the question, much debated at present among historians,[35] of the conditions (economic crisis, economic crisis following a period of expansion and so on) in which the dialectic of mutually self-reproducing objective chances and subjective aspirations may break down. Everything suggests that an abrupt slump in objective chances relative to subjective aspirations is likely to produce a break in the tacit acceptance which the dominated classes—now abruptly excluded from the race, objectively and subjectively—previously granted to the dominant goals, and so to make possible a genuine inversion of the table of values.

3 The Habitus and the Space of Life-Styles

The mere fact that the social space described here can be presented as a diagram indicates that it is an abstract representation, deliberately constructed, like a map, to give a bird's-eye view, a point of view on the whole set of points from which ordinary agents (including the sociologist and his reader, in their ordinary behaviour) see the social world. Bringing together in simultaneity, in the scope of a single glance—this is its heuristic value—positions which the agents can never apprehend in their totality and in their multiple relationships, social space is to the practical space of everyday life, with its distances which are kept or signalled, and neighbours who may be more remote than strangers, what geometrical space is to the 'travelling space' (*espace hodologique*) of ordinary experience, with its gaps and discontinuities.

But the most crucial thing to note is that the question of this space is raised within the space itself—that the agents have points of view on this objective space which depend on their position within it and in which their will to transform or conserve it is often expressed. Thus many of the words which sociology uses to designate the classes it constructs are borrowed from ordinary usage, where they serve to express the (generally polemical) view that one group has of another. As if carried away by their quest for greater objectivity, sociologists almost always forget that the 'objects' they classify produce not only objectively classifiable practices but also classifying operations that are no less objective and are themselves classifiable. The division into classes performed by sociology leads to the common root of the classifiable practices which agents produce and of the classificatory judgements they make of other agents'

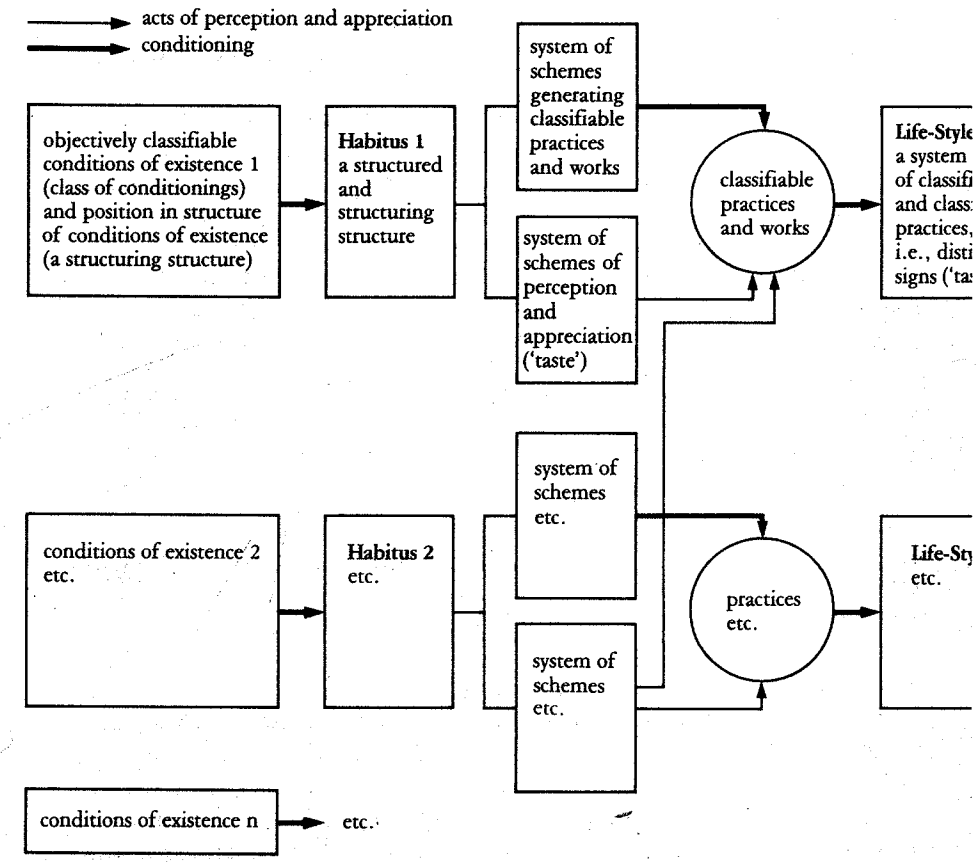
practices and their own. The habitus is both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification (*principium divisionis*) of these practices. It is in the relationship between the two capacities which define the habitus, the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste), that the represented social world, i.e., the space of life-styles, is constituted.

The relationship that is actually established between the pertinent characteristics of economic and social condition (capital volume and composition, in both synchronic and diachronic aspects) and the distinctive features associated with the corresponding position in the universe of life-styles only becomes intelligible when the habitus is constucted as the generative formula which makes it possible to account both for the classifiable practices and products and for the judgements, themselves classified, which make these practices and works into a system of distinctive signs. When one speaks of the aristocratic asceticism of teachers or the pretension of the petite bourgeoisie, one is not only describing these groups by one, or even the most important, of their properties, but also endeavouring to name the principle which generates all their properties and all their judgements of their, or other people's, properties. The habitus is necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions; it is a general, transposable disposition which carries out a systematic, universal application—beyond the limits of what has been directly learnt—of the necessity inherent in the learning conditions. That is why an agent's whole set of practices (or those of a whole set of agents produced by similar conditions) are both systematic, inasmuch as they are the product of the application of identical (or interchangeable) schemes, and systematically distinct from the practices constituting another life-style.

Because different conditions of existence produce different habitus—systems of generative schemes applicable, by simple transfer, to the most varied areas of practice—the practices engendered by the different habitus appear as systematic configurations of properties expressing the differences objectively inscribed in conditions of existence in the form of systems of differential deviations which, when perceived by agents endowed with the schemes of perception and appreciation necessary in order to identify, interpret and evaluate their pertinent features, function as life-styles (see figure 8).

The habitus is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world is itself the product of internalization of the division into social classes. Each class condition is defined, simultaneously, by its intrinsic properties and by the relational properties which it derives from its position in the system of class conditions, which is also a system of

Figure 8 Conditions of existence, habitus and life-style.



differences, differential positions, i.e., by everything which distinguishes it from what it is not and especially from everything it is opposed to; social identity is defined and asserted through difference. This means that inevitably inscribed within the dispositions of the habitus is the whole structure of the system of conditions, as it presents itself in the experience of a life-condition occupying a particular position within that structure. The most fundamental oppositions in the structure (high/low, rich/poor etc.) tend to establish themselves as the fundamental structuring principles of practices and the perception of practices. As a system of practice-generating schemes which expresses systematically the necessity and freedom inherent in its class condition and the difference constituting that position, the habitus apprehends differences between conditions, which it grasps in the form of differences between classified, classifying practices (products of other habitus), in accordance with principles of differentiation which, being themselves the product of these differences, are objectively attuned to them and therefore tend to perceive them as natural.

The observer who divides a population into classes performs an operation which has its equivalent in social practice. If he is not aware of this, he is likely to present a more or less modified form of a native classification as a scientific classification (a number of 'typologies' are precisely this). In addition, he has no chance of bringing to the level of consciousness the true status of his classifying operations which, like native knowledge, presuppose connections and comparisons and which, even when they seem to belong to the realm of social physics, in fact produce and interpret signifying distinctions, in short, belong to the order of the symbolic.

While it must be reasserted, against all forms of mechanism, that ordinary experience of the social world is a cognition, it is equally important to realize—contrary to the illusion of the spontaneous generation of consciousness which so many theories of the 'awakening of class consciousness' (*prise de conscience*) amount to—that primary cognition is misrecognition, recognition of an order which is also established in the mind. Life-styles are thus the systematic products of habitus, which, perceived in their mutual relations through the schemes of the habitus, become sign systems that are socially qualified (as 'distinguished', 'vulgar' etc.). The dialectic of conditions and habitus is the basis of an alchemy which transforms the distribution of capital, the balance-sheet of a power relation, into a system of perceived differences, distinctive properties, that is, a distribution of symbolic capital, legitimate capital, whose objective truth is misrecognized.

As structured products (*opus operatum*) which a structuring structure (*modus operandi*) produces through retranslations according to the specific logic of the different *fields*, all the practices and products of a given

agent are objectively harmonized among themselves, without any deliberate pursuit of coherence, and objectively orchestrated, without any conscious concertation, with those of all members of the same class. The habitus continuously generates practical metaphors, that is to say, transfers (of which the transfer of motor habits is only one example) or, more precisely, systematic transpositions required by the particular conditions in which the habitus is 'put into practice' (so that, for example, the ascetic ethos which might be expected always to express itself in saving may, in a given context, express itself in a particular way of using credit). The practices of the same agent, and, more generally, the practices of all agents of the same class, owe the stylistic affinity which makes each of them a metaphor of any of the others to the fact that they are the product of transfers of the same schemes of action from one field to another. An obvious paradigm would be the disposition called 'handwriting', a singular way of tracing letters which always produces the same writing, i.e., graphic forms which, in spite of all the differences of size, material or colour due to the surface (paper or blackboard) or the instrument (pen or chalk)—in spite, therefore, of the different use of muscles—present an immediately perceptible family resemblance, like all the features of style or manner whereby a painter or writer can be recognized as infallibly as a man by his walk.

True pastiche, as Proust does it, for example, reproduces not the most striking features of a style—like parody or caricature—but the habitus, which Jacques Rivière calls 'the hearth of mental activity', in which the original discourse is generated: 'We are amused to see each writer "resurrected" with his whole personality and, faced with an event he has never experienced, react just as he did to those which life brought him. The hearth of his mental activity is rekindled, the lamp relit in his brain.'[2]

Systematicity is found in the opus operatum because it is in the modus operandi.[3] It is found in all the properties—and property—with which individuals and groups surround themselves, houses, furniture, paintings, books, cars, spirits, cigarettes, perfume, clothes, and in the practices in which they manifest their distinction, sports, games, entertainments, only because it is in the synthetic unity of the habitus, the unifying, generative principle of all practices. Taste, the propensity and capacity to appropriate (materially or symbolically) a given class of classified, classifying objects or practices, is the generative formula of life-style, a unitary set of distinctive preferences which express the same expressive intention in the specific logic of each of the symbolic sub-spaces, furniture, clothing, language or body hexis. Each dimension of life-style 'symbolizes with' the others, in Leibniz's phrase, and symbolizes them. An old cabinetmaker's world view, the way he manages his budget, his time or his

body, his use of language and choice of clothing are fully present in his ethic of scrupulous, impeccable craftsmanship and in the aesthetic of work for work's sake which leads him to measure the beauty of his products by the care and patience that have gone into them.

The system of matching properties, which includes people—one speaks of a 'well-matched couple', and friends like to say they have the same tastes—is organized by taste, a system of classificatory schemes which may only very partially become conscious although, as one rises in the social hierarchy, life-style is increasingly a matter of what Weber calls the 'stylization of life'. Taste is the basis of the mutual adjustment of all the features associated with a person, which the old aesthetic recommended for the sake of the mutual reinforcement they give one another; the countless pieces of information a person consciously or unconsciously imparts endlessly underline and confirm one another, offering the alert observer the same pleasure an art-lover derives from the symmetries and correspondences produced by a harmonious distribution of redundancies. The over-determination that results from these redundancies is felt the more strongly because the different features which have to be isolated for observation or measurement strongly interpenetrate in ordinary perception; each item of information imparted in practice (e.g., a judgement of a painting) is contaminated—and, if it deviates from the probable feature, corrected—by the effect of the whole set of features previously or simultaneously perceived. That is why a survey which tends to isolate features—for example, by dissociating the things said from the way they are said—and detach them from the system of correlative features tends to minimize the deviation, on each point, between the classes, especially that between the petit bourgeois and the bourgeois. In the ordinary situations of bourgeois life, banalities about art, literature or cinema are inseparable from the steady tone, the slow, casual diction, the distant or self-assured smile, the measured gesture, the well-tailored suit and the bourgeois salon of the person who pronounces them.

Thus, lacunae can turn into disdainful refusals and confusion into absent-mindedness. Bourgeois respondents particularly distinguish themselves by their ability to control the survey situation (and any analysis of survey data should take this into account). Control over the social situation in which culture operates is given to them by the very unequally distributed capacity to adopt the relation to language which is called for in all situations of polite conversation (e.g., chatter about cinema or travel), and which presupposes an art of skimming, sliding and masking, making abundant use of all the hinges, fillers and qualifiers identified by linguists as characteristic of bourgeois language.

Taste is the practical operator of the transmutation of things into distinct and distinctive signs, of continuous distributions into discontinuous oppositions; it raises the differences inscribed in the physical order of bodies to the symbolic order of significant distinctions. It transforms objectively classified practices, in which a class condition signifies itself (through taste), into classifying practices, that is, into a symbolic expression of class position, by perceiving them in their mutual relations and in terms of social classificatory schemes. Taste is thus the source of the system of distinctive features which cannot fail to be perceived as a systematic expression of a particular class of conditions of existence, i.e., as a distinctive life-style, by anyone who possesses practical knowledge of the relationships between distinctive signs and positions in the distributions—between the universe of objective properties, which is brought to light by scientific construction, and the no less objective universe of life-styles, which exists as such for and through ordinary experience.

This classificatory system, which is the product of the internalization of the structure of social space, in the form in which it impinges through the experience of a particular position in that space, is, within the limits of economic possibilities and impossibilities (which it tends to reproduce in its own logic), the generator of practices adjusted to the regularities inherent in a condition. It continuously transforms necessities into strategies, constraints into preferences, and, without any mechanical determination, it generates the set of 'choices' constituting life-styles, which derive their meaning, i.e., their value, from their position in a system of oppositions and correlations.[4] It is a virtue made of necessity which continuously transforms necessity into virtue by inducing 'choices' which correspond to the condition of which it is the product. As can be seen whenever a change in social position puts the habitus into new conditions, so that its specific efficacy can be isolated, it is taste—the taste of necessity or the taste of luxury—and not high or low income which commands the practices objectively adjusted to these resources. Through taste, an agent has what he likes because he likes what he has, that is, the properties actually given to him in the distributions and legitimately assigned to him in the classifications.[5]

The Homology between the Spaces

Bearing in mind all that precedes, in particular the fact that the generative schemes of the habitus are applied, by simple transfer, to the most dissimilar areas of practice, one can immediately understand that the practices or goods associated with the different classes in the different areas of practice are organized in accordance with structures of opposition which are homologous to one another because they are all homologous to the structure of objective oppositions between class conditions. Without presuming to demonstrate here in a few pages what the whole of the rest of this work will endeavour to establish—but lest the reader fail to see the wood for the trees of detailed analysis—I shall merely indi-

cate, very schematically, how the two major organizing principles of the social space govern the structure and modification of the space of cultural consumption, and, more generally, the whole universe of life-styles.

In cultural consumption, the main opposition, by overall capital value, is between the practices designated by their rarity as distinguished, those of the fractions richest in both economic and cultural capital, and the practices socially identified as vulgar because they are both easy and common, those of the fractions poorest in both these respects. In the intermediate position are the practices which are perceived as pretentious, because of the manifest discrepancy between ambition and possibilities. In opposition to the dominated condition, characterized, from the point of view of the dominant, by the combination of forced poverty and unjustified laxity, the dominant aesthetic—of which the work of art and the aesthetic disposition are the most complete embodiments—proposes the combination of ease and asceticism, i.e., self-imposed austerity, restraint, reserve, which are affirmed in that absolute manifestation of excellence, relaxation in tension.

This fundamental opposition is specified according to capital composition. Through the mediation of the means of appropriation available to them, exclusively or principally cultural on the one hand, mainly economic on the other, and the different forms of relation to works of art which result from them, the different fractions of the dominant class are oriented towards cultural practices so different in their style and object and sometimes so antagonistic (those of 'artists' and 'bourgeois')[6] that it is easy to forget that they are variants of the same fundamental relationship to necessity and to those who remain subject to it, and that each pursues the exclusive appropriation of legitimate cultural goods and the associated symbolic profits. Whereas the dominant fractions of the dominant class (the 'bourgeoisie') demand of art a high degree of denial of the social world and incline towards a hedonistic aesthetic of ease and facility, symbolized by boulevard theatre or Impressionist painting, the dominated fractions (the 'intellectuals' and 'artists') have affinities with the ascetic aspect of aesthetics and are inclined to support all artistic revolutions conducted in the name of purity and purification, refusal of ostentation and the bourgeois taste for ornament; and the dispositions towards the social world which they owe to their status as poor relations incline them to welcome a pessimistic representation of the social world.

While it is clear that art offers it the greatest scope, there is no area of practice in which the intention of purifying, refining and sublimating facile impulses and primary needs cannot assert itself, or in which the stylization of life, i.e., the primacy of form over function, which leads to the denial of function, does not produce the same effects. In language, it gives the opposition between popular outspokenness and the highly censored language of the bourgeois, between the expressionist pursuit of the picturesque or the rhetorical effect and the choice of restraint and false

simplicity (litotes). The same economy of means is found in body language: here too, agitation and haste, grimaces and gesticulation are opposed to slowness—'the slow gestures, the slow glance' of nobility, according to Nietzsche[7]—to the restraint and impassivity which signify elevation. Even the field of primary tastes is organized according to the fundamental opposition, with the antithesis between quantity and quality, belly and palate, matter and manners, substance and form.

FORM AND SUBSTANCE The fact that in the realm of food the main opposition broadly corresponds to differences in income has masked the secondary opposition which exists, both within the middle classes and within the dominant class, between the fractions richer in cultural capital and less rich in economic capital and those whose assets are structured in the opposite way. Observers tend to see a simple effect of income in the fact that, as one rises in the social hierarchy, the proportion of income spent on food diminishes, or that, within the food budget, the proportion spent on heavy, fatty, fattening foods, which are also cheap—pasta, potatoes, beans, bacon, pork—declines (C.S. XXXIII), as does that spent on wine, whereas an increasing proportion is spent on leaner, lighter (more digestible), non-fattening foods (beef, veal, mutton, lamb, and especially fresh fruit and vegetables).[8] Because the real principle of preferences is taste, a virtue made of necessity, the theory which makes consumption a simple function of income has all the appearances to support it, since income plays an important part in determining distance from necessity. However, it cannot account for cases in which the same income is associated with totally different consumption patterns. Thus, foremen remain attached to 'popular' taste although they earn more than clerical and commercial employees, whose taste differs radically from that of manual workers and is closer to that of teachers.

