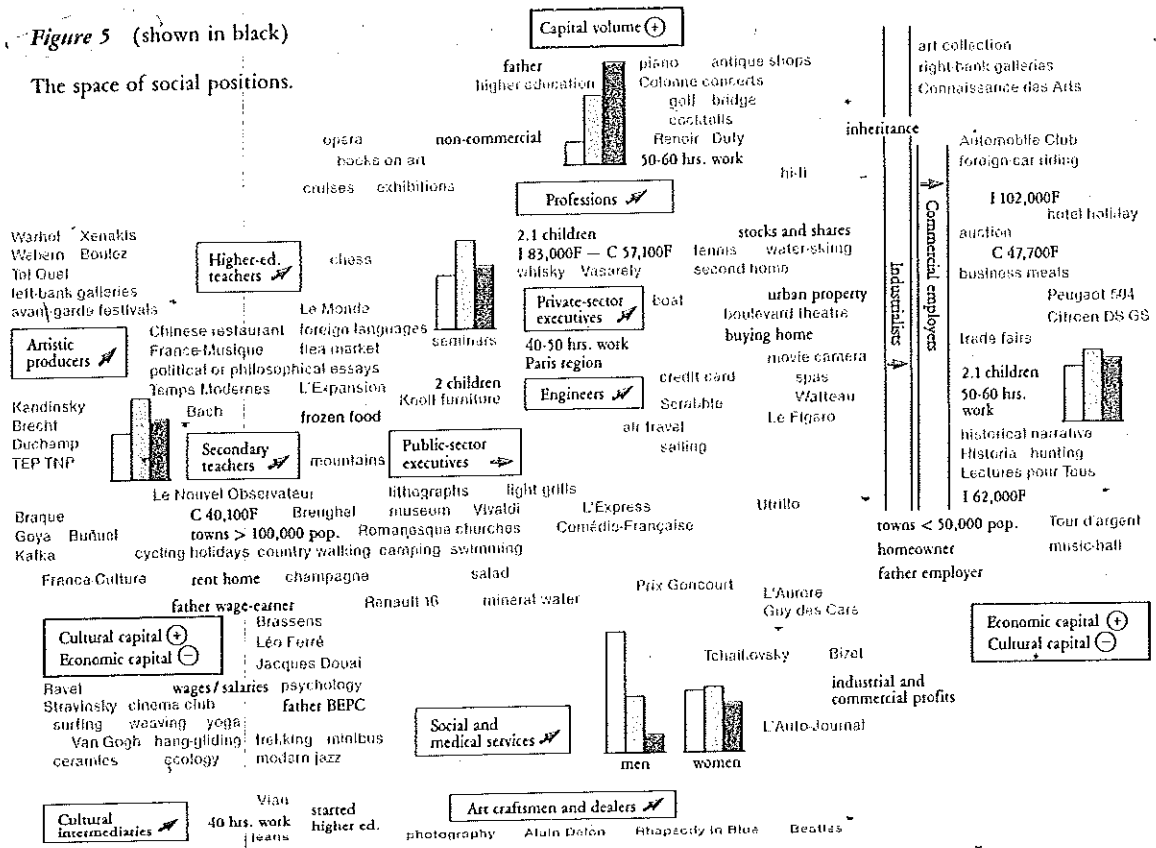
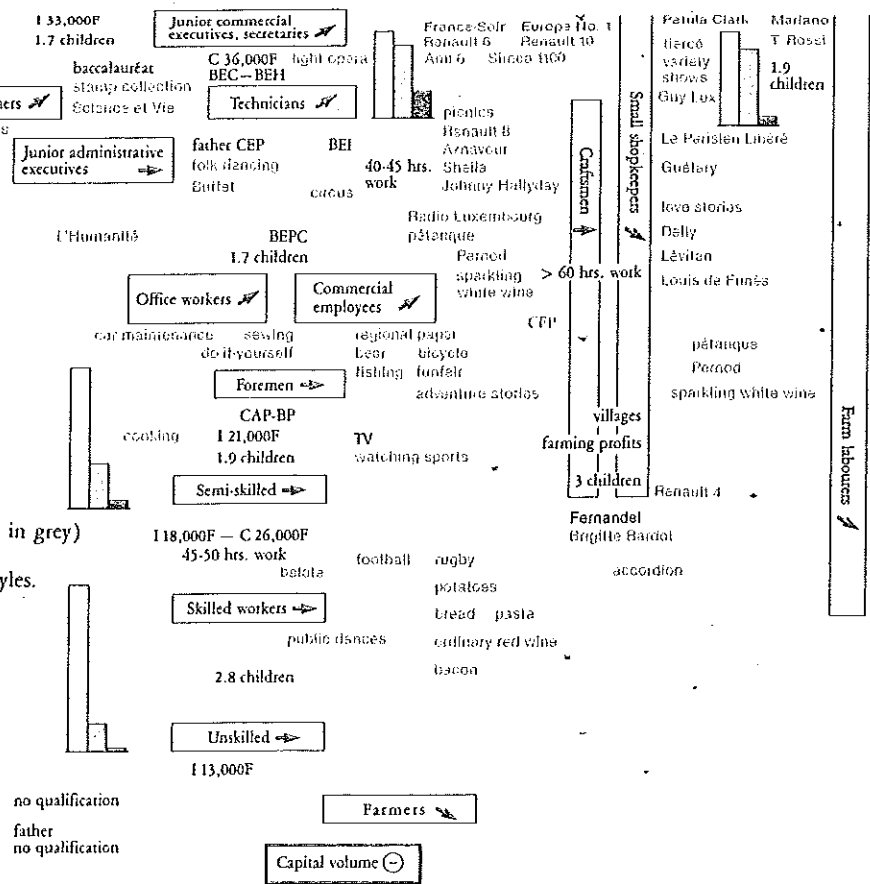