For a real explanation of the variations which J. F. Engel's law merely records, one has to take account of all the characteristics of social condition which are (statistically) associated from earliest childhood with possession of high or low income and which tend to shape tastes adjusted to these conditions.[9] The true basis of the differences found in the area of consumption, and far beyond it, is the opposition between the tastes of luxury (or freedom) and the tastes of necessity. The former are the tastes of individuals who are the product of material conditions of existence defined by distance from necessity, by the freedoms or facilities stemming from possession of capital; the latter express, precisely in their adjustment, the necessities of which they are the product. Thus it is possible to deduce popular tastes for the foods that are simultaneously most 'filling' and most economical[10] from the necessity of reproducing labour power at the lowest cost which is forced on the proletariat as its very definition. The idea of taste, typically bourgeois, since it presupposes absolute freedom of choice, is so closely associated with the idea of freedom that

many people find it hard to grasp the paradoxes of the taste of necessity. Some simply sweep it aside, making practice a direct product of economic necessity (workers eat beans because they cannot afford anything else), failing to realize that necessity can only be fulfilled, most of the time, because the agents are inclined to fulfil it, because they have a taste for what they are anyway condemned to. Others turn it into a taste of freedom, forgetting the conditionings of which it is the product, and so reduce it to pathological or morbid preference for (basic) essentials, a sort of congenital coarseness, the pretext for a class racism which associates the populace with everything heavy, thick and fat.[11] Taste is *amor fati,* the choice of destiny, but a forced choice, produced by conditions of existence which rule out all alternatives as mere daydreams and leave no choice but the taste for the necessary.

One only has to describe the tastes of necessity as if they were tastes of luxury (which inevitably happens whenever one ignores the modality of practices)[12] to produce false coincidences between the two extreme positions in social space: fertility or celibacy (or which amounts to the same thing, late marriage) is an elective luxury in one case, an effect of privation in the other. In this respect, Nicole Tabard's analysis of women's attitudes to 'working wives' is exemplary: for working-class women, 'employment is a constraint which weakens as the husband's income rises'; for the women of the privileged classes, work is a choice, as is shown by the fact that 'the rate of female employment does not decline as status rises.'[13] This example should be borne in mind when reading statistics in which the nominal identity imposed by uniform questioning conceals totally different realities, as often happens when one moves from one extreme of social space to the other. If in one case women who work say they are in favour of women working, whereas in the other they may work while saying they are against it, this is because the work to which working-class women are tacitly referring is the only sort they can expect, i.e., unpleasant, poorly paid work, which has nothing in common with what 'work' implies for bourgeois women. To give an idea of the ideological effects which the essentialist and anti-genetic dominant vision produces when, consciously or unconsciously, it naturalizes the taste of necessity (Kant's 'barbarous taste'), converting it into a natural inclination simply by dissociating it from its economic and social raisons d'être, one only has to recall a social psychology experiment which showed that the same act, that of giving blood, is seen as voluntary or forced depending on whether it is performed by members of the privileged classes or the working classes.[14]

The taste of necessity can only be the basis of a life-style 'in-itself', which is defined as such only negatively, by an absence, by the relationship of privation between itself and the other life-styles. For some, there are elective emblems, for others stigmata which they bear in their very bodies. 'As the chosen people bore in their features the sign that they were the property of Jehovah, so the division of labour brands the manu-

facturing worker as the property of capital.'[15] The brand which Marx speaks of is nothing other than life-style, through which the most deprived immediately betray themselves, even in their use of spare time; in so doing they inevitably serve as a foil to every distinction and contribute, purely negatively, to the dialectic of pretension and distinction which fuels the incessant changing of taste. Not content with lacking virtually all the knowledge or manners which are valued in the markets of academic examination or polite conversation nor with only possessing skills which have no value there, they are the people 'who don't know how to live', who sacrifice most to material foods, and to the heaviest, grossest and most fattening of them, bread, potatoes, fats, and the most vulgar, such as wine; who spend least on clothing and cosmetics, appearance and beauty; those who 'don't know how to relax', 'who always have to be doing something', who set off in their Renault 5 or Simca 1000 to join the great traffic jams of the holiday exodus, who picnic beside major roads, cram their tents into overcrowded campsites, fling themselves into the prefabricated leisure activities designed for them by the engineers of cultural mass production; those who by all these uninspired 'choices' confirm class racism, if it needed to be confirmed, in its conviction that they only get what they deserve.

The art of eating and drinking remains one of the few areas in which the working classes explicitly challenge the legitimate art of living. In the face of the new ethic of sobriety for the sake of slimness, which is most recognized at the highest levels of the social hierarchy, peasants and especially industrial workers maintain an ethic of convivial indulgence. A bon vivant is not just someone who enjoys eating and drinking; he is someone capable of entering into the generous and familiar—that is, both simple and free—relationship that is encouraged and symbolized by eating and drinking together, in a conviviality which sweeps away restraints and reticence.

Sixty-four percent of senior executives, professionals and industrialists and 60 percent of junior executives, clerical and commercial employees consider that 'the French eat too much'. Farm workers (who are by far the most inclined to think the quantity 'about right'—54 percent as against 32 percent in the upper classes) and industrial workers are the categories who least often accept the new cultural norm (40 percent and 46 percent), which is recognized more by women than men and more by young people than old. As regards drink, only farm workers stand out clearly against the dominant view (32 percent of them consider that 'French people drink about the right amount'), though industrial workers also accept it less frequently than the other categories. Sixty-three percent of the industrial workers (and 50 percent of the farm workers, as against 48 percent of the executives, professionals and industrialists) say they have a favourable opinion of someone who enjoys eating and drinking. Another index of their willingness to stand up in this area for heterodox practices which in cultural matters they

would try to disguise is that they say that, in a restaurant, they would choose a substantial dish rather than a light grill (favoured by the senior executives) or that they would have both cheese *and* a dessert. This is understandable when it is remembered that, by its very rarity, a visit to a restaurant is, for most of them—51 percent of the farm workers and 44 percent of the industrial workers hardly ever eat in a restaurant, as against only 6 percent of the upper classes—something extraordinary, associated with the idea of abundance and the suspension of ordinary restrictions. Even as regards alcohol consumption, where the weight of legitimacy is no doubt greater, the working classes are the least inclined (35 percent of farm workers, 46 percent of industrial workers, 55 percent of the upper classes) to set the minimum age for drinking alcohol above fifteen (C.S. XXXIV).

The boundary marking the break with the popular relation to food runs, without any doubt, between the manual workers and the clerical and commercial employees (see table 16). Clerical workers spend less on food than skilled manual workers, both in absolute terms (9,376 francs as against 10,347 francs) and in relative terms (34.2 percent as against 38.3 percent); they consume less bread, pork, pork products (*charcuterie*), milk, cheese, rabbit, poultry, dried vegetables and fats, and, within a smaller food budget, spend as much on meat—beef, veal, mutton and lamb—and slightly more on fish, fresh fruit and aperitifs. These changes in the structure of spending on food are accompanied by increased spending on health and beauty care and clothing, and a slight increase in spending on cultural and leisure activities. When it is noted that the reduced spending on food, especially on the most earthly, earthy, down-to-earth foods, is accompanied by a lower birth-rate, it is reasonable to suppose that it constitutes one aspect of an overall transformation of the relationship to the world. The 'modest' taste which can defer its gratifications is opposed to the spontaneous materialism of the working classes, who refuse to participate in the Benthamite calculation of pleasures and pains, benefits and costs (e.g., for health and beauty). In other words, these two relations to the 'fruits of the earth' are grounded in two dispositions towards the future which are themselves related in circular causality to two objective futures. Against the imaginary anthropology of economics, which has never shrunk from formulating universal laws of 'temporal preference', it has to be pointed out that the propensity to subordinate present desires to future desires depends on the extent to which this sacrifice is 'reasonable', that is, on the likelihood, in any case, of obtaining future satisfactions superior to those sacrificed.[16]

Among the economic conditions of the propensity to sacrifice immediate satisfactions to expected satisfactions one must include the probability of these future satisfactions which is inscribed in the present condition. There is still a sort of economic calculation in the unwillingness to subject existence to economic calculation. The hedonism which seizes day by day the rare satisfactions ('good times') of the immediate present

Table 16 Annual household expenditures on food: skilled manual workers, foremen and clerical workers, 1972.

	Skilled manual		Foremen		Clerical workers
Average number persons per household	3.61		3.85		2.95
Average total household expenditure (francs)	26,981		35,311		27,376
Average total household expenditure on food (francs)	10,347		12,503		9,376
Expenditure on food as % of total expenditure	38.3		35.4		34.2
	Average exp.		Average exp.		Average exp.
Type of food	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.
Cereals	925	8.9	1,054	8.4	789	8.4
bread	464	4.5	512	4.1	349	3.7
cakes, pastries	331	3.2	439	3.5	322	3.4
rusks	27	0.3	28	0.2	24	0.2
rice	65	0.6	46	0.4	49	0.5
flour	37	0.3	27	0.2	45	0.5
Vegetables	858	8.3	979	7.8	766	8.2
potatoes	141	1.4	146	1.2	112	1.2
fresh vegetables	556	5.4	656	5.2	527	5.6
dried or canned	162	1.6	177	1.4	127	1.3
Fruit	515	5.0	642	5.1	518	5.5
fresh fruit	248	2.4	329	2.6	278	3.0
citrus fruit, bananas	202	1.9	229	1.8	177	1.9
dried	65	0.6	86	0.7	62	0.7
Butcher's meat	1,753	16.9	2,176	17.4	1,560	16.5
beef	840	8.1	1,086	8.7	801	8.5
veal	302	2.9	380	3.0	296	3.1
mutton, lamb	169	1.6	170	1.3	154	1.6
horse	88	0.8	112	0.9	74	0.8
pork	354	3.4	428	3.4	235	2.5
Pork products, delicatessen	893	8.6	1,046	8.4	758	8.0

	Skilled manual		Foremen		Clerical workers	
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	Average exp.		Average exp.		Average exp.	
Type of food	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.
Poultry	389	3.7	403	3.2	317	3.4
Rabbit, game	173	1.7	156	1.2	131	1.4
Eggs	164	1.6	184	1.5	146	1.5
Milk	342	3.3	337	2.7	252	2.7
Cheese, yogurt	631	6.1	700	5.6	521	5.5
Fats	547	5.3	629	5.0	439	4.7
butter	365	3.5	445	3.5	292	3.1
oil	149	1.4	146	1.2	125	1.3
margarine	30	0.3	37	0.3	21	0.2
lard	2	0	0	0	1	0
Sugar, confectionery, cocoa	345	3.3	402	3.2	290	3.1
Alcohol	883	8.6	1,459	11.7	771	8.2
wine	555	5.4	1,017	8.1	466	5.0
beer	100	1.0	109	0.9	68	0.7
cider	13	0	5	0	8	0
apéritifs, liqueurs	215	2.1	328	2.6	229	2.4
Non-alcoholic drinks	236	2.3	251	2.0	224	2.4
Coffee, tea	199	1.9	252	2.0	179	1.9
Restaurant meals	506	4.9	583	4.7	572	6.1
Canteen meals	457	4.4	559	4.5	473	5.0
Miscellaneous	263	2.5	359	2.9	389	4.1

Source: C.S. III (1972).

is the only philosophy conceivable to those who 'have no future' and, in any case, little to expect from the future.[17] It becomes clearer why the practical materialism which is particularly manifested in the relation to food is one of the most fundamental components of the popular ethos and even the popular ethic. The being-in-the-present which is affirmed in the readiness to take advantage of the good times and take time as it comes is, in itself, an affirmation of solidarity with others (who are often the only present guarantee against the threats of the future), inasmuch as this temporal immanentism is a recognition of the limits which define the condition. This is why the sobriety of the petit bourgeois is felt as a break: in abstaining from having a good time and from having it with others, the would-be petit bourgeois betrays his ambition of escaping from the common present, when, that is, he does not construct his whole self-image around the opposition between his home and the café, abstinence and intemperance, in other words, between individual salvation and collective solidarities.

The café is not a place a man goes to for a drink but a place he goes to in order to drink in company, where he can establish relationships of familiarity based on the suspension of the censorships, conventions and proprieties that prevail among strangers. In contrast to the bourgeois or petit-bourgeois café or restaurant, where each table is a separate, appropriated territory (one asks permission to borrow a chair or the salt), the working-class café is a site of companionship (each new arrival gives a collective greeting, 'Salut la compagnie!' etc.). Its focus is the counter, to be leaned on after shaking hands with the landlord—who is thus defined as the host (he often leads the conversation)—and sometimes shaking hands with the whole company; the tables, if there are any, are left to 'strangers', or women who have come in to get a drink for their child or make a phone call. In the café free rein is given to the typically popular art of the joke—the art of seeing everything as a joke (hence the reiterated 'Joking apart' or 'No joke', which mark a return to serious matters or prelude a second-degree joke), but also the art of making or playing jokes, often at the expense of the 'fat man'. He is always good for a laugh, because, in the popular code, his fatness is more a picturesque peculiarity than a defect, and because the good nature he is presumed to have predisposes him to take it in good heart and see the funny side. The joke, in other words, is the art of making fun without raising anger, by means of ritual mockery or insults which are neutralized by their very excess and which, presupposing a great familiarity, both in the knowledge they use and the freedom with which they use it, are in fact tokens of attention or affection, ways of building up while seeming to run down, of accepting while seeming to condemn—although they may also be used to test out those who show signs of stand-offishness.[18]

THREE STYLES OF DISTINCTION The basic opposition between the tastes of luxury and the tastes of necessity is specified in as many opposi-

tions as there are different ways of asserting one's distinction vis-à-vis the working class and its primary needs, or—which amounts to the same thing—different powers whereby necessity can be kept at a distance. Thus, within the dominant class, one can, for the sake of simplicity, distinguish three structures of the consumption distributed under three items: food, culture and presentation (clothing, beauty care, toiletries, domestic servants). These structures take strictly opposite forms—like the structures of their capital—among the teachers as against the industrial and commercial employers (see table 17). Whereas the latter have exceptionally high expenditure on food (37 percent of the budget), low cultural costs and medium spending on presentation and representation, the former, whose total spending is lower on average, have low expenditure on food (relatively less than manual workers), limited expenditure on presentation (though their expenditure on health is one of the highest) and relatively high expenditure on culture (books, papers, entertainments, sport, toys, music, radio and record-player). Opposed to both these groups are the members of the professions, who devote the same proportion of their budget to food as the teachers (24.4 percent), but out of much greater total expenditure (57,122 francs as against 40,884 francs), and who spend much more on presentation and representation than all other fractions, especially if the costs of domestic service are included, whereas their cultural expenditure is lower than that of the teachers (or even the engineers and senior executives, who are situated between the teachers and the professionals, though nearer the latter, for almost all items).

The system of differences becomes clearer when one looks more closely at the patterns of spending on food. In this respect the industrial and commercial employers differ markedly from the professionals, and a fortiori from the teachers, by virtue of the importance they give to cereal-based products (especially cakes and pastries), wine, meat preserves (foie

Table 17 Yearly spending by teachers, professionals and industrial and commercial employers, 1972.

Type of spending	Teachers (higher and secondary)		Professionals		Industrial and commercial employers	
	Francs	% of total	Francs	% of total	Francs	% of total
Food[a]	9,969	24.4	13,956	24.4	16,578	37.4
Presentation[b]	4,912	12.0	12,680	22.2	5,616	12.7
Culture[c]	1,753	4.3	1,298	2.3	574	1.3

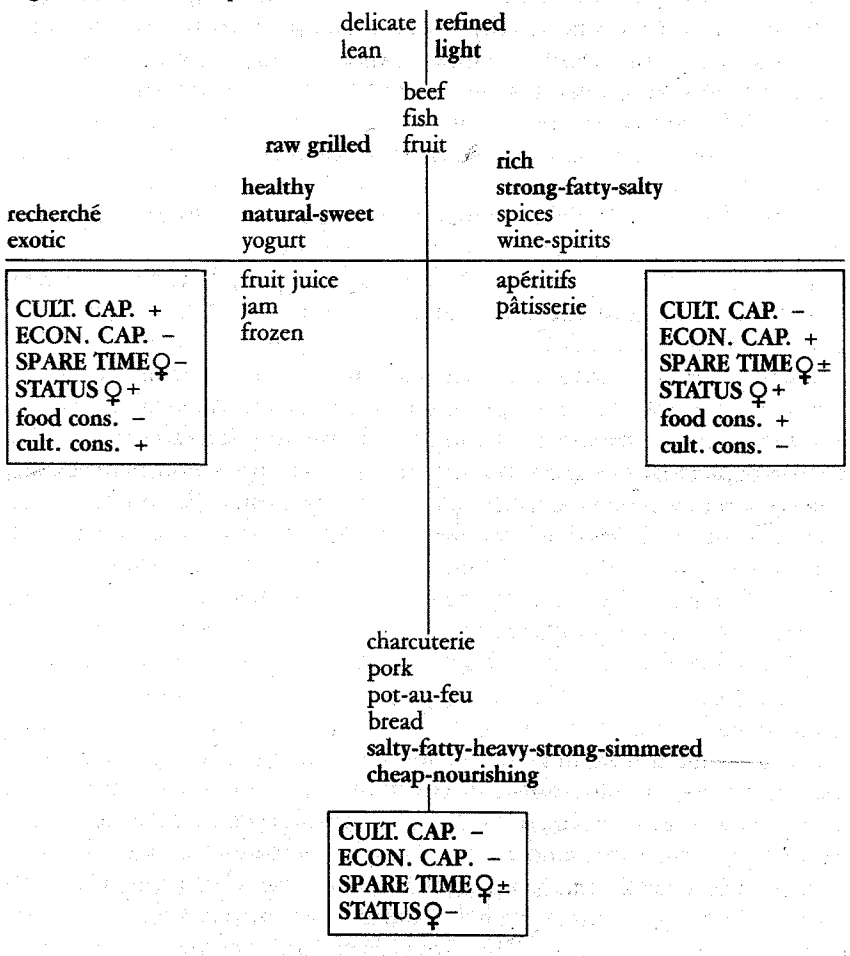
Source: C.S. III (1972).
a. Includes restaurant or canteen meals.
b. Clothes, shoes, repairs and cleaning, toiletries, hairdressing, domestic servants.
c. Books, newspapers and magazines, stationery, records, sport, toys, music, entertainments.

gras, etc.) and game, and their relatively low spending on meat, fresh fruit and vegetables. The teachers, whose food purchases are almost identically structured to those of office workers, spend more than all other fractions on bread, milk products, sugar, fruit preserves and non-alcoholic drinks, less on wine and spirits and distinctly less than the professions on expensive products such as meat—especially the most expensive meats, such as mutton and lamb—and fresh fruit and vegetables. The members of the professions are mainly distinguished by the high proportion of their spending which goes on expensive products, particularly meat (18.3 percent of their food budget), and especially the most expensive meat (veal, lamb, mutton), fresh fruit and vegetables, fish and shellfish, cheese and aperitifs.[19]

Thus, when one moves from the manual workers to the industrial and commercial employers, through foremen, craftsmen and small shopkeepers, economic constraints tend to relax without any fundamental change in the pattern of spending (see figure 9). The opposition between the two extremes is here established between the poor and the rich (nouveau riche), between *la bouffe* and *la grande bouffe*;[20] the food consumed is increasingly rich (both in cost and in calories) and increasingly heavy (game, foie gras). By contrast, the taste of the professionals or senior executives defines the popular taste, by negation, as the taste for the heavy, the fat and the coarse, by tending towards the light, the refined and the delicate (see table 18). The disappearance of economic constraints is accompanied by a strengthening of the social censorships which forbid coarseness and fatness, in favour of slimness and distinction. The taste for rare, aristocratic foods points to a traditional cuisine, rich in expensive or rare products (fresh vegetables, meat). Finally, the teachers, richer in cultural capital than in economic capital, and therefore inclined to ascetic consumption in all areas, pursue originality at the lowest economic cost and go in for exoticism (Italian, Chinese cooking etc.)[21] and culinary populism (peasant dishes). They are thus almost consciously opposed to the (new) rich with their rich food, the buyers and sellers of *grosse bouffe*, the 'fat cats',[22] gross in body and mind, who have the economic means to flaunt, with an arrogance perceived as 'vulgar', a life-style which remains very close to that of the working classes as regards economic and cultural consumption.

Eating habits, especially when represented solely by the produce consumed, cannot of course be considered independently of the whole life-style. The most obvious reason for this is that the taste for particular dishes (of which the statistical shopping-basket gives only the vaguest idea) is associated, through preparation and cooking, with a whole conception of the domestic economy and of the division of labour between the sexes. A taste for elaborate casserole dishes (pot-au-feu, *blanquette, daube*), which demand a big investment of time and interest, is linked to a traditional conception of woman's role. Thus there is a particularly

Figure 9 The food space.



strong opposition in this respect between the working classes and the dominated fractions of the dominant class, in which the women, whose labour has a high market value (and who, perhaps as a result, have a higher sense of their own value) tend to devote their spare time rather to child care and the transmission of cultural capital, and to contest the traditional division of domestic labour. The aim of saving time and labour in preparation combines with the search for light, low-calorie products, and points towards grilled meat and fish, raw vegetables (*'salades composées'*), frozen foods, yogurt and other milk products, all of which are diametrically opposed to popular dishes, the most typical of which is pot-au-feu, made with cheap meat that is boiled (as opposed to grilled or roasted), a method of cooking that chiefly demands time. It is no accident that this form of cooking symbolizes one state of female existence

and of the sexual division of labour (a woman entirely devoted to housework is called 'pot-au-feu'), just as the slippers put on before dinner symbolize the complementary male rôle.

Small industrial and commercial employers, the incarnation of the 'grocer' traditionally execrated by artists, are the category who most often (60 percent) say they change into their carpet slippers every day before dinner, whereas the professions and the senior executives are most inclined to reject this petit-bourgeois symbol (35 percent say they never do it). The particularly high consumption of carpet slippers by working-class women (both urban and rural) no doubt reflects the relation to the body and to self-presentation entailed by confinement to the home and to domestic life. (The wives of craftsmen, shopkeepers and manual workers are those who most often say that their choice of clothes is mainly guided by a concern to please their husbands.)

It is among manual workers that most time and interest is devoted to cooking: 69 percent of those questioned say they like doing elaborate cooking (*la grande cuisine*), as against 59 percent of the junior executives, 52 percent of the small shopkeepers and 51 percent of the senior executives, professionals and industrialists (C.S. XXXIVa). (Another indirect index of these differences as regards the sexual division of labour is that whereas the teachers and senior executives seem to give priority to a washing machine and a dishwasher, for the professionals and industrial or commercial employers priority seems to go rather to a TV set and a car—C.S. III.) Finally, when invited to choose their two favourite dishes from a list of seven, the farm workers and manual workers, who, like all other categories, give the highest rank to roast leg of lamb, are the most inclined (45 percent and 34 percent, as against 28 percent of the clerical workers, 20 percent of the senior executives and 19 percent of the small employers) to choose pot-au-feu (the farm workers are almost the only ones who choose *andouillette*—pork tripe sausage—14 percent of them, as against 4 percent of the manual workers, clerical workers and junior executives, 3 percent of the senior executives and 0 percent of the small employers). Manual workers and small employers also favour coq au vin (50 percent and 48 percent), a dish typical of small restaurants aiming to be 'posh', and perhaps for this reason associated with the idea of 'eating out' (compared with 42 percent of the clerical workers, 39 percent of the senior executives and 37 percent of the farm workers). The executives, professionals and big employers clearly distinguish themselves solely by choosing—from a list which for them is particularly narrow—the dish which is both relatively 'light' and symbolically marked (in contrast to the ordinary routine of petit-bourgeois cooking), bouillabaisse (31 percent, as against 22 percent of the clerical workers, 17 percent of the small employers, 10 percent of the manual workers, 7 percent of the farm workers), in which the opposition between fish and meat (especially the pork in sauerkraut or *cassoulet*) is clearly strengthened by regionalist and touristic connotations (C.S. XXXIV). It is obvious that the imprecise classifications used in this survey prevent one from seeing the effects of the secondary opposition between the fractions, and that the ten-

Table 18 Annual household expenditures on food: fractions of the dominant class, 1972.

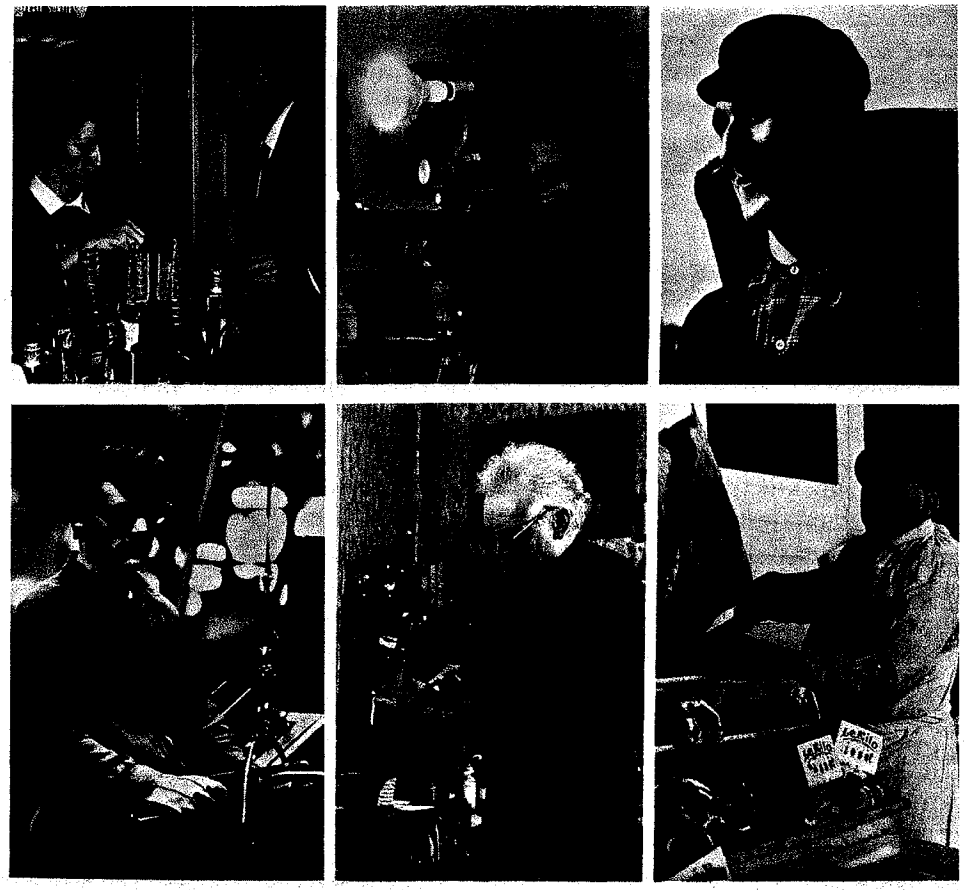
	Teachers (higher and secondary)		Senior executives		Professions		Engineers		Industrial and commercial employers	
Average number persons per household	3.11		3.6		3.5		3.6		3.6	
Average total household expenditure (francs)	40,844		52,156		57,122		49,822		44,339	
Average total household expenditure on food (francs)	9,969		13,158		13,956		12,666		16,578	
Expenditure on food as % of total expenditure	24.4		25.2		24.4		25.4		37.4	
	Average exp.		Average exp.		Average exp.		Average exp.		Average exp.	
Type of Food	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.	Francs	As % of all food exp.
Cereals	865	8.7	993	7.5	1,011	7.2	951	7.5	1,535	9.2
bread	322	3.2	347	2.6	326	2.3	312	2.5	454	2.5
cakes, pastries	452	4.5	552	4.1	548	4.0	539	4.2	989	5.6
rusks	16	0.2	27	0.2	33	0.2	28	0.2	29	0.1
rice	35	0.3	32	0.2	62	0.4	41	0.3	33	0.1
flour	40	0.4	35	0.2	41	0.3	31	0.2	28	0.1
Vegetables	766	7.7	1,015	7.7	1,100	7.9	899	7.1	1,222	7.4
potatoes	81	0.8	94	0.7	95	0.7	98	0.7	152	0.8
fresh vegetables	555	5.6	729	5.5	811	5.8	647	5.1	915	5.1
dried or canned	131	1.3	191	1.4	216	1.5	154	1.2	153	0.8
Fruit	632	6.3	871	6.6	990	7.2	864	6.8	877	5.2
fresh fruit	295	2.9	405	3.1	586	4.2	424	3.3	547	3.1
citrus fruit, bananas	236	2.4	343	2.6	303	2.2	324	2.5	256	1.4
dried	102	1.0	122	0.9	98	0.7	116	0.9	72	0.4
Butcher's meat	1,556	15.6	2,358	18.0	2,552	18.3	2,073	16.4	2,323	14.0
beef	814	8.1	1,291	9.8	1,212	8.7	1,144	9.0	1,273	7.2
veal	335	3.4	452	3.4	630	4.5	402	3.1	377	2.3
mutton, lamb	156	1.6	315	2.3	438	3.2	242	1.9	390	2.2
horse	31	0.3	49	0.3	31	0.2	37	0.3	94	0.5
pork (fresh)	221	2.2	251	1.7	239	1.7	247	1.9	187	1.3
Pork products	634	6.3	741	5.6	774	5.5	705	5.6	812	4.9
Meat preserves	336	3.4	350	2.6	233	1.7	310	2.4	1,362	8.0
Fish, shellfish	336	3.4	503	3.8	719	5.1	396	3.1	588	3.5
Poultry	235	2.3	311	2.4	399	2.8	310	2.4	333	2.0
Rabbit, game	36	0.3	97	0.7	148	1.1	89	0.7	289	1.7
Eggs	149	1.4	172	1.3	190	1.4	178	1.4	185	1.1
Milk	299	3.0	271	2.0	249	1.8	287	2.3	309	1.9
Cheese, yogurt	692	6.9	776	5.9	843	6.0	785	6.1	1,090	6.5
Fats	399	4.0	564	4.3	525	3.8	504	4.0	551	3.3
butter	320	3.2	408	3.1	379	2.7	371	2.9	405	2.4
oil	66	0.6	136	1.0	132	1.0	103	0.8	112	0.6
margarine	12	0.1	17	0.1	12	0.1	29	0.2	19	0.1
lard	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	13	0.1
Sugar, confectionery, cocoa	304	3.0	395	3.0	265	1.9	327	2.6	407	2.4
Alcohol	711	7.1	1,365	10.3	1,329	9.5	937	7.4	2,218	13.4
wine	457	4.6	869	6.6	899	6.4	392	3.1	1,881	11.8
beer	82	0.8	91	0.7	40	0.3	184	1.4	93	0.5
cider	13	0.1	12	0	0	0	8	0	5	0
apéritifs, liqueurs etc.	157	1.6	391	3.0	389	2.8	352	2.8	237	1.4
Non-alcoholic drinks	344	3.4	342	2.6	267	1.9	295	2.3	327	2.0
Coffee, tea	152	1.5	215	1.5	291	2.1	178	1.4	298	1.8
Restaurant meals	829	8.3	1,863	13.0	1,562	11.2	1,372	10.8	1,179	7.1
Canteen meals	745	7.5	562	4.0	221	1.6	773	6.1	299	1.8
Miscellaneous	264	2.6	379	2.7	258	1.8	432	3.4	324	1.9

Source: C.S. III (1972).

dencies observed would have been more marked if, for example, it had been possible to isolate the teachers or if the list of dishes had been more diversified in the sociologically pertinent respects.

Tastes in food also depend on the idea each class has of the body and of the effects of food on the body, that is, on its strength, health and beauty; and on the categories it uses to evaluate these effects, some of which may be important for one class and ignored by another, and which the different classes may rank in very different ways. Thus, whereas the working classes are more attentive to the strength of the (male) body than its shape, and tend to go for products that are both cheap and nutritious, the professions prefer products that are tasty, health-giving, light and not fattening. Taste, a class culture turned into nature, that is, *embodied,* helps to shape the class body. It is an incorporated principle of classification which governs all forms of incorporation, choosing and modifying everything that the body ingests and digests and assimilates, physiologically and psychologically. It follows that the body is the most indisputable materialization of class taste, which it manifests in several ways. It does this first in the seemingly most natural features of the body, the dimensions (volume, height, weight) and shapes (round or square, stiff or supple, straight or curved) of its visible forms, which express in countless ways a whole relation to the body, i.e., a way of treating it, caring for it, feeding it, maintaining it, which reveals the deepest dispositions of the habitus. It is in fact through preferences with regard to food which may be perpetuated beyond their social conditions of production (as, in other areas, an accent, a walk etc.),[23] and also, of course, through the uses of the body in work and leisure which are bound up with them, that the class distribution of bodily properties is determined.

The quasi-conscious representation of the approved form of the perceived body, and in particular its thinness or fatness, is not the only mediation through which the social definition of appropriate foods is established. At a deeper level, the whole body schema, in particular the physical approach to the act of eating, governs the selection of certain foods. For example, in the working classes, fish tends to be regarded as an unsuitable food for men, not only because it is a light food, insufficiently 'filling', which would only be cooked for health reasons, i.e., for invalids and children, but also because, like fruit (except bananas) it is one of the 'fiddly' things which a man's hands cannot cope with and which make him childlike (the woman, adopting a maternal role, as in all similar cases, will prepare the fish on the plate or peel the pear); but above all, it is because fish has to be eaten in a way which totally contradicts the masculine way of eating, that is, with restraint, in small mouthfuls, chewed gently, with the front of the mouth, on the tips of the teeth (because of the bones). The whole masculine identity—what is called virility—is involved in these two ways of eating, nibbling and picking, as befits a



The body for the job

woman, or with whole-hearted male gulps and mouthfuls, just as it is involved in the two (perfectly homologous) ways of talking, with the front of the mouth or the whole mouth, especially the back of the mouth, the throat (in accordance with the opposition, noted in an earlier study, between the manners symbolized by *la bouche* and *la gueule*).[24]

This opposition can be found in each of the uses of the body, especially in the most insignificant-looking ones, which, as such, are predisposed to serve as 'memory joggers' charged with the group's deepest values, its most fundamental 'beliefs'. It would be easy to show, for example, that Kleenex tissues, which have to be used delicately, with a little sniff from the tip of the nose, are to the big cotton handkerchief, which is blown into sharply and loudly, with the eyes closed and the nose held tightly, as repressed laughter is to a belly laugh, with wrinkled nose, wide-open

mouth and deep breathing ('doubled up with laughter'), as if to amplify to the utmost an experience which will not suffer containment, not least because it has to be shared, and therefore clearly manifested for the benefit of others.

And the practical philosophy of the male body as a sort of power, big and strong, with enormous, imperative, brutal needs, which is asserted in every male posture, especially when eating, is also the principle of the division of foods between the sexes, a division which both sexes recognize in their practices and their language. It behooves a man to drink and eat more, and to eat and drink stronger things. Thus, men will have two rounds of aperitifs (more on special occasions), big ones in big glasses (the success of Ricard or Pernod is no doubt partly due to its being a drink both strong and copious—not a dainty 'thimbleful'), and they leave the tit-bits (savoury biscuits, peanuts) to the children and the women, who have a small measure (not enough to 'get tipsy') of home-made aperitif (for which they swap recipes). Similarly, among the hors d'oeuvres, the *charcuterie* is more for the men, and later the cheese, especially if it is strong, whereas the *crudités* (raw vegetables) are more for the women, like the salad; and these affinities are marked by taking a second helping or sharing what is left over. Meat, the nourishing food par excellence, strong and strong-making, giving vigour, blood, and health, is the dish for the men, who take a second helping, whereas the women are satisfied with a small portion. It is not that they are stinting themselves; they really don't want what others might need, especially the men, the natural meat-eaters, and they derive a sort of authority from what they do not see as a privation. Besides, they don't have a taste for men's food, which is reputed to be harmful when eaten to excess (for example, a surfeit of meat can 'turn the blood', over-excite, bring you out in spots etc.) and may even arouse a sort of disgust.