Figure 6 (shown in grey)

The space of life-styles.



remained stable. They thus make visible the opposition between the new, strongly growing fractions and the established, stable or declining fractions. I have thus endeavoured to show both the state of the power relation between the classes which constitutes the structure of the social space at a given moment and also something which is simultaneously an effect of and a factor in the transformation of that structure, namely the reconversion strategies whereby individuals (and groups) strive to maintain or improve their position in social space.

The synoptic schema, by bringing together information from areas which the usual classificatory systems separate—so much so that they make mere juxtaposition appear unthinkable or scandalous—and so making manifest the relationships among all the properties and practices characteristic of a group, which are perceived intuitively and which guide the classifications of everyday life, forces one to look for the basis of each of these systems of 'choices', on the one hand in the social conditions and conditionings characteristic of a given position in objective social space, which are expressed in those choices but in a misrecognized form; and on the other hand, in their relationship to the other systems of 'choices', by reference to which their specifically symbolic meaning and value are defined. Because life-styles are essentially distinctive, a number of features do not take on their full significance until they are brought into relation not only with the social positions they express but also with features appearing at an opposite pole of this space. This is the case, for example, with the oppositions which are established primarily between the

positions most remote from each other in one or both of the fundamental dimensions of social space (i.e., with respect to volume and composition of capital): Goya and Renoir, *avant-garde* theatre and boulevard theatre, Jacques Brel and Tino Rossi, France-Musique and France-Inter or Radio Luxembourg, cinema clubs and variety shows and so forth.