Strictly biological differences are underlined and symbolically accentuated by differences in bearing, differences in gesture, posture and behaviour which express a whole relationship to the social world. To these are added all the deliberate modifications of appearance, especially by use of the set of marks—cosmetic (hairstyle, make-up, beard, moustache, whiskers etc.) or vestimentary—which, because they depend on the economic and cultural means that can be invested in them, function as social markers deriving their meaning and value from their position in the system of distinctive signs which they constitute and which is itself homologous with the system of social positions. The sign-bearing, sign-wearing body is also a producer of signs which are physically marked by the relationship to the body: thus the valorization of virility, expressed in a use of the mouth or a pitch of the voice, can determine the whole of working-class pronunciation. The body, a social product which is the only tangible manifestation of the 'person', is commonly perceived as the most natural expression of innermost nature. There are no merely 'physical' facial

signs; the colour and thickness of lipstick, or expressions, as well as the shape of the face or the mouth, are immediately read as indices of a 'moral' physiognomy, socially characterized, i.e., of a 'vulgar' or 'distinguished' mind, naturally 'natural' or naturally 'cultivated'. The signs constituting the perceived body, cultural products which differentiate groups by their degree of culture, that is, their distance from nature, seem grounded in nature. The legitimate use of the body is spontaneously perceived as an index of moral uprightness, so that its opposite, a 'natural' body, is seen as an index of *laisser-aller* ('letting oneself go'), a culpable surrender to facility.

Thus one can begin to map out a universe of class bodies, which (biological accidents apart) tends to reproduce in its specific logic the universe of the social structure. It is no accident that bodily properties are perceived through social systems of classification which are not independent of the distribution of these properties among the social classes. The prevailing taxonomies tend to rank and contrast the properties most frequent among the dominant (i.e., the rarest ones) and those most frequent among the dominated.[25] The social representation of his own body which each agent has to reckon with,[26] from the very beginning, in order to build up his subjective image of his body and his bodily hexis, is thus obtained by applying a social system of classification based on the same principle as the social products to which it is applied. Thus, bodies would have every likelihood of receiving a value strictly corresponding to the positions of their owners in the distribution of the other fundamental properties—but for the fact that the logic of social heredity sometimes endows those least endowed in all other respects with the rarest bodily properties, such as beauty (sometimes 'fatally' attractive, because it threatens the other hierarchies), and, conversely, sometimes denies the 'high and mighty' the bodily attributes of their position, such as height or beauty.

UNPRETENTIOUS OR UNCOUTH? It is clear that tastes in food cannot be considered in complete independence of the other dimensions of the relationship to the world, to others and to one's own body, through which the practical philosophy of each class is enacted. To demonstrate this, one would have to make a systematic comparison of the working-class and bourgeois ways of treating food, of serving, presenting and offering it, which are infinitely more revelatory than even the nature of the products involved (especially since most surveys of consumption ignore differences in quality). The analysis is a difficult one, because each life-style can only really be constructed in relation to the other, which is its objective and subjective negation, so that the meaning of behaviour is totally reversed depending on which point of view is adopted and on whether the common words which have to be used to name the conduct (e.g., 'manners') are invested with popular or bourgeois connotations.

Considerable misunderstanding can result from ignorance of this mechanism in all surveys by questionnaire, which are always an exchange of words. The confusions are made even worse when the interviewer tries to collect opinions about words or reactions to words (as in the 'ethical test' in which the respondents were presented with the same lists of adjectives to describe an ideal friend, garment or interior). The responses he records in this case have in fact been defined in relation to stimuli which, beyond their nominal identity (that of the words offered), vary in their perceived reality, and therefore their practical efficacy, in accordance with the very principles of variation (and firstly, social class) whose effects one is seeking to measure (which can lead to literally meaningless encounters between opposing classes). Groups invest themselves totally, with everything that opposes them to other groups, in the common words which express their social identity, i.e., their difference. Behind their apparent neutrality, words as ordinary as 'practical', 'sober', 'clean', 'functional', 'amusing', 'delicate', 'cosy', 'distinguished' are thus divided against themselves, because the different classes either give them different meanings, or give them the same meaning but attribute opposite values to the things named. Some examples: *soigné* (neat, trim, careful, well-groomed, well-kept), so strongly appropriated by those who use it to express their taste for a job well done, properly finished, or for the meticulous attention they devote to their personal appearance, that it no doubt evokes for those who reject it the narrow or 'up-tight' rigour they dislike in the petit-bourgeois style; or *drôle* (amusing, funny, droll), whose social connotations, associated with a socially marked pronunciation, bourgeois or snobbish,[27] clash with the values expressed, putting off those who would certainly respond to a popular equivalent of *drôle,* such as *bidonnant, marrant* or *rigolo;* or, again, *sobre,* which, applied to a garment or an interior, can mean radically different things when expressing the prudent, defensive strategies of a small craftsman, the aesthetic asceticism of a teacher or the austerity-in-luxury of the old-world *grand bourgeois.* It can be seen that every attempt to produce an ethical organon common to all classes is condemned from the start, unless, like every 'universal' morality or religion, it plays systematically on the fact that language is both common to the different classes and capable of receiving different, even opposite, meanings in the particular, and sometimes antagonistic, uses that are made of it.

Plain speaking, plain eating: the working-class meal is characterized by plenty (which does not exclude restrictions and limits) and above all by freedom. 'Elastic' and 'abundant' dishes are brought to the table—soups or sauces, pasta or potatoes (almost always included among the vegetables)—and served with a ladle or spoon, to avoid too much measuring and counting, in contrast to everything that has to be cut and divided, such as roasts.[28] This impression of abundance, which is the norm on special occasions, and always applies, so far as is possible, for the men, whose plates are filled twice (a privilege which marks a boy's accession to manhood), is often balanced, on ordinary occasions, by restrictions

which generally apply to the women, who will share one portion between two, or eat the left-overs of the previous day; a girl's accession to womanhood is marked by doing without. It is part of men's status to eat and to eat well (and also to drink well); it is particularly insisted that they should eat, on the grounds that 'it won't keep', and there is something suspect about a refusal. On Sundays, while the women are on their feet, busily serving, clearing the table, washing up, the men remain seated, still eating and drinking. These strongly marked differences of social status (associated with sex and age) are accompanied by no practical differentiation (such as the bourgeois division between the dining room and the kitchen, where the servants eat and sometimes the children), and strict sequencing of the meal tends to be ignored. Everything may be put on the table at much the same time (which also saves walking), so that the women may have reached the dessert, and also the children, who will take their plates and watch television, while the men are still eating the main dish and the 'lad', who has arrived late, is swallowing his soup.

This freedom, which may be perceived as disorder or slovenliness, is adapted to its function. Firstly, it is labour-saving, which is seen as an advantage. Because men take no part in housework, not least because the women would not allow it—it would be a dishonour to see men step outside their rôle—every economy of effort is welcome. Thus, when the coffee is served, a single spoon may be passed around to stir it. But these short cuts are only permissible because one is and feels at home, among the family, where ceremony would be an affectation. For example, to save washing up, the dessert may be handed out on improvised plates torn from the cake-box (with a joke about 'taking the liberty', to mark the transgression), and the neighbour invited in for a meal will also receive his piece of cardboard (offering a plate would exclude him) as a sign of familiarity. Similarly, the plates are not changed between dishes. The soup plate, wiped with bread, can be used right through the meal. The hostess will certainly offer to 'change the plates', pushing back her chair with one hand and reaching with the other for the plate next to her, but everyone will protest ('It all gets mixed up inside you') and if she were to insist it would look as if she wanted to show off her crockery (which she is allowed to if it is a new present) or to treat her guests as strangers, as is sometimes deliberately done to intruders or 'scroungers' who never return the invitation. These unwanted guests may be frozen out by changing their plates despite their protests, not laughing at their jokes, or scolding the children for their behaviour ('No, no, *we* don't mind', say the guests; 'They ought to know better by now', the parents respond). The common root of all these 'liberties' is no doubt the sense that at least there will not be self-imposed controls, constraints and restrictions—especially not in eating, a primary need and a compensation—and especially not in the heart of domestic life, the one realm of freedom, when everywhere else, and at all other times, necessity prevails.

In opposition to the free-and-easy working-class meal, the bourgeoisie is concerned to eat with all due form. Form is first of all a matter of rhythm, which implies expectations, pauses, restraints; waiting until the last person served has started to eat, taking modest helpings, not appearing over-eager. A strict sequence is observed and all coexistence of dishes which the sequence separates, fish and meat, cheese and dessert, is excluded: for example, before the dessert is served, everything left on the table, even the salt-cellar, is removed, and the crumbs are swept up. This extension of rigorous rules into everyday life (the bourgeois male shaves and dresses first thing every morning, and not just to 'go out'), refusing the division between home and the exterior, the quotidian and the extra-quotidian, is not explained solely by the presence of strangers—servants and guests—in the familiar family world. It is the expression of a habitus of order, restraint and propriety which may not be abdicated. The relation to food—*the* primary need and pleasure—is only one dimension of the bourgeois relation to the social world. The opposition between the immediate and the deferred, the easy and the difficult, substance (or function) and form, which is exposed in a particularly striking fashion in bourgeois ways of eating, is the basis of all aestheticization of practice and every aesthetic. Through all the forms and formalisms imposed on the immediate appetite, what is demanded—and inculcated—is not only a disposition to discipline food consumption by a conventional structuring which is also a gentle, indirect, invisible censorship (quite different from enforced privations) and which is an element in an art of living (correct eating, for example, is a way of paying homage to one's hosts and to the mistress of the house, a tribute to her care and effort). It is also a whole relationship to animal nature, to primary needs and the populace who indulge them without restraint; it is a way of denying the meaning and primary function of consumption, which are essentially common, by making the meal a social ceremony, an affirmation of ethical tone and aesthetic refinement. The manner of presenting and consuming the food, the organization of the meal and setting of the places, strictly differentiated according to the sequence of dishes and arranged to please the eye, the presentation of the dishes, considered as much in terms of shape and colour (like works of art) as of their consumable substance, the etiquette governing posture and gesture, ways of serving oneself and others, of using the different utensils, the seating plan, strictly but discreetly hierarchical, the censorship of all bodily manifestations of the act or pleasure of eating (such as noise or haste), the very refinement of the things consumed, with quality more important than quantity—this whole commitment to stylization tends to shift the emphasis from substance and function to form and manner, and so to deny the crudely material reality of the act of eating and of the things consumed, or, which amounts to the same thing, the basely material vulgarity of those who indulge in the immediate satisfactions of food and drink.[29]

The main findings of an extremely detailed survey of the art of entertaining (C.S. XLIII) are brought together in a synoptic table (see table 19) which confirms and extends these arguments. It can be seen first that, in the working class, the world of reciprocal invitations, spontaneous or organized, is restricted to the family and the world of familiars who can be treated as 'one of the family', people 'you feel at home with', whereas 'acquaintances', 'connections', in the sense of professional or business connections who are useful in one's work, appear in the middle classes but are essentially a feature of the dominant class. One sign of this informality is that working-class invitations tend to be for coffee, dessert or an aperitif (whereas, at the other end of the social space, invitations are more often for tea, lunch or dinner, or to go out to a restaurant). If working-class people prefer to limit their spontaneous invitations to the offer of a drink or coffee, this is because there can be no 'half-measures' in giving a meal, no 'quick and easy solutions' (as recommended by the women's weeklies) to save time and effort, such as a buffet or a single course.[30]

This refusal to skimp (the main thing is to make sure that the guests have enough to eat and that the food 'goes down well', secondarily that they are not bored) is even more clearly seen when the composition of the meals is analysed. For manual workers, a real meal is a meal with nothing left out, from the aperitif through to the dessert (whereas the other classes are often willing to 'simplify' by omitting the hors d'oeuvre, the salad or the dessert.[31] Because substance takes priority over form, if anything has to be 'simplified' it can only be in the order of form, etiquette, which is seen as inessential, purely symbolic. No matter that the tableware is ordinary, so long as the food is 'extra-ordinary': this is a commonplace underlined by many ritual remarks. No matter that the guests are not seated as etiquette dictates, nor dressed for the occasion. No matter that the children are present at a meal which is in no way a ritual—so long as they do not chip into the conversation, which is adults' business. Since informality is the order of the day, there is no reason not to keep an eye on the television, to break into song at the end of the meal or even organize games; here too, since the function is clearly recognized—'We're here to have fun'—fun will be had, using every available means (drinks, games, funny stories etc.). And the primacy of substance over form, the refusal of the denial implied in formality, is again expressed in the content of the goods exchanged on arrival: flowers, which are seen as gratuitous, as art, art for art's sake (there are jokes to the effect that 'you can't eat them') are discarded in favour of earthly foods, wines or desserts, presents that 'always go down well' and which can be unpretentiously offered and accepted in the name of a realistic view of the costs of the meal and a willingness to share in them.

Given the basic opposition between form and substance, one could re-generate each of the oppositions between the two antagonistic approaches to the treatment of food and the act of eating. In one case, food is claimed as a material reality, a nourishing substance which sustains the body and gives strength (hence the emphasis on heavy, fatty, strong foods, of which the paradigm is pork—fatty and salty—the antithesis of

Table 19 Variations in entertaining, by class fraction (%), 1978.[a]

Variations in ways of entertaining	Manual workers	Clerical, junior execs.	Executives, industrialists, professions
Spontaneous invitations reserved for:			
close family	*51.7*	34.7	32.5
close friends	20.9	*35.9*	33.2
children's friends	2.8	3.4	*8.3*
colleagues/associates	1.9	3.1	*4.2*
Invite in advance:			
close family	*41.2*	33.1	30.2
colleagues/associates	2.6	8.4	*18.9*
Invite fairly or very often for:			
coffee	*49.2*	48.4	38.2
dessert	23.7	*24.7*	15.1
dinner	51.3	67.8	*70.2*
Make spontaneous invitations for:			
apéritif	*52.8*	46.3	39.2
a meal	23.9	31.9	*40.0*
Most important thing in spontaneous invitations:			
successful cooking	*10.1*	5.9	9.4
enough to eat	*33.6*	28.4	26.0
guests not bored	33.4	46.6	*47.9*
Prefer to offer guests:			
buffet or single dish	19.4	25.3	*26.1*
a full meal	*77.2*	71.6	70.9
When entertaining, use (reg. and often):			
silverware	27.8	40.7	*61.5*
crystal glasses	29.3	49.7	*57.3*
china crockery	39.6	46.3	*60.0*
ordinary glasses	*84.8*	56.5	55.4
earthenware crockery	*60.6*	55.9	54.8
Like their guests to dress:			
elegantly	10.8	15.9	*30.6*
casually	*79.7*	70.9	58.5
Seating—prefer:			
to indicate guest's place	29.7	31.3	*46.0*
guests to choose places	*65.7*	63.1	46.8
to separate couples	22.8	35.0	*50.6*
not to separate couples	26.0	*38.4*	26.0
Children welcome (avg. min. age in years):			
at meal	6.5	7.5	*8.8*
at end of evening	10.9	11.9	*12.9*
in conversation	12.0	12.2	12.1
Guests bring:			
flowers	41.8	56.3	*68.3*
dessert	*24.6*	16.6	9.8
wine	*18.6*	16.9	14.0

Table 19 (continued)

Variations in ways of entertaining	Manual workers	Clerical, junior execs.	Executives, industrialists, professions
When entertaining, like:			
background music	48.1	56.6	*57.7*
to keep an eye on TV	*14.4*	4.7	4.2
singing after meal	*64.9*	55.3	45.3
organizing games	*66.4*	59.7	50.9

Source: C.S. XLIII (1978).

a. This table is read as follows: 51.7% of manual workers restrict their spontaneous invitations to their close family, 20.9% to close friends etc.; 34.7% of clerical workers and junior executives restrict such invitations to their close family, 35.9% to close friends etc. For each question the total of the percentages may be greater or less than 100, since for each question the respondents could choose several answers or none. Italic figures indicate the strongest tendency in each row.

fish—light, lean and bland); in the other, the priority given to form (the shape of the body, for example) and social form, formality, puts the pursuit of strength and substance in the background and identifies true freedom with the elective asceticism of a self-imposed rule. And it could be shown that two antagonistic world views, two worlds, two representations of human excellence are contained in this matrix. Substance—or matter—is what is substantial, not only 'filling' but also real, as opposed to all appearances, all the fine words and empty gestures that 'butter no parsnips' and are, as the phrase goes, purely symbolic; reality, as against sham, imitation, window-dressing; the little eating-house with its marble-topped tables and paper napkins where you get an honest square meal and aren't 'paying for the wallpaper' as in fancy restaurants; being, as against seeming, nature and the natural, simplicity (pot-luck, 'take it as it comes', 'no standing on ceremony'), as against embarrassment, mincing and posturing, airs and graces, which are always suspected of being a substitute for substance, i.e., for sincerity, for feeling, for what is felt and proved in actions; it is the free-speech and language of the heart which make the true 'nice guy', blunt, straightforward, unbending, honest, genuine, 'straight down the line' and 'straight as a die', as opposed to everything that is pure form, done only for form's sake; it is freedom and the refusal of complications, as opposed to respect for all the forms and formalities spontaneously perceived as instruments of distinction and power. On these moralities, these world views, there is no neutral viewpoint; what for some is shameless and slovenly, for others is straightforward, unpretentious; familiarity is for some the most absolute form of recognition, the abdication of all distance, a trusting openness, a relation of equal to equal; for others, who shun familiarity, it is an unseemly liberty.

The popular realism which inclines working people to reduce practices to the reality of their function, to do what they do, and be what they are ('That's the way I am'), without 'kidding themselves' ('That's the way it is'), and the practical materialism which inclines them to censor the expression of feelings or to divert emotion into violence or oaths, are the near-perfect antithesis of the aesthetic disavowal which, by a sort of essential hypocrisy (seen, for example, in the opposition between pornography and eroticism) masks the interest in function by the primacy given to form, so that what people do, they do as if they were not doing it.

THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE But food—which the working classes place on the side of being and substance, whereas the bourgeoisie, refusing the distinction between inside and outside or 'at home' and 'for others', the quotidian and the extra-quotidian, introduces into it the categories of form and appearance—is itself related to clothing as inside to outside, the domestic to the public, being to seeming. And the inversion of the places of food and clothing in the contrast between the spending patterns of the working classes, who give priority to being, and the middle classes, where the concern for 'seeming' arises, is the sign of a reversal of the whole world view. The working classes make a realistic or, one might say, functionalist use of clothing. Looking for substance and function rather than form, they seek 'value for money' and choose what will

'last'. Ignoring the bourgeois concern to introduce formality and formal dress into the domestic world, the place for freedom—an apron and slippers (for women), bare chest or a vest (for men)—they scarcely mark the distinction between top clothes, visible, intended to be seen, and underclothes, invisible or hidden—unlike the middle classes, who have a degree of anxiety about external appearances, both sartorial and cosmetic, at least outside and at work (to which middle-class women more often have access).

Thus, despite the limits of the data available, one finds in men's clothing (which is much more socially marked, at the level of what can be grasped by statistics on purchases, than women's clothing) the equivalent of the major oppositions found in food consumption. In the first dimension of the space, the division again runs between the office workers and the manual workers and is marked particularly by the opposition between grey or white overalls and blue dungarees or boiler-suits, between town shoes and the more relaxed moccasins, kickers or sneakers (not to mention dressing-gowns, which clerical workers buy 3.5 times more often than manual workers). The increased quantity and quality of all purchases of men's clothing is summed up in the opposition between the suit, the prerogative of the senior executive, and the blue overall, the distinctive mark of the farmer and industrial worker (it is virtually unknown in other groups, except craftsmen); or between the overcoat, always much rarer among men than women, but much more frequent among senior executives than the other classes, and the fur-lined jacket or lumber jacket, mainly worn by agricultural and industrial workers. In between are the junior executives, who now scarcely ever wear working clothes but fairly often buy suits.

Among women, who, in all categories (except farmers and farm labourers), spend more than men (especially in the junior and senior executive, professional and other high-income categories), the number of purchases increases as one moves up the social hierarchy; the difference is greatest for suits and costumes—expensive garments—and smaller for dresses and especially skirts and jackets. The top-coat, which is increasingly frequent among women at higher social levels, is opposed to the 'all-purpose' raincoat, in the same way as overcoat and lumber jacket are opposed for men. The use of the smock and the apron, which in the working classes is virtually the housewife's uniform, increases as one moves down the hierarchy (in contrast to the dressing-gown, which is virtually unknown among peasants and industrial workers).

Every year, on average, manual workers buy more handkerchiefs, vests and underpants, and about as many socks, sweat shirts, sweaters etc. as the other classes, but fewer pyjamas (like dressing-gowns, a typically bourgeois garment) and shirts. Among women, the class differences in underwear purchases, which are clearly marked as regards price, are less strong as regards number (and are even inverted for slips, nightdresses, stockings, tights and

handkerchiefs). By contrast, among both men and women, purchases of top clothes increase in number and value as one moves up the social hierarchy.

The transverse oppositions are harder to determine because the survey on household living conditions, which would show variations by five categories, makes only very rough divisions by item. However, expenditure on clothing (almost entirely devoted to top clothes) varies strongly between the fractions of the dominant class, rising steadily from teachers, who devote least to this item in both absolute and relative terms (1,523 francs per annum, or 3.7 percent), through the industrial and commercial employers (4.5 percent), senior executives (5.7 percent) and engineers (6.1 percent) to the members of the professions (4,361 francs or 7.6 percent). These differences in the value placed on these means of self-presentation (shoe consumption varies like that of clothes) can be traced back to the generative formulae which retranslate the necessities and facilities characteristic of a position and a condition into a particular life-style, determining the value and importance accorded to social 'connections'—smallest, it seems, among teachers, who are close in this respect to the petite bourgeoisie, and greatest in the professions or the bourgeoisie of big business, which is not isolated in the statistics—as an opportunity to accumulate social capital. But in order to characterize completely the specific form which the basic principles of each life-style take in this particular area, one would need to have close descriptions of the *quality* of the objects in question, cloth (e.g., the English associate tweeds with the 'country gentleman'), colour, cut, enabling one to grasp the taxonomies used and the conscious or unconscious expressive intentions ('young' or 'classical', 'sporty' or 'smart' etc.). There is, however, every reason to think that clothing and hairstyles become 'younger' as one moves away from the dominant pole, more and more 'serious' (i.e., dark, severe, classical) as one moves towards it.[32] The younger one is socially, that is, younger in biological age, and the closer, within the space of the fractions, to the dominated pole or to the new sectors of occupational space, the greater the affinities with all the new forms of dress (unisex garments of 'junior fashion', jeans, sweat shirts and so forth) which are defined by a refusal of the constraints and conventions of 'dressing up'.

The interest the different classes have in self-presentation, the attention they devote to it, their awareness of the profits it gives and the investment of time, effort, sacrifice and care which they actually put into it are proportionate to the chances of material or symbolic profit they can reasonably expect from it (see table 20). More precisely, they depend on the existence of a labour market in which physical appearance may be valorized in the performance of the job itself or in professional relations; and on the differential chances of access to this market and the sectors of this market in which beauty and deportment most strongly contribute to occupational value. A first indication of this correspondence between the propensity to cosmetic investments and the chances of profit may be seen in the gap, for all forms of beauty care, between those who work and those who do not (which must also vary according to the nature of the job and the work environment). It can be understood in terms of this

Table 20 Variations in value placed by Frenchwomen on body, beauty and beauty care, 1976.[a]

Aspect of body, beauty or beauty care	Positive responses (%) by occupation of head of respondent's household				Positive responses (%) by activity of respondent	
	Farm worker	Manual	Clerical, junior exec.	Executive, industrialist, professions	Does not work	Works
Waist is over 33″	33.7	24.2	20.4	11.4	24.7	17.3
Thinks self below average in beauty	40.2	36.0	33.2	24.2	34.2	31.0
Thinks looks older than she is	13.0	14.0	10.1	7.6	13.6	9.8
Average rating of her own:						
hair	5.22	5.47	5.40	5.88	5.47	5.62
face	5.36	5.53	5.51	5.67	5.54	5.58
eyes	6.18	6.44	6.30	6.48	6.35	6.41
skin	5.88	5.63	5.64	5.75	5.63	5.74
teeth	5.24	5.45	5.40	5.74	5.40	5.59
body	5.35	5.78	5.75	5.91	5.76	5.83
nose	5.94	5.48	5.56	5.65	5.41	5.74
hands	5.88	5.99	6.10	5.82	5.78	6.17
Often or sometimes wishes face was different	45.7	60.8	68.2	64.4	60.1	64.6
Beauty depends on:						
care you take	33.7	46.9	52.0	54.7	45.8	53.1
income	15.2	18.8	9.2	8.9	16.7	10.3
Care with looks increases chances of success	75.0	68.8	72.9	74.5	70.1	72.1

Table 20 (continued)

Aspect of body, beauty or beauty care	Positive responses (%) by occupation of head of respondent's household				Positive responses (%) by activity of respondent	
	Farm worker	Manual	Clerical, junior exec.	Executive, industrialist, professions	Does not work	Works
Would rather look:						
natural	69.6	69.8	62.8	57.6	*68.8*	61.6
raffinée	12.0	15.6	22.9	*25.0*	16.8	22.3
Thinks husband prefers woman to be:						
natural	*65.2*	65.0	51.4	50.8	*60.6*	54.1
raffinée	6.5	8.1	15.1	*16.1*	10.6	12.3
Thinks it is better to be:						
beautiful	52.2	58.5	59.2	*61.9*	59.5	58.7
rich	*39.1*	35.4	33.5	27.5	32.7	33.9
Thinks it is better to be:						
beautiful	9.8	14.0	*17.5*	*17.4*	15.7	14.4
lucky	*83.7*	*83.3*	76.8	75.8	80.2	80.3
Thinks it is normal to use make-up to look younger	53.3	51.9	62.3	*67.8*	52.1	*63.6*
To lose weight, uses:						
diet	23.9	19.8	*28.8*	23.3	23.9	23.1
sport, exercise	4.3	8.3	14.0	*16.9*	10.6	11.8
drugs	2.2	*4.6*	3.6	3.0	3.8	3.6
nothing	*69.6*	*71.7*	60.6	66.1	68.3	66.4
Approves of plastic surgery to look younger	50.0	50.0	*56.4*	52.0	51.3	53.4
Bath or shower at least once a day	9.8	16.9	36.6	*43.2*	23.2	*32.0*
Puts on make-up every day	12.0	29.6	45.0	*54.7*	30.1	*44.8*
Puts on make-up never or rarely	*48.9*	35.6	21.2	17.3	35.1	22.9
Spends more than half an hour on grooming	12.3	45.6	*48.9*	45.3	42.1	*48.2*
Uses make-up to feel good	4.3	15.9	25.9	*27.8*	21.0	22.1
Hairdresser at least once a fortnight	6.5	8.1	16.9	*20.8*	9.8	13.5
Cleanses face every night:						
with soap	*34.8*	*35.4*	20.1	15.7	28.1	25.7
with make-up remover etc.	47.8	59.4	86.0	*91.4*	67.5	*78.8*

Source: C.S. XLIV (1976).
a. Italic figures indicate the strongest tendency or tendencies in each row.

logic why working-class women, who are less likely to have a job and much less likely to enter one of the occupations which most strictly demand conformity to the dominant norms of beauty, are less aware than all others of the 'market' value of beauty and much less inclined to invest time and effort, sacrifices and money in cultivating their bodies.

It is quite different with the women of the petite bourgeoisie, especially the new petite bourgeoisie, in the occupations involving presentation and representation, which often impose a uniform (*tenue*) intended, among other things, to abolish all traces of heterodox taste, and which always demand what is called *tenue,* in the sense of 'dignity of conduct and correctness of manners', implying, according to the dictionary, 'a refusal to give way to vulgarity or facility'. (In the specialized 'charm schools' which train hostesses, the working-class girls who select themselves on the basis of 'natural' beauty undergo a radical transformation in their way of walking, sitting, laughing, smiling, talking, dressing, making-up etc.) Women of the petite bourgeoisie who have sufficient interests in the market in which physical properties can function as capital to recognize the dominant image of the body unconditionally without possessing, at least in their own eyes (and no doubt objectively) enough body capital to obtain the highest profits, are, here too, at the site of greatest tension.

The self-assurance given by the certain knowledge of one's own value, especially that of one's body or speech, is in fact very closely linked to the position occupied in social space (and also, of course, to trajectory). Thus, the proportion of women who consider themselves below average in beauty, or who think they look older than they are, falls very rapidly as one moves up the social hierarchy. Similarly, the ratings women give themselves for the different parts of their bodies tend to rise with social position, and this despite the fact that the implicit demands rise too. It is not surprising that petit-bourgeois women—who are almost as dissatisfied with their bodies as working-class women (they are the ones who most often wish they looked different and who are most discontented with various parts of their bodies), while being more aware of the usefulness of beauty and more often recognizing the dominant ideal of physical excellence—devote such great investments, of self-denial and especially of time, to improving their appearance and are such unconditional believers in all forms of cosmetic voluntarism (e.g., plastic surgery).

As for the women of the dominant class, they derive a double assurance from their bodies. Believing, like petit-bourgeois women, in the value of beauty and the value of the effort to be beautiful, and so associating aesthetic value and moral value, they feel superior both in the intrinsic, natural beauty of their bodies and in the art of self-embellishment and everything they call *tenue,* a moral and aesthetic virtue which defines 'nature' negatively as sloppiness. Beauty can thus be simultaneously a gift

of nature and a conquest of merit, as much opposed to the abdications of vulgarity as to ugliness.

Thus, the experience par excellence of the 'alienated body', embarrassment, and the opposite experience, ease, are clearly unequally probable for members of the petite bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie, who grant the same recognition to the same representation of the legitimate body and legitimate deportment, but are unequally able to achieve it. The chances of experiencing one's own body as a vessel of grace, a continuous miracle, are that much greater when bodily capacity is commensurate with recognition; and, conversely, the probability of experiencing the body with unease, embarrassment, timidity grows with the disparity between the ideal body and the real body, the dream body and the 'looking-glass self' reflected in the reactions of others (the same laws are also true of speech).

The mere fact that the most sought-after bodily properties (slimness, beauty etc.) are not randomly distributed among the classes (for example, the proportion of women whose waist measurement is greater than the modal waist rises sharply as one moves down the social hierarchy) is sufficient to exclude the possibility of treating the relationship which agents have with the social representation of their own body as a generic alienation, constitutive of the 'body for others'. The 'alienated body' described by Sartre is a generic body, as is the 'alienation' which befalls each body when it is perceived and named, and therefore objectified by the gaze and the discourse of others.[33] The phenomenologists' 'body-for-others' is doubly a social product: it derives its distinctive properties from its social conditions of production; and the social gaze is not a universal, abstract, objectifying power, like the Sartrian gaze, but a social power, whose efficacy is always partly due to the fact that the receiver recognizes the categories of perception and appreciation it applies to him or her.

Although it is not a petit-bourgeois monopoly, the petit-bourgeois experience of the world starts out from timidity, the embarrassment of someone who is uneasy in his body and his language and who, instead of being 'as one body with them', observes them from outside, through other people's eyes, watching, checking, correcting himself, and who, by his desperate attempts to reappropriate an alienated being-for-others, exposes himself to appropriation, giving himself away as much by hypercorrection as by clumsiness. The timidity which, despite itself, realizes the objectified body, which lets itself be trapped in the destiny proposed by collective perception and statement (nicknames etc.), is betrayed by a body that is subject to the representation of others even in its passive, unconscious reactions (one feels oneself blushing). By contrast, ease, a sort of indifference to the objectifying gaze of others which neutralizes its powers, presupposes the self-assurance which comes from the certainty of

being able to objectify that objectification, appropriate that appropriation, of being capable of imposing the norms of apperception of one's own body, in short, of commanding all the powers which, even when they reside in the body and apparently borrow its most specific weapons, such as 'presence' or charm, are essentially irreducible to it. This is the real meaning of the findings of the experiment by W. D. Dannenmaier and F. J. Thumin, in which the subjects, when asked to assess the height of familiar persons from memory, tended to overestimate most the height of those who had most authority or prestige in their eyes.[34] It would seem that the logic whereby the 'great' are perceived as physically greater than they are applies very generally, and that authority of whatever sort contains a power of seduction which it would be naive to reduce to the effect of self-interested servility. That is why political contestation has always made use of caricature, a distortion of the bodily image intended to break the charm and hold up to ridicule one of the principles of the effect of authority imposition.

Charm and charisma in fact designate the power, which certain people have, to impose their own self-image as the objective and collective image of their body and being; to persuade others, as in love or faith, to abdicate their generic power of objectification and delegate it to the person who should be its object, who thereby becomes an absolute subject, without an exterior (being his own Other), fully justified in existing, legitimated. The charismatic leader manages to be for the group what he is for himself, instead of being for himself, like those dominated in the symbolic struggle, what he is for others. He 'makes' the opinion which makes him; he constitutes himself as an absolute by a manipulation of symbolic power which is constitutive of his power since it enables him to produce and impose his own objectification.

The Universes of Stylistic Possibles

Thus, the spaces defined by preferences in food, clothing or cosmetics are organized according to the same fundamental structure, that of the social space determined by volume and composition of capital. Fully to construct the space of life-styles within which cultural practices are defined, one would first have to establish, for each class and class fraction, that is, for each of the configurations of capital, the generative formula of the habitus which retranslates the necessities and facilities characteristic of that class of (relatively) homogeneous conditions of existence into a particular life-style. One would then have to determine how the dispositions of the habitus are specified, for each of the major areas of practice, by implementing one of the stylistic possibles offered by each field (the field of sport, or music, or food, decoration, politics, language etc.). By superimposing these homologous spaces one would obtain a rigorous representation of the space of life-styles, making it possible to characterize each of

the distinctive features (e.g., wearing a cap or playing the piano) in the two respects in which it is objectively defined, that is, on the one hand by reference to the set of features constituting the area in question (e.g., the system of hairstyles), and on the other hand by reference to the set of features constituting a particular life-style (e.g., the working-class life-style), within which its social significance is determined.

For example, the universe of sporting activities and entertainments presents itself to each new entrant as a set of ready-made choices, objectively instituted possibles, traditions, rules, values, equipment, symbols, which receive their social significance from the system they constitute and which derive a proportion of their properties, at each moment, from history.

A sport such as rugby presents an initial ambiguity. In England, at least, it is still played in the elite 'public schools', whereas in France it has become the characteristic sport of the working and middle classes of the regions south of the Loire (while preserving some 'academic' bastions such as the Racing Club or the Paris Université Club). This ambiguity can only be understood if one bears in mind the history of the process which, as in the 'elite schools' of nineteenth-century England, leads to the transmutation of popular games into elite sports, associated with an aristocratic ethic and world view ('fair play', 'will to win' etc.), entailing a radical change in meaning and function entirely analogous to what happens to popular dances when they enter the complex forms of 'serious' music; and the less well-known history of the process of popularization, akin to the diffusion of classical or 'folk' music on LPs, which, in a second phase, transforms elite sport into mass sport, a spectacle as much as a practice.

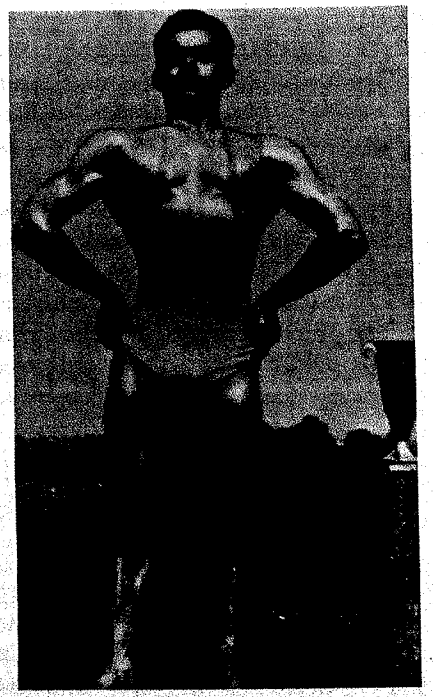
The distributional properties which are conferred on the different practices when they are evaluated by agents possessing a practical knowledge of their distribution among agents who are themselves distributed into ranked classes, or, in other words, of the probability, for the different classes, of practising them, do indeed owe much to past patterns of distribution, because of the effects of hysteresis. The 'aristocratic' image of sports like tennis, riding or golf can persist beyond a—relative—transformation of the material conditions of access, whereas *pétanque* (a form of bowls), doubly stigmatized by its popular and southern origins and connections, has a distributional significance very similar to that of Ricard or other strong drinks and all the cheap, strong foods which are supposed to give strength.