In addition to the information gathered directly by the survey, I have used a number of indices of cultural consumption, such as possession of a piano or records, TV-viewing, visits to museums, exhibitions, variety shows and the cinema, membership in a library, evening classes, collections, sports, all taken from the 1967 INSEE survey on leisure activities (C.S. IV); information on the consumption and life-styles of members of the dominant class (hi-fi equipment, sailing, cruises, bridge, picture collections, champagne, whisky, sports etc.) from surveys by the SOFRES and CESP (C.S. V and VI); information on theatre-going from a survey by SEMA (Société d'économie et de mathématiques appliquées) (C.S. XIV); on favourite actors, from the surveys by IFOP (Institut français de l'opinion publique) (C.S. XIV); on the reading of daily and weekly newspapers and magazines, from the surveys by the CSE (Centre de sociologie européenne) and CESP (C.S. XXVII); and on various cultural activities (ceramics, pottery, funfairs etc.) from the survey by the Ministry of Culture (C.S. VII).

In the resulting figure, each pertinent item appears only once and is therefore valid for a whole zone (of varying extent depending on the case) of social space, although it

most strongly characterizes the category to which it is closest. (Thus the item 'wages/salaries', marked half-way up the left-hand side of figure 5 and opposed to 'industrial and commercial profits', is valid for the whole of the left-hand side of the social space, i.e., for the university and secondary teachers, senior executives and engineers and also the primary teachers, junior executives, technicians, clerical workers and manual workers. Similarly, the item 'stocks and shares'—top right—applies to employers, the professions, private-sector executives and engineers.) It can be seen immediately that possession of a piano and the choice of the *Canterino for the Left Hand* are most typical of members of the professions; that walking and mountaineering are particularly

characteristic of secondary teachers and public-sector executives; or that swimming, placed half-way between the new petite bourgeoisie and the private-sector executives or the engineers, belongs to the life-style of both these sets of occupations. Thus, grouped around the name of each class fraction are those features of its life-style which are the most pertinent because they are the most distinctive—though it may in fact share them with other groups. This is the case, for example, with the use of a library, which appears in the area of the junior executives, primary teachers and technicians, although it is at least as frequent among secondary and university teachers; but the latter are less marked by the practice since it is part of their occupational role.

tion strategies. The reconversion of capital held in one form to another, more accessible, more profitable or more legitimate form tends to induce a transformation of asset structure.

These reconversions correspond to movements in a social space which has nothing in common with the unreal and yet naively realistic space of so-called 'social mobility' studies. The same positivistic naivety which sees 'upward mobility' in the morphological transformations of different classes or fractions is also unaware that the reproduction of the social structure may, in certain conditions, demand very little 'occupational heredity'. This is true whenever agents can only maintain their position in the social structure by means of a shift into a new condition (e.g., the man to office worker or commercial employee, or from small crafts-

The social space, being structured in two dimensions (overall capital volume and dominant/dominated capital), allows two types of movement which traditional mobility studies confuse, although they are in no way equivalent and are unequally probable: vertical movements, upwards or downwards, in the same vertical sector, that is, in the same field (e.g., nessman); and transverse movements, from one field to another, which may occur either horizontally (a schoolteacher, or his son, becomes a small shopkeeper) or between different levels (a shopkeeper, or his son,

becomes an industrialist). Vertical movements, the most frequent ones, only require an increase in the volume of the type of capital already dominant in the asset structure, and therefore a movement in the structure of the distribution of total capital which takes the form of a movement within a field (business field, academic field, administrative field, medical field etc.). Transverse movements entail a shift into another field and the reconversion of one type of capital into another or of one sub-type into another sub-type (e.g., from landowning to industrial capital or from literature to economics) and therefore a transformation of asset structure which protects overall capital volume and maintains position in the vertical dimension.

The probability of entering a given fraction of the dominant class from another class is, as we have seen, in inverse ratio to the position of that fraction in the hierarchy of economic capital. (The only exception is the 'liberal professions', which tend to transmit both economic and cultural capital and have the highest rate of endogenous recruitment.) Similarly, major sideways movements within the class (industrialists' sons becoming secondary or higher-education teachers, or vice versa) are extremely rare. Thus, in 1970, the probability of becoming an industrial or commercial employer was 1.9 percent for a professor's son, and the probability of becoming a teacher was 0.8 percent for an industrialist's son and 1.5 percent for a commercial entrepreneur's son. The probability of becoming a craftsman or shopkeeper was 1.2 percent for a primary teacher's son, and the probability of becoming a primary teacher was 2.4 percent for a craftsman's son and 1.4 percent for a small shopkeeper's son (C.S. II, secondary analysis).