But distributional properties are not the only ones conferred on goods by the agents' perception of them. Because agents apprehend objects through the schemes of perception and appreciation of their habitus, it would be naive to suppose that all practitioners of the same sport (or any other practice) confer the same meaning on their practice or even,

Strength and Silhouette

'I was no weakling for my age when I started, but all the same I've put 5 inches on my shoulders, 3 inches on my chest and 1½ inches on my arms, and all that in just three months. It's beyond my wildest hopes. My muscles are several inches bigger and my strength has doubled. I feel like a new man. My parents and friends used to make fun of me, but now my father gets me to take off my shirt and show visitors what I've achieved, thanks to you.'

Prospectus for *Sculpture Humaine*



'The President's tennis lesson, Paris, July 1978. Like a growing number of people in France, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing is interested in tennis. To improve his style, he now takes regular early-morning lessons in a club on the outskirts of Paris, where our photographer surprised him.'

Tennis-Magazine/Sygma

' "An aesthete of fashion cannot fail to be sensitive to the harmony of his body," Karl Lagerfeld explains. The Paris fashion designer spends at least thirty minutes a day keeping in trim. His bedroom, which he has turned into a home gymnasium, contains all sorts of apparatus: an exercise bicycle, wall bars, a rowing machine, a massage machine etc. Back from his holidays in Saint-Tropez (where he did a lot of swimming), he uses this panoply of equipment to keep himself looking the way he wants. "I want to be free to choose my silhouette." '

La Maison de Marie-Claire (October 1971).

strictly speaking, that they are practising the same practice. It can easily be shown that the different classes do not agree on the profits expected from sport, be they specific physical profits, such as effects on the external body, like slimness, elegance or visible muscles, and on the internal body, like health or relaxation; or extrinsic profits, such as the social relationships a sport may facilitate, or possible economic and social advantages. And, though there are cases in which the dominant function of the practice is reasonably clearly designated, one is practically never entitled to assume that the different classes expect the same thing from the same practice. For example, gymnastics may be asked—this is the popular demand, satisfied by body-building—to produce a strong body, bearing the external signs of its strength, or a healthy body—this is the bourgeois demand, satisfied by 'keep-fit' exercises or 'slimnastics'—or, with the 'new gymnastics', a 'liberated' body—this is the demand characteristic of women in the new fractions of the bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie.[35] Only a methodical analysis of the variations in the function and meaning conferred on the different sporting activities will enable one to escape from abstract, formal 'typologies' based (it is the law of the genre) on universalizing the researcher's personal experience; and to construct the table of the sociologically pertinent features in terms of which the agents (consciously or unconsciously) choose their sports.

The meaning of a sporting practice is linked to so many variables—how long ago, and how, the sport was learnt, how often it is played, the socially qualified conditions (place, time, facilities, equipment), how it is played (position in a team, style etc.)—that most of the available statistical data are very difficult to interpret. This is especially true of highly dispersed practices, such as pétanque, which may be played every weekend, on a prepared pitch, with regular partners, or improvised on holiday to amuse the children; or gymnastics, which may be simple daily or weekly keep-fit exercises, at home, without special equipment, or performed in a special gymnasium whose 'quality' (and price) vary with its equipment and services (not to mention athletic gymnastics and all the forms of 'new gymnastics'). But can one place in the same class, given identical frequency, those who have skied or played tennis from early childhood and those who learnt as adults, or again those who ski in the school holidays and those who have the means to ski at other times and off the beaten track? In fact, it is rare for the social homogeneity of the practitioners to be so great that the populations defined by the same activity do not function as fields in which the very definition of the legitimate practice is at stake. Conflicts over the legitimate way of doing it, or over the resources for doing it (budget allocations, equipment, grounds etc.) almost always retranslate social differences into the specific logic of the field. Thus sports which are undergoing 'democratization' may cause to coexist (generally in separate spaces or times) socially different sub-populations which correspond to different ages of the sport. In the case of tennis, the members of private clubs, long-standing

practitioners who are more than ever attached to strict standards of dress (a Lacoste shirt, white shorts or skirt, special shoes) and all that this implies, are opposed in every respect to the new practitioners in municipal clubs and holiday clubs who demonstrate that the ritual of clothing is no superficial aspect of the legitimate practice. Tennis played in Bermuda shorts and a tee shirt, in a track suit or even swimming trunks, and Adidas running-shoes, is indeed another tennis, both in the way it is played and in the satisfactions it gives. And so the necessary circle whereby the meaning of a practice casts light on the class distribution of practices and this distribution casts light on the differential meaning of the practice cannot be broken by an appeal to the 'technical' definition. This, far from escaping the logic of the field and its struggles, is most often the work of those who, like physical-education teachers, are required to ensure the imposition and methodical inculcation of the schemes of perception and action which, in practice, organize the practices, and who are inclined to present the explanations they produce as grounded in reason or nature.

In any case, one only needs to be aware that the class variations in sporting activities are due as much to variations in perception and appreciation of the immediate or deferred profits they are supposed to bring, as to variations in the costs, both economic and cultural and, indeed, bodily (degree of risk and physical effort), in order to understand in its broad outlines the distribution of these activities among the classes and class fractions. Everything takes place as if the probability of taking up the different sports depended, within the limits defined by economic (and cultural) capital and spare time, on perception and assessment of the intrinsic and extrinsic profits of each sport in terms of the dispositions of the habitus, and more precisely, in terms of the relation to the body, which is one aspect of this.

The relationship between the different sports and age is more complex since it is only defined—through the intensity of the physical effort called for and the disposition towards this demand, which is a dimension of class ethos—in the relationship between a sport and a class. The most important property of the 'popular' sports is that they are tacitly associated with youth—which is spontaneously and implictly credited with a sort of temporary licence, expressed, inter alia, in the expending of excess physical (and sexual) energy—and are abandoned very early (generally on entry into adult life, symbolized by marriage). By contrast, the common feature of the 'bourgeois' sports, mainly pursued for their health-maintaining functions and their social profits, is that their 'retirement age' is much later, perhaps the more so the more prestigious they are (e.g., golf).

The instrumental relation to their own bodies which the working classes express in all practices directed towards the body—diet or beauty care, relation to illness or medical care—is also manifested in choosing

sports which demand a high investment of energy, effort or even pain (e.g., boxing) and which sometimes endanger the body itself (e.g., motor cycling, parachute jumping, acrobatics, and, to some extent, all the 'contact sports').

Rugby, which combines the popular features of the ball-game and a battle involving the body itself and allowing a—partially regulated—expression of physical violence and an immediate use of 'natural' physical qualities (strength, speed etc.), has affinities with the most typically popular dispositions, the cult of manliness and the taste for a fight, toughness in 'contact' and resistance to tiredness and pain, and sense of solidarity ('the mates') and revelry ('the third half') and so forth. This does not prevent members of the dominant fractions of the dominant class (or some intellectuals, who consciously or unconsciously express their values) from making an aesthetico-ethical investment in the game and even sometimes playing it. The pursuit of toughness and the cult of male values, sometimes mingled with an aestheticism of violence and man-to-man combat, bring the deep dispositions of first-degree practitioners to the level of discourse. The latter, being little inclined to verbalize and theorize, find themselves relegated by the managerial discourse (that of trainers, team managers and some journalists) to the rôle of docile, submissive, brute force ('gentle giant', etc.), working-class strength in its approved form (self-sacrifice, 'team spirit' and so forth). But the aristocratic reinterpretation which traditionally hinged on the 'heroic' virtues associated with the three-quarter game encounters its limits in the reality of modern rugby, which, under the combined effects of modernized tactics and training, a change in the social recruitment of the players and a wider audience, gives priority to the 'forward game', which is increasingly discussed in metaphors of the meanest industrial labour ('attacking the coal-face') or trench warfare (the infantryman who 'dutifully' runs headlong into enemy fire).[36]

Everything seems to indicate that the concern to cultivate the body appears, in its elementary form—that is, as the cult of health—often associated with an ascetic exaltation of sobriety and controlled diet, in the middle classes (junior executives, the medical services and especially schoolteachers, and particularly among women in these strongly feminized categories). These classes, who are especially anxious about appearance and therefore about their body-for-others, go in very intensively for gymnastics, the ascetic sport par excellence, since it amounts to a sort of training (*askesis*) for training's sake. We know from social psychology that self-acceptance (the very definition of ease) rises with unselfconsciousness, the capacity to escape fascination with a self possessed by the gaze of others (one thinks of the look of questioning anxiety, turning the looks of others on itself, so frequent nowadays among bourgeois women who *must not* grow old); and so it is understandable that middle-class women are disposed to sacrifice much time and effort to achieve the

sense of meeting the social norms of self-presentation which is the precondition of forgetting oneself and one's body-for-others (C.S. LXI).

But physical culture and all the strictly health-oriented practices such as walking and jogging are also linked in other ways to the dispositions of the culturally richest fractions of the middle classes and the dominant class. Generally speaking, they are only meaningful in relation to a quite theoretical, abstract knowledge of the effects of an exercise which, in gymnastics, is itself reduced to a series of abstract movements, decomposed and organized by reference to a specific, erudite goal (e.g., 'the abdominals'), entirely opposed to the total, practically oriented movements of everyday life; and they presuppose a rational faith in the deferred, often intangible profits they offer (such as protection against ageing or the accidents linked to age, an abstract, negative gain). It is therefore understandable that they should find the conditions for their performance in the ascetic dispositions of upwardly mobile individuals who are prepared to find satisfaction in effort itself and to take the deferred gratifications of their present sacrifice at face value. But also, because they can be performed in solitude, at times and in places beyond the reach of the many, off the beaten track, and so exclude all competition (this is one of the differences between running and jogging), they have a natural place among the ethical and aesthetic choices which define the aristocratic asceticism of the dominated fractions of the dominant class.

Team sports, which only require competences ('physical' or acquired) that are fairly equally distributed among the classes and are therefore equally accessible within the limits of the time and energy available, might be expected to rise in frequency, like individual sports, as one moves through the social hierarchy. However, in accordance with a logic observed in other areas—photography, for example—their very accessibility and all that this entails, such as undesirable contacts, tend to discredit them in the eyes of the dominant class. And indeed, the most typically popular sports, football and rugby, or wrestling and boxing, which, in France, in their early days were the delight of aristocrats, but which, in becoming popular, have ceased to be what they were, combine all the features which repel the dominant class: not only the social composition of their public, which redoubles their commonness, but also the values and virtues demanded, strength, endurance, violence, 'sacrifice', docility and submission to collective discipline—so contrary to bourgeois 'rôle distance'—and the exaltation of competition.

Regular sporting activity varies strongly by social class, ranging from 1.7 percent for farm workers, 10.1 percent for manual workers and 10.6 percent for clerical workers to 24 percent for junior executives and 32.3 percent for members of the professions. Similar variations are found in relation to educational level, whereas the difference between the sexes increases, as elsewhere, as one moves down the social hierarchy.[37] The variations are even more marked in the case of an individual sport like tennis, whereas in the case of soccer the hierarchy is inverted: it is most played among manual workers, followed by the craftsmen and shopkeepers. These differences are partly explained by the encouragement of sport in schools, but they also result from the fact that the decline in sporting activity with age, which occurs very abruptly and relatively early in the working classes, where it coincides with school-leaving or marriage (three-quarters of the peasants and manual workers have abandoned sport by age 25), is much slower in the dominant class, whose sport is explicitly invested with health-giving functions (as is shown, for example, by the interest in children's physical development). (This explains why, in the synoptic table—table 21—the proportion who regularly perform any sporting activity at a given moment rises strongly with position in the social hierarchy, whereas the proportion who no longer do so but used to at one time is fairly constant, and is even highest among craftsmen and shopkeepers.)

Attendance at sporting events (especially the most popular of them) is most common among craftsmen and shopkeepers, manual workers, junior executives and clerical workers (who often also read the sports paper *L'Equipe*); the same is true of interest in televised sport (soccer, rugby, cycling, horse-racing). By contrast, the dominant class watches much less sport, either live or on TV, except for tennis, rugby and skiing.

Just as, in an age when sporting activities were reserved for a few, the cult of 'fair play', the code of play of those who have the self-control not to get so carried away by the game that they forget that it is 'only a game', was a logical development of the distinctive function of sport, so too, in an age when participation is not always a sufficient guarantee of the rarity of the participants, those who seek to prove their excellence must affirm their disinterestedness by remaining aloof from practices devalued by the appearances of sheep-like conformism which they acquired by becoming more common. To distance themselves from common amusements, the privileged once again need only let themselves be guided by the horror of vulgar crowds which always leads them elsewhere, higher, further, to new experiences and virgin spaces, exclusively or firstly theirs, and also by the sense of the legitimacy of practices, which is a function of their distributional value, of course, but also of the degree to which they lend themselves to aestheticization, in practice or discourse.[38]

All the features which appeal to the dominant taste are combined in sports such as golf, tennis, sailing, riding (or show-jumping), skiing (especially its most distinctive forms, such as cross-country) or fencing. Practised in exclusive places (private clubs), at the time one chooses, alone or with chosen partners (features which contrast with the collective discipline, obligatory rhythms and imposed efforts of team sports), demanding a relatively low physical exertion that is in any case freely determined, but a relatively high investment—and the earlier it is put in,

Table 21 Class variations in sports activities and opinions on sport, 1975.

Sports characteristics of respondents	Positive responses (%) by class fraction					Positive responses (%) by sex	
	Farm workers	Manual workers	Craftsmen, small shopkeepers	Clerical, junior execs.	Senior execs., professions	Men	Women
Attend sports events fairly or very often	20	22	*24*	18	16	26	10
Watch or listen to sports events (on TV or radio) often or fairly often	50	*62*	60	60	50	71	47
Would like their child to become sports champion	50	*61*	55	44	33	52	47
Think that physical education ought to have a bigger place in the school curriculum	23	48	41	60	*71*	47	39
Regularly practise one or more sports (other than swimming if only on holiday)	17	18	24	29	*45*	25	15
Practise no sport now but used to	26	34	*41*	34	33	42	21
Have never regularly practised any sport	*57*	48	35	37	22	33	64
Regularly practise:							
tennis	0	1.5	2.5	2.5	*15.5*	2	2.5
riding	1.5	0.5	1	1.5	*3.5*	1	1
skiing	3.5	1.5	6.5	4.5	*8*	3	3
swimming	2.0	2.5	3.5	6.5	*10*	4	3
gymnastics	0.5	3	0.5	5	7	1.5	4
athletics	0	1.5	0.5	2.5	*4*	2	0.5
football	2.5	*6*	4.5	4	4	7	0.5

Source: C.S. XXXVIII (1975).

a. The statistics available (see app. 2, Complementary Sources) only indicate the most general tendencies, which are confirmed in all cases, despite variations due to vague definition of the practice, frequency, occasions etc. (It may also be assumed that the rates are over-estimated, to an unequal extent in the different classes, since all the surveys are based on the respondents' statements and are no substitute for surveys of the actual practitioners or spectators.) For this reason a synoptic table is used to show the proportion of each class or sex of agents who present a given characteristic according to the most recent survey on sporting activities and opinions on sport (C.S. XXXVIII). Italic figures indicate the strongest tendency in each row.

the more profitable it is—of time and learning (so that they are relatively independent of variations in bodily capital and its decline through age), they only give rise to highly ritualized competitions, governed, beyond the rules, by the unwritten laws of fair play. The sporting exchange takes on the air of a highly controlled social exchange, excluding all physical or verbal violence, all anomic use of the body (shouting, wild gestures etc.) and all forms of direct contact between the opponents (who are often separated by the spatial organization and various opening and closing rites). Or, like sailing, skiing and all the Californian sports, they substitute man's solitary struggle with nature for the man-to-man battles of popular sports (not to mention competitions, which are incompatible with a lofty idea of the person).

Thus it can be seen that economic barriers—however great they may be in the case of golf, skiing, sailing or even riding and tennis—are not sufficient to explain the class distribution of these activities. There are more hidden entry requirements, such as family tradition and early training, or the obligatory manner (of dress and behaviour), and socializing techniques, which keep these sports closed to the working class and to upwardly mobile individuals from the middle or upper classes and which maintain them (along with smart parlour games like chess and especially bridge) among the surest indicators of bourgeois pedigree.

In contrast to belote (and, even more so, manille), bridge is a game played more at higher levels of the social hierarchy, most frequently among members of the professions (IFOP, 1948). Similarly, among students of the grandes écoles, bridge, and especially intensive playing, with tournaments, varies very strongly by social origin. Chess (or the claim to play it) seems less linked than bridge to social traditions and to the pursuit of the accumulation of social capital. This would explain why it increases as one moves up the social hierarchy, but chiefly towards the area of social space defined by strong cultural capital (C.S. VII).

The simple fact that, at different times, albeit with a change in meaning and function, the same practices have been able to attract aristocratic or popular devotees, or, at the same time, to assume different meanings and forms for the different groups, should warn us against the temptation of trying to explain the class distribution of sports purely in terms of the 'nature' of the various activities. Even if the logic of distinction is sufficient to account for the basic opposition between popular and bourgeois sports, the fact remains that the relationships between the different groups and the different practices cannot be fully understood unless one takes account of the objective potentialities of the different institutionalized practices, that is, the social uses which these practices encourage, discourage or exclude both by their intrinsic logic and by their positional and distributional value. We can hypothesize as a general law that a sport

is more likely to be adopted by a social class if it does not contradict that class's relation to the body at its deepest and most unconscious level, i.e., the body schema, which is the depository of a whole world view and a whole philosophy of the person and the body.