CLASS MOBILITY AND MOBILE CLASSES The recent changes in the relationship between the different classes and the educational system—with the 'schooling boom' and the accompanying changes in the system itself—and also the changes in the social structure resulting from the new relationship between qualifications and jobs, are the consequences of intensified competition for academic qualifications. One important factor in intensifying this competition has doubtless been the fact that those fractions of the dominant class and middle class who are richest in economic capital (i.e., industrial and commercial employers, craftsmen and tradesmen) have had to make greatly increased use of the educational system in order to ensure their social reproduction.

The disparity between the scholastic capital of the adults of a class or fraction (measured by the proportion who have a qualification equal or superior to the BEPC) and the schooling rate of the corresponding adolescents is much more pronounced among craftsmen, shopkeepers and industrialists than among office workers and junior executives. This break in the usual correspondence between the children's educational participation rates and the parents' cultural capital indicates a profound change in dispo-

sitions towards scholastic investment. Many fewer small craftsmen and shopkeepers aged 45-54 than office workers have at least the BEPC (in 1962, 5.7 percent as against 10.1 percent), but their 18-year-old sons are equally likely to be in school (42.1 percent and 43.3 percent in 1962). Similarly industrialists and commercial entrepreneurs have less educational capital than technicians and junior executives (20 percent and 28.9 percent respectively have at least the BEPC), but their sons are equally likely to be in school (65.8 percent and 64.2 percent). The same process has begun among farm workers, as is shown by the rapid rise in their children's schooling rate between 1962 and 1975.²⁸

When class fractions who previously made little use of the school system enter the race for academic qualifications, the effect is to force the groups whose reproduction was mainly or exclusively achieved through education to step up their investments so as to maintain the relative scarcity of their qualifications and, consequently, their position in the class structure. Academic qualifications and the school system which awards them thus become one of the key stakes in an interclass competition which generates a general and continuous growth in the demand for education and an inflation of academic qualifications.

To the effects of the competition between groups struggling for 'upclassing' and against 'downclassing' (*déclassement*), a competition that is organized around the academic qualification (*titre*) and more generally around all the 'entitlements' by which groups assert and constitute their own scarcity value vis-à-vis other groups, must be added the effect of what might be termed a *structural* factor. Generally increased schooling has the effect of increasing the mass of cultural capital which, at every moment, exists in an 'embodied' state. Since the success of the school's educative action and the durability of its effects depend on how much cultural capital has been directly transmitted by the family, it can be presumed that the efficiency of school-based educative action tends to rise constantly, other things being equal. In short, the same scholastic investment becomes more profitable, a fact which no doubt contributes to inflation by bringing diplomas within reach of a greater number of people.

Bearing in mind that the volume of corresponding jobs may also have varied over the same period, one may assume that a qualification is likely to have undergone devaluation if the number of diploma-holders has grown more rapidly than the number of suitable positions. Everything seems to suggest that the *baccalauréat* and lower qualifications are the ones most affected by such devaluation. To this must be added the less obvious devaluation resulting from the fact that if the number of corresponding jobs does keep pace, the positions themselves are likely to lose some of their scarcity value. This is what has happened, for example, to jobs at all levels of the teaching profession.

The very rapid growth in girls' and women's education has been a sig-

significant factor in the devaluing of academic qualifications. Because the image of the division of labour between the sexes has also changed, more women now bring academic qualifications onto the labour market which previously were partly held in reserve (and were 'invested' only in the marriage market); and the higher the diploma, the more marked this growth has been, (see table 10). Just as all segregation (by sex or any other criterion) tends to slow down devaluation by its *numerus clausus* effect, so all desegregation tends to restore full strength to the devaluing mechanisms; and, as an American study of the effects of racial desegregation has shown, the least qualified are the ones who feel the effects most directly.