Thus a sport is in a sense predisposed for bourgeois use when the use of the body it requires in no way offends the sense of the high dignity of the person, which rules out, for example, flinging the body into the rough and tumble of 'forward-game' rugby or the demeaning competitions of athletics. Ever concerned to impose the indisputable image of his own authority, his dignity or his distinction, the bourgeois treats his body as an end, makes his body a sign of its own ease. Style is thus foregrounded, and the most typically bourgeois deportment can be recognized by a certain breadth of gesture, posture and gait, which manifests by the amount of physical space that is occupied the place occupied in social space; and above all by a restrained, measured, self-assured tempo. This slow pace, contrasting with working-class haste or petit-bourgeois eagerness, also characterizes bourgeois speech, where it similarly asserts awareness of the right to take one's time—and other people's.

The affinity between the potentialities objectively inscribed in practices and dispositions is seen most clearly of all in flying, and especially military aviation. The individual exploits and chivalrous ethic of the Prussian aristocrats and French nobles who joined the Air Force from cavalry school (everything that *La Grande Illusion* evokes) are implied in the very activity of flying which, as all the metaphors of skimming and high flying suggest, are associated (*per ardua ad astra*) with elevated society and high-mindedness, 'a certain sense of altitude combining with the life of the spirit', as Proust says apropos of Stendhal.[39] The whole opposition between a bellicose, jingoistic bourgeoisie, which identified the virtues of leadership with the gallant, risk-taking, stiff-upper-lipped man of action, and a free-trading, multinational bourgeoisie which derives its power from its decision-making, organizational (in a word, cybernetic) capacities is contained in the opposition between the horse-riding, fencing, boxing or flying aristocrats and bourgeois of the Belle Epoque and the modern skiing, sailing or gliding executive.

And just as a history of the sporting practices of the dominant class would no doubt shed light on the evolution of its ethical dispositions, the bourgeois conception of the human ideal and in particular the form of reconciliation between the bodily virtues and the supposedly more feminine intellectual virtues, so too an analysis of the distribution at a given moment of sporting activities among the fractions of the dominant class would bring to light some of the most hidden principles of the opposition between these fractions, such as the deep-rooted, unconscious conception of the relationship between the sexual division of labour and the division of the work of domination. This is perhaps truer than ever

now that the gentle, invisible education by exercise and diet which is appropriate to the new morality of health is tending to take the place of the explicitly ethical pedagogy of the past in shaping bodies and minds. Because the different principles of division which structure the dominant class are never entirely independent—such as the oppositions between the economically richest and the culturally richest, between inheritors and parvenus, old and young (or seniors and juniors)—the practices of the different fractions tend to be distributed, from the dominant fractions to the dominated fractions, in accordance with a series of oppositions which are themselves partially reducible to each other: the opposition between the most expensive and smartest sports (golf, sailing, riding, tennis) or the most expensive and smartest ways of doing them (private clubs) and the cheapest sports (rambling, hiking, jogging, cycling, mountaineering) or the cheapest ways of doing the smart sports (e.g., tennis on municipal courts or in holiday camps); the opposition between the 'manly' sports, which may demand a high energy input (hunting, fishing, the 'contact' sports, clay-pigeon shooting), and the 'introverted' sports, emphasizing self-exploration and self-expression (yoga, dancing, 'physical expression') or the 'cybernetic' sports (flying, sailing), requiring a high cultural input and a relatively low energy input.

Thus, the differences which separate the teachers, the professionals and the employers are, as it were, summed up in the three activities which, though relatively rare—about 10 percent—even in the fractions they distinguish, appear as the distinctive feature of each of them, because they are much more frequent there, at equivalent ages, than in the others (C.S. V and VII, secondary analysis). The aristocratic asceticism of the teachers finds an exemplary expression in mountaineering, which, even more than rambling, with its reserved paths (one thinks of Heidegger) or cycle-touring, with its Romanesque churches, offers for minimum economic costs the maximum distinction, distance, height, spiritual elevation, through the sense of simultaneously mastering one's own body and a nature inaccessible to the many.[40] The health-oriented hedonism of doctors and modern executives who have the material and cultural means of access to the most prestigious activities, far from vulgar crowds, is expressed in yachting, open-sea swimming, cross-country skiing or underwater fishing; whereas the employers expect the same gains in distinction from golf, with it aristocratic etiquette, its English vocabulary and its great exclusive spaces, together with extrinsic profits, such as the accumulation of social capital.[41]

Since age is obviously a very important variable here, it is not surprising that differences in social age, not only between the biologically younger and older in identical social positions, but also, at identical biological ages, between the dominant and the dominated fractions, or the new and the established fractions, are retranslated into the opposition between the

traditional sports and all the new forms of the classic sports (pony trekking, cross-country skiing, and so on), or all the new sports, often imported from America by members of the new bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie, in particular by all the people working in fashion—designers, photographers, models, advertising agents, journalists—who invent and market a new form of poor-man's elitism, close to the teachers' version but more ostentatiously unconventional.

The true nature of this counter-culture, which in fact reactivates all the traditions of the typically cultivated cults of the natural, the pure and the authentic, is more clearly revealed in the equipment which one of the new property-rooms of the advanced life-style—the FNAC ('executive retail' shops), Beaubourg, *Le Nouvel Observateur,* holiday clubs etc.—offers the serious trekker: parkas, plus-fours, *authentic* Jacquard sweaters in *real* Shetland wool, *genuine* pullovers in *pure natural* wool, Canadian trappers' jackets, English fishermen's pullovers, U.S. Army raincoats, Swedish lumberjack shirts, fatigue pants, U.S. work shoes, rangers, Indian moccasins in supple leather, Irish work caps, Norwegian woollen caps, bush hats—not forgetting the whistles, altimeters, pedometers, trail guides, Nikons and other essential gadgets without which there can be no natural return to nature. And how could one fail to recognize the dynamics of the dream of social weightlessness as the basis of all the new sporting activities—foot-trekking, pony-trekking, cycle-trekking, motorbike trekking, boat-trekking, canoeing, archery, windsurfing, cross-country skiing, sailing, hang-gliding, microlights etc.—whose common feature is that they all demand a high investment of cultural capital in the activity itself, in preparing, maintaining and using the equipment, and especially, perhaps, in verbalizing the experiences, and which bear something of the same relation to the luxury sports of the professionals and executives as symbolic possession to material possession of the work of art?

In the opposition between the classical sports and the Californian sports, two contrasting relations to the social world are expressed, as clearly as they are in literary or theatrical tastes. On the one hand, there is respect for forms and for forms of respect, manifested in concern for propriety and ritual and in unashamed flaunting of wealth and luxury, and on the other, symbolic subversion of the rituals of bourgeois order by ostentatious poverty, which makes a virtue of necessity, casualness towards forms and impatience with constraints, which is first marked in clothing or cosmetics since casual clothes and long hair—like the minibus or camping-car, or folk and rock, in other fields—are challenges to the standard attributes of bourgeois rituals, classically styled clothes, luxury cars, boulevard theatre and opera. And this opposition between two relations to the social world is perfectly reflected in the two relations to the natural world, on the one hand the taste for natural, wild nature, on the other, organized, signposted, cultivated nature.

The Catalogue of New Sporting Resources

Physical expression

Gazelle

She is deeply imbued with the teaching of L'Arche, where she lived for ten years. Lanza del Vasto has written of her: 'Her art is not just in her legs, it has matured for a long time in her head and heart . . . if I bring her out from time to time, it's so that this precious art, inspired by Hindu dance as much as by mediaeval Christian imagery, should not be lost.'

The approaches to the inner life are made through activities throughout the day's session, and are subsequently pursued in life; indeed, the search for inner unity is the central theme. Dance has the place of honour, be it folk, religious or creative dance. It is not a goal in itself, but a support for the inner life. Technique is worked on, certainly, but never at the expense of the relaxation that is essential for the harmony of the self.

Women discover their bodies through dance

For women, dance is above all a way of becoming aware of their bodies, and, in this sense, it is a self-discovery. Awareness of the body is sometimes accompanied by awareness of the body as a particular means of expression. Women experience dance as a new language through which they can express themselves. . . . Moreover, for around half of the interviewees, this activity seems to awaken a primary eroticism, even a primary auto-eroticism; heightened consciousness of the body is experienced as a pleasure. . . . 'That's when I feel I have a body. . . . I think that dancing can give me harmony with myself. . . .' 'A search for myself, discovering myself physically. . . .' 'Sensations running through my body . . . a way of talking, you can say a lot!' 'It's a self-affirmation. . . .' 'I feel good when dancing. I become aware of myself. Once, I stopped for two years; there was something missing. . . . It's a need.'

Wheels

Four girls, two guys, a hired horse, a second-hand cart and a bike

We started out from La Charité-sur-Loire in the Nièvre, with no precise destination. In the course of a month we did 300 kilometres to Montaigut-en-Combraille (Puy-de-Dôme), along the minor roads of the Bourbonnais. Average speed 3 kilometres an hour (the horse didn't feel like going any faster). Fifteen or 20 kilometres a day. Because we were just ambling along we had time to do all sorts of things you can't do in a car: blackberrying, cycling, talking to the locals, climbing up on the cart, bathing, making love. . . . After a few days, we'd completely lost the sense of time (the time of the rat-race).

Free flight

A hang-glider is a sail stretched between aluminum tubes, a big kite without a string but with a bloke hanging in a harness; you take it somewhere high, jump off, and FLY.

You start with little hills, grassy slopes, sand-pits, just a few yards above the ground. Geographically speaking, you can do it anywhere: from the Pyrenees to the Vosges,

from the slag-heaps and cliffs of the Nord to the Jura and the Alps, not forgetting the Puy-de-Dôme.

Walking

To think there are people who don't know that you only have to leave the claustrophobic world of the *métro* at Porte de Saint-Cloud to find yourself on the route of National Trail No. 1!!! Yes indeed!!! Sounds like the blurred breakfast-time account of a dream? And yet it's true: at the end of the Avenue de Versailles, there's the start of 565 kilometres, no less, of footpaths, WITHOUT ENTERING A SINGLE TOWN!

Groovy football

Alternative soccer is on the up-and-up. Spontaneity is the word: no clubs, no championships, often no grounds. The traditional team colours give way to multi-coloured tee shirts, even Indian shirts. Not many shorts to be seen, but lots of jeans. Heavy boots with studs and laces all over them are rare in the extreme, and when they do appear a crowd gathers to gawk at them before the match. Sneakers and desert boots are more like it.

The number of players is very variable and rarely reaches the symbolic eleven. The players aren't even always men and I can remember some matches in the winter mud of the Parc de Sceaux in which each team included three or four girls whose high heels made their mark on a few ankles and shins, and not just their opponents'!

They were epic struggles, with two or three intervals, during which the least out of breath would have a quick joint or two. A typical score would be 32–28.

Age is pretty variable, too. No categories like kiddies, juniors, minors, seniors, veterans. And kids of eleven or twelve are the sort of mosquitoes you can't easily shake off.

Naturally, the rules are liberally interpreted. Besides, most of the time there's no referee. The off-side rule only applies in cases of flagrant violation (for example, when a player hangs around the opposite goal throughout the match in case a pass comes his way). There are no touch-lines, so the pitches are often wider than they're long! Corners are taken, because they're a real gas. The teams expand during the match as more players arrive.

Competitiveness isn't entirely ruled out, but we're a long way from the fanaticism of 'pro' teams. In fact the people who come along to kick the ball aren't out there to win at all costs, given that there are no prizes, it's rarely the same teams, the length of the match is very elastic, and the scoring is very approximate (to within a goal or two). And when one team is obviously stronger, you balance it out by 'transferring' players between the two teams. . . . It's a far cry from the gamesmanship they teach you most of the time at school.

What's the answer? Perhaps it comes from games masters like the one who gave each player a ball so there would be no competitive spirit (a true story—the teacher in question even got into trouble for not observing the usual rule).

Next weekend, if you see a couple of gangs of hairy louts chasing after a ball, don't hesitate, just ask if you can join in. They won't eat you.

Extracts from *Catalogue des ressources* (Paris, Librairies Alternative and Parallèles, 1977).

Thus, the system of the sporting activities and entertainments that offer themselves at a given moment for the potential 'consumers' to choose from is predisposed to express all the differences sociologically pertinent at that moment: oppositions between the sexes, between the classes and between class fractions. The agents only have to follow the leanings of their habitus in order to take over, unwittingly, the intention immanent in the corresponding practices, to find an activity which is entirely 'them' and, with it, kindred spirits. The same is true in all areas of practice: each consumer is confronted by a particular state of the supply side, that is, with objectified possibilities (goods, services, patterns of action etc.) the appropriation of which is one of the stakes in the struggles between the classes, and which, because of their probable association with certain classes or class fractions, are automatically classified and classifying, rank-ordered and rank-ordering. The observed state of the distribution of goods and practices is thus defined in the meeting between the possibilities offered at a given moment by the different fields of production (past and present) and the socially differentiated dispositions which—associated with the capital (of determinate volume and composition) of which, depending on the trajectory, they are more or less completely the product and in which they find their means of realization—define the interest in these possibilities, that is, the propensity to acquire them and (through acquisition) to convert them into distinctive signs.

Thus, a study of the toy market undertaken along these lines would first have to establish the specific structuring principles of a field of production in which, as in other such fields, there coexist firms differing in 'age' (from small workshops producing wooden toys to large modern companies), in volume (turnover, number of employees) and, perhaps especially, in the extent to which production is guided by psychological as well as technological research. Secondly, on the basis of an analysis of the conditions in which toy purchases are made, and in particular of the degree (probably varying with class) to which they are linked to traditional, seasonal, gift exchanges (Christmas, New Year), one could try to determine the meaning and function which the different classes consciously or unconsciously confer on toys according to their own schemes of perception and appreciation and, more precisely, according to their educational strategies. (The latter in turn have to be seen in terms of their whole system of reproduction strategies: the propensity to confer an educational function on toys no doubt rises with the degree to which the reproduction of social position depends exclusively on transmission of cultural capital, i.e., with the weight of cultural capital in the asset structure.) It would also be necessary to examine how the logic of the competition between firms of different types, having different strengths and therefore inclined to defend different products, is in a sense decided by the different categories of clients. Craft firms may get a new lease on life when wooden toys encounter the taste for natural materials

and simple shapes among the intellectual fractions, who are also attracted by all forms of logical games which are supposed to 'awaken' and 'develop' the intelligence; and the cultural-capital-intensive firms benefit not only from the intensified competition for educational qualifications and the general rise in educational investments, but also from the unsolicited advertising given to products which suit their taste by those who present their own life-style as an example to others and elevate the inclinations of their own ethos into a universal ethic. The producers of cultural toys, who have every interest in 'de-seasonalizing' their sales by creating a continuous need for their products, can count on the proselytism of all those who are inclined to believe and persuade others to believe in the (strictly unverifiable) educational value of toys and play—psychologists, psychoanalysts, nursery teachers, 'toy bank' organizers, and everyone else with a stake in a definition of childhood capable of producing a market for goods and services aimed at children.[42]

There is no clearer indication of the existence, in all areas, of a legitimacy and a definition of legitimate practice than the careless, but socially corroborated, assurance with which the new taste-makers measure all practices against the yardstick of their own taste, the acid test of modernity (as opposed to all that is archaic, rigid, old-fashioned). The naivety of some of the comments embroidering the statistics on consumption they produce for the purposes of marketing reveals, for example, that they classify all eating habits in terms of their distance from the American ideal of eggs and bacon for breakfast or a light lunch washed down with mineral water, just as others adjudicate what is 'in' in politics or the latest 'must' in philosophical fashion in terms of what is (or is not) being done at Harvard, Princeton or Stanford.

It follows that it is only by increasing the number of empirical analyses of the relations between relatively autonomous fields of production of a particular class of products and the market of consumers which they assemble, and which sometimes function as fields (without ceasing to be determined by their position in the field of the social classes), that one can really escape from the abstraction of economic theories, which only recognize a consumer reduced to his purchasing power (itself reduced to his income) and a product characterized, equally abstractly, by a technical function presumed to be equal for all; only in this way is it possible to establish a genuine scientific theory of the economy of practices.

The abstract notion of the 'labour market' requires a similar critique which would describe both the invariants and the variations in the relationship between the owner of the means of production—and therefore of jobs—and the seller of labour power, according to the power relations between the two parties. These depend, among other things, on the rarity of the post and the material and symbolic advantages it gives and on the rarity of the labour power supplied or of the qualifications which guarantee it; in other

words, on the degree to which the job supplier can withstand individual or collective withdrawal of labour power (refusal of the job, a strike etc.) and the extent to which the possessor of labour power is able to refuse the job (depending, for example, on his qualifications, age and family responsibilities, with the unmarried young being least vulnerable).

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4 The Dynamics of the Fields

There are thus as many fields of preferences as there are fields of stylistic possibles. Each of these worlds—drinks (mineral waters, wines and aperitifs) or automobiles, newspapers or holiday resorts, design or furnishing of house or garden, not to mention political programmes—provides the small number of distinctive features which, functioning as a system of differences, differential deviations, allow the most fundamental social differences to be expressed almost as completely as through the most complex and refined expressive systems available in the legitimate arts; and it can be seen that the total field of these fields offers well-nigh inexhaustible possibilities for the pursuit of distinction.

If, among all these fields of possibles, none is more obviously predisposed to express social differences than the world of luxury goods, and, more particularly, cultural goods, this is because the relationship of distinction is objectively inscribed within it, and is reactivated, intentionally or not, in each act of consumption, through the instruments of economic and cultural appropriation which it requires. It is not only a matter of the affirmations of difference which writers and artists profess ever more insistently as the autonomy of the field of cultural production becomes more pronounced,[1] but also of the intention immanent in cultural objects. One could point to the socially charged nature of legitimate language and, for example, the systems of ethical and aesthetic values deposited, ready for quasi-automatic reactivation, in pairs of contrasting adjectives; or the very logic of literary language, whose whole value lies in an *écart,* i.e., a distance from simple, common ways of speaking. Rhetorical figures, as modifications of ordinary usage, are in a sense the ob-

jectifications of the social relationship in which they are produced and function, and it is futile to seek, in the intrinsic nature of the tropes catalogued in the 'Arts of Rhetoric', properties which, like all properties of distinction, exist only in and through the relationship, in and through difference. A figure of words or style is always only an alteration of usage, and consequently a distinctive mark which may consist in the absence of any mark when the intention of distinguishing oneself from a would-be distinction that is held to be 'excessive' (the vulgarity of 'pretension') or simply 'worn out' or 'outmoded' leads to the double negations which underlie so many spurious encounters between the opposite extremes of social space. It is well known that all dominant aesthetics set a high value on the virtues of sobriety, simplicity, economy of means, which are as much opposed to first-degree poverty and simplicity as to the pomposity or affectation of the 'half-educated'.