Indeed, it presents no paradox to suggest that the chief victims of the devaluing of academic qualifications are those who enter the labour market without such qualifications. The devaluation of diplomas is accompanied by the gradual extension of the monopoly held by academic-qualification-holders over positions previously open to the academically unqualified, which has the effect of limiting the devaluation of qualifications by limiting the competition, but only at the cost of restricting the career openings available to the unqualified and of reinforcing the academic predetermination of occupational opportunity. In certain areas, particularly the civil service, this leads to a decline both in the dispersal of the holders of the same qualifications among different jobs and in the dispersal of the qualifications of holders of equivalent jobs, or, in other words, a reinforced correlation between academic qualification and job occupied.

The market in jobs open to formally qualified candidates has grown constantly, inevitably at the expense of the formally unqualified. Universal recognition of academic qualifications no doubt has the effect of unifying the official set of qualifications for social positions and of eliminating local anomalies due to the existence of social spaces with their own rank-ordering principles. However, academic qualifications never achieve total, exclusive acceptance. Outside the specifically scholastic market, a diploma is worth what its holder is worth, economically and socially; the rate of return on educational capital is a function of the economic and social capital that can be devoted to exploiting it. The change in the distribution of posts among qualification-holders

Table 10 Rate of employment of women aged 25-34, by education, 1962 and 1968.¹

Year	CEP	CAP	BEPC	Bac	>Bac
1962	43.8	59.7	59.8	67.1	67.9
1968	46.3	60.6	65.5	74.3	77.5

Source: 1968 census.

1. It was not possible to isolate women without qualifications.

which results automatically from the increased number of formally qualified agents means that at every moment a proportion of the qualification-holders—starting, no doubt, with those who are least well endowed with the inherited means of exploiting their qualifications—are victims of devaluation. The strategies by which those who are most subject to devaluation endeavour to fight against it, in the short term (in the course of their own careers) or in the long term (through the strategies they employ for their children's schooling), constitute one of the decisive factors in the growth in the volume of qualifications awarded, which itself contributes to devaluation. The dialectic of devaluation and compensation thus tends to feed on itself.

RECONVERSION STRATEGIES AND MORPHOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS
The strategies which individuals and families employ with a view to safeguarding or improving their position in social space are reflected in transformations which modify both the volume of the different class fractions and the structure of their assets.

Table 11 has been constructed so as to give at least an approximate idea of these transformations. Since it was not possible (though it would have been desirable) to establish in narrowly defined categories the changes in total income and income structure for the period 1954-1975 (instead, table 12 indicates these changes in broad categories, for the period 1954-1968), I have indicated the distribution by source of income and the total income declared to the tax authorities, the source used by INSEE. It is known, however, that the degree of underestimation varies greatly. According to A. Villeneuve,²⁵ wages and salaries should be multiplied by 1.1, farmers' profits by 3.6, investment income by 2.9 and so forth. Once these corrections are applied, the members of the professions, and especially the craftsmen and small shopkeepers, return to their real places.

The categories (relatively) richest in economic capital (as represented by indicators such as stocks and shares, rural or urban property, etc.) tend to regress very sharply, as is shown by the decline in their volume (in the case relatively small increase in the proportion of young people) and by the fall or this has not occurred in the 'small shopkeeper' and 'craftsman' categories is explained by the coming of a new style of shopkeeper and craftsman.) Part of the apparent increase in the educational (and, no doubt, economic) capital of these categories is probably due to the fact that the reduction in their numbers chiefly concerns their lower strata.

By contrast, the fractions richest in cultural capital (measured by educational qualifications) have greatly expanded. They have acquired more young people, a higher proportion of women, and a higher rate of educational qualification. The categories most typical of this process are office workers and shop workers, technicians, junior and senior executives, primary teachers and especially secondary and tertiary teachers (in the last case the interlinked changes are particularly intense). Among engineers, how-