It is scarcely necessary to establish that the work of art is the objectification of a relationship of distinction and that it is thereby explicitly predisposed to bear such a relationship in the most varied contexts. As soon as art becomes self-conscious, in the work of Alberti, for example, as Gombrich demonstrates, it is defined by a negation, a refusal, a renunciation, which is the very basis of the refinement in which a distance is marked from the simple pleasure of the senses and the superficial seductions of gold and ornaments that ensnare the vulgar taste of the Philistines: 'In the strict hierarchic society of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the contrast between the "vulgar" and the "noble" becomes one of the principal preoccupations of the critics. . . . Their belief was that certain forms or modes are "really" vulgar, because they please the low, while others are inherently noble, because only a developed taste can appreciate them.'[2] The aim of distinction, expressing the specific interest of the artists, who are increasingly inclined to claim exclusive control over form at the risk of disappointing their clients' 'bad taste', is far from incompatible with the functions really conferred on works of art by those who commission them or conserve them in their collections: these 'cultural creations which we usually regard purely aesthetically, as variants of a particular style, were perceived by their contemporaries', as Norbert Elias reminds us, referring to the society of the Grand Siècle, as 'the highly differentiated expression of certain social qualities.'[3]

This means that, like art as defined by Yeats ('Art is a social act of a solitary man'), every appropriation of a work of art which is the embodiment of a relation of distinction is itself a social relation and, contrary to the illusion of cultural communism, it is a relation of distinction. Those who possess the means of symbolically appropriating cultural goods are more than willing to believe that it is only through their economic dimension that works of art, and cultural goods in general, acquire rarity. They like to see symbolic appropriation—the only legitimate sort, in their view—as a kind of mystical participation in a common good of

which each person has a share and which everyone has entirely, as a paradoxical appropriation, excluding privilege and monopoly, unlike material appropriation, which asserts real exclusivity and therefore exclusion. 'If I contemplate a painting by Poussin or read a Platonic dialogue, that doesn't imply that I am depriving anyone and that we need to produce as many Poussins and Platos as there are possible beholders or readers' (Philosophy teacher, age 30).

The love of art is conceived as a secularized form of the 'intellectual love of God', a love, according to Spinoza, that is 'the greater as more men enjoy it.' There is no doubt that the works of art inherited from the past and deposited in museums and private collections and, beyond them, all objectified cultural capital, the product of history accumulated in the form of books, articles, documents, instruments, which are the trace or materialization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics or conceptual systems, present themselves as an autonomous world which, although it is the product of historical action, has its own laws, transcending individual wills, and remains irreducible to what each agent or even the whole population of agents can appropriate (i.e., to internalized cultural capital), just as the language objectified in dictionaries and grammars remains irreducible to the language really appropriated, that is, to what is internalized by each speaker or even the whole population. However, contrary to theories of the autonomy of the world of ideas or of 'objective knowledge without a knowing subject' and 'subjectless processes' (in which Louis Althusser and Karl Popper concur), it has to be pointed out that objectified cultural capital only exists and subsists in and through the struggles of which the fields of cultural production (the artistic field, the scientific field etc.) and, beyond them, the field of the social classes, are the site, struggles in which the agents wield strengths and obtain profits proportionate to their mastery of this objectified capital, in other words, their internalized capital.[4]

Because the appropriation of cultural products presupposes dispositions and competences which are not distributed universally (although they have the appearance of innateness), these products are subject to exclusive appropriation, material or symbolic, and, functioning as cultural capital (objectified or internalized), they yield a profit in distinction, proportionate to the rarity of the means required to appropriate them, and a profit in legitimacy, the profit par excellence, which consists in the fact of feeling justified in being (what one is), being what it is right to be.[5] This is the difference between the legitimate culture of class societies, a product of domination predisposed to express or legitimate domination, and the culture of little-differentiated or undifferentiated societies, in which access to the means of appropriation of the cultural heritage is fairly equally distributed, so that culture is fairly equally mastered by all members of the group and cannot function as cultural capital, i.e., as an instrument of domination, or only so within very narrow limits and with a very high degree of euphemization.

The symbolic profit arising from material or symbolic appropriation of a work of art is measured by the distinctive value which the work derives from the rarity of the disposition and competence which it demands and which determines its class distribution.[6] Cultural objects, with their subtle hierarchy, are predisposed to mark the stages and degrees of the initiatory progress which defines the enterprise of culture, according to Valéry Larbaud. Like 'Christian's progress towards the heavenly Jerusalem', it leads from the 'illiterate' to the 'literate', via the 'non-literate' and 'semi-literate', or the 'common reader' (*lecteur*)—leaving aside the 'bibliophile'—to the truly cultivated reader (*liseur*). The mysteries of culture have their catechumens, their initiates, their holy men, that 'discrete elite' set apart from ordinary mortals by inimitable nuances of manner and united by 'a quality, something which lies in the man himself, which is part of his happiness, which may be indirectly very useful to him but which will never win him a sou, any more than his courtesy, his courage or his goodness.'[7]

Hence the incessant revisions, reinterpretations and rediscoveries which the learned of all religions of the book perform on their canonical texts: since the levels of 'reading' designate hierarchies of readers, it is necessary and sufficient to change the hierarchy of readings in order to overturn the hierarchy of readers.

It follows from what has been said that a simple upward displacement of the structure of the class distribution of an asset or practice (i.e., a virtually identical increase in the proportion of possessors in each class) has the effect of diminishing its rarity and distinctive value and threatening the distinction of the older possessors. Intellectuals and artists are thus divided between their interest in cultural proselytism, that is, winning a market by widening their audience, which inclines them to favour popularization, and concern for cultural distinction, the only objective basis of their rarity; and their relationship to everything concerned with the 'democratization of culture' is marked by a deep ambivalence which may be manifested in a dual discourse on the relations between the institutions of cultural diffusion and the public.

When asked in a survey how they thought works of art in museums might be better presented, and whether the 'supply level' ought to be made more accessible by providing technical, historical or aesthetic explanations, members of the dominant class—and especially the teachers and art specialists—endeavour to escape from the contradiction by dissociating what is desirable for others from what is desirable for themselves. It is because the museum is as it is that it is their exclusive privilege; so it is as it should be for people like them, i.e., people made for it. But they cannot fail to be sensitive to the fact that they, the habitués, are being consulted first about what should be done, because this recognizes their privilege of granting part of their privilege to others. In accepting educational improvements, it is *their* museum, the one that they alone can enjoy, austere, ascetic and noble,

which they graciously open to others. (An analysis of the debates which occurred when cheap paperbacks came onto the market—a promise of popularity for the author, a threat of vulgarization for the reader—would reveal the same ambivalence).

Because the distinctive power of cultural possessions or practices—an artifact, a qualification, a film culture—tends to decline with the growth in the absolute number of people able to appropriate them, the profits of distinction would wither away if the field of production of cultural goods, itself governed by the dialectic of pretension and distinction, did not endlessly supply new goods or new ways of using the same goods.

The Correspondence between Goods Production and Taste Production

In the cultural market—and no doubt elsewhere—the matching of supply and demand is neither the simple effect of production imposing itself on consumption nor the effect of a conscious endeavour to serve the consumers' needs, but the result of the objective orchestration of two relatively independent logics, that of the fields of production and that of the field of consumption. There is a fairly close homology between the specialized fields of production in which products are developed and the fields (the field of the social classes or the field of the dominant class) in which tastes are determined. This means that the products developed in the competitive struggles of which each of the fields of production is the site, and which are the source of the incessant changing of these products, meet, without having expressly to seek it, the demand which is shaped in the objectively or subjectively antagonistic relations between the different classes or class fractions over material or cultural consumer goods or, more exactly, in the competitive struggles between them over these goods, which are the source of the changing of tastes. This objective orchestration of supply and demand is the reason why the most varied tastes find the conditions for their realization in the universe of possibles which each of the fields of production offers them, while the latter find the conditions for their constitution and functioning in the different tastes which provide a (short- or long-term) market for their different products.[8]

The field of production, which clearly could not function if it could not count on already existing tastes, more or less strong propensities to consume more or less clearly defined goods, enables taste to be realized by offering it, at each moment, the universe of cultural goods as a system of stylistic possibles from which it can select the system of stylistic features constituting a life-style. It is always forgotten that the universe of products offered by each field of production tends in fact to limit the universe of the forms of experience (aesthetic, ethical, political etc.) that are objectively possible at any given moment.[9] It follows from this, among other things, that the distinction recognized in all dominant classes and in all their properties takes different forms depending on the state of the distinctive signs of 'class' that are effectively available. In the case of the production of cultural goods at least, the relation between supply and demand takes a particular form: the supply always exerts an effect of symbolic imposition. A cultural product—an avant-garde picture, a political manifesto, a newspaper—is a constituted taste, a taste which has been raised from the vague semi-existence of half-formulated or unformulated experience, implicit or even unconscious desire, to the full reality of the finished product, by a process of objectification which, in present circumstances, is almost always the work of professionals. It is consequently charged with the legitimizing, reinforcing capacity which objectification always possesses, especially when, as is the case now, the logic of structural homologies assigns it to a prestigious group so that it functions as an authority which authorizes and reinforces dispositions by giving them a collectively recognized expression.[10] Taste, for its part, a classification system constituted by the conditionings associated with a condition situated in a determinate position in the structure of different conditions, governs the relationship with objectified capital, with this world of ranked and ranking objects which help to define it by enabling it to specify and so realize itself.[11]

Thus the tastes actually realized depend on the state of the system of goods offered; every change in the system of goods induces a change in tastes. But conversely, every change in tastes resulting from a transformation of the conditions of existence and of the corresponding dispositions will tend to induce, directly or indirectly, a transformation of the field of production, by favouring the success, within the struggle constituting the field, of the producers best able to produce the needs corresponding to the new dispositions. There is therefore no need to resort to the hypothesis of a sovereign taste compelling the adjustment of production to needs, or the opposite hypothesis, in which taste is itself a product of production, in order to account for the quasi-miraculous correspondence prevailing at every moment between the products offered by a field of production and the field of socially produced tastes. The producers are led by the logic of competition with other producers and by the specific interests linked to their position in the field of production (and therefore by the habitus which have led them to that position) to produce distinct products which meet the different cultural interests which the consumers owe to their class conditions and position, thereby offering them a real possibility of being satisfied. In short, if, as they say, 'There is something for everyone', if each fraction of the dominant class has its own artists and philosophers, newspapers and critics, just as it has its hairdresser, interior decorator or tailor, or if, as an artist put it, 'Everyone sells', meaning that paintings of the most varied styles always eventually find a

purchaser, this is not the result of intentional design but of the meeting between two systems of differences.

The functional and structural homology which guarantees objective orchestration between the logic of the field of production and the logic of the field of consumption arises from the fact that all the specialized fields (haute couture or painting, theatre or literature) tend to be governed by the same logic, i.e., according to the volume of the specific capital that is possessed (and according to seniority of possession, which is often associated with volume), and from the fact that the oppositions which tend to be established in each case between the richer and the less rich in the specific capital—the established and the outsiders, veterans and newcomers, distinction and pretension, rear-guard and avant-garde, order and movement etc.—are mutually homologous (which means that there are numerous invariants) and also homologous to the oppositions which structure the field of the social classes (between dominant and dominated) and the field of the dominant class (between the dominant fraction and the dominated fraction).[12] The correspondence which is thereby objectively established between the classes of products and the classes of consumers is realized in acts of consumption only through the mediation of that sense of the homology between goods and groups which defines tastes. Choosing according to one's tastes is a matter of identifying goods that are objectively attuned to one's position and which 'go together' because they are situated in roughly equivalent positions in their respective spaces, be they films or plays, cartoons or novels, clothes or furniture; this choice is assisted by institutions—shops, theatres (left- or right-bank), critics, newspapers, magazines—which are themselves defined by their position in a field and which are chosen on the same principles.

For the dominant class, the relationship between supply and demand takes the form of a pre-established harmony. The competition for luxury goods, emblems of 'class', is one dimension of the struggle to impose the dominant principle of domination, of which this class is the site; and the strategies it calls for, whose common feature is that they are oriented towards maximizing the distinctive profit of exclusive possessions, must necessarily use different weapons to achieve this common function. On the supply side, the field of production need only follow its own logic, that of distinction, which always leads it to be organized in accordance with a structure analogous to that of the symbolic systems which it produces by its functioning and in which each element performs a distinctive function.

THE LOGIC OF HOMOLOGIES Thus, the case of fashion, which might seem to justify a model which locates the motor of changing sartorial styles in the intentional pursuit of distinction (the 'trickle-down effect') is an almost perfect example of the meeting of two spaces and two relatively autonomous histories. The endless changes in fashion result from the objective orchestration between, on the one hand, the logic of the struggles internal to the field of production, which are organized in terms of the opposition old/new, itself linked, through the oppositions expensive/(relatively) cheap and classical/practical (or rear-guard/avant-garde), to the opposition old/young (very important in this field, as in sport); and, on the other hand, the logic of the struggles internal to the field of the dominant class which, as we have seen, oppose the dominant and the dominated fractions, or, more precisely, the established and the challengers, in other words—given the equivalence between power (more specifically, economic power) and age, which means that, at identical biological ages, social age is a function of proximity to the pole of power and duration in that position—between those who have the social properties associated with accomplished adulthood and those who have the social properties associated with the incompleteness of youth. The couturiers who occupy a dominant position in the field of fashion only have to follow through the negative strategies of discretion and understatement that are forced on them by the aggressive competition of the challengers to find themselves directly attuned to the demands of the old bourgeoisie who are oriented towards the same refusal of emphasis by a homologous relation to the audacities of the new bourgeoisie; and, similarly, the newcomers to the field, young couturiers or designers endeavouring to win acceptance of their subversive ideas, are the 'objective allies' of the new fractions and the younger generation of the dominant fractions of the bourgeoisie, for whom the symbolic revolutions of which vestimentary and cosmetic outrages are the paradigm, are the perfect vehicle for expressing the ambiguity of their situation as the 'poor relations' of the temporal powers.

Just as the ready-to-wear 'revolution' arose when the dispositions of a designer occupying a particular position in the field of fashion encountered the 'modern', 'dynamic', 'casual' life-style of the new bourgeoisie which brings the traditional functions of representation into professional life, so the new fashion based on the 'authentic' and 'genuine' (real Chinese clothes, real Army surplus—parkas, combat trousers, light raincoats etc.—Canadian trappers' jackets, Japanese martial-art kimonos, safari jackets), which the most 'in' boutiques sell at inflated prices to a clientele of 'beautiful people'—models, photographers, advertising agents, journalists—owes its success to the fact that it meets the demands of the young counter-culture.[13]

The logic of the functioning of the fields of cultural-goods production, together with the distinction strategies which determine their dynamics, cause the products of their functioning, be they fashion designs or novels, to be predisposed to function differentially, as means of distinc-

tion, first between the class fractions and then between the classes. The producers can be totally involved and absorbed in their struggles with other producers, convinced that only specific artistic interests are at stake and that they are otherwise totally disinterested, while remaining unaware of the social functions they fulfil, in the long run, for a particular audience, and without ever ceasing to respond to the expectations of a particular class or class fraction.

This is especially clear in the case of the theatre, where the correspondence between several relatively autonomous spaces—the space of the producers (playwrights and actors), the space of the critics (and through them the space of the daily and weekly press), and the space of the audiences and readerships (i.e., the space of the dominant class), is so perfect, so necessary and yet so unforeseeable that every actor can experience his encounter with the object of his preference as a miracle of predestination.[14]

In the same way, it would be easy to show how much newspapers owe, even in an age of market research, to the logic of competition for advertisers and for readers. Like political parties, newspapers must endlessly work to maximize their clientele, at the expense of their closest competitors in the field of production, through more or less disguised borrowings of themes, formulae and even journalists, without losing the core readership which defines them and gives them their distributional value.

Boulevard theatre, which offers tried and tested shows (adaptations of foreign plays, revivals of boulevard 'classics' etc.), written to reliable formulae and performed by consecrated actors, and which caters to a middle-aged, 'bourgeois' audience that is disposed to pay high prices, is opposed in every respect to experimental theatre, which attracts a young, 'intellectual' audience to relatively inexpensive shows that flout ethical and aesthetic conventions. This structure of the field of production operates both in reality, through the mechanisms which produce the oppositions between the playwrights or actors and their theatre, the critics and their newspapers, and in people's minds, in the form of a system of categories shaping perception and appreciation which enable them to classify and evaluate playwrights, works, styles and subjects. Thus, critics occupying opposed positions in the field of cultural production will assess plays in terms of the very same oppositions which engender the objective differences between them, but they will set the terms of these oppositions in opposite hierarchies.

Thus in 1973 Françoise Dorin's play *Le Tournant* (*The Turning*), which dramatizes a boulevard playwright's attempt to start a new career as an avant-garde playwright, aroused reactions which varied in form and content according to the position of the publication in which they appeared, that is, according to how distant the critic and his readership

were from the 'bourgeois' pole and consequently from Dorin's play. They range from unconditional approval to disdainful silence, via a neutral point (occupied by *Le Monde*), as one moves from right to left, from the Right Bank to the Left Bank, through the field of newspapers and weeklies, from *L'Aurore* to *Le Nouvel Observateur,* and, simultaneously, through the field of readership, which is itself organized in accordance with oppositions corresponding fairly exactly to those defining the field of the theatre. When confronted with an object so clearly organized in terms of the basic opposition, the critics, who are themselves distributed in the field of the press in accordance with the structure which shapes both the classified object and the classification system they apply to it, reproduce—in the space of the judgements whereby they classify both it and themselves—the space within which they are themselves classified. (The whole process constitutes a perfect circle from which the only escape is to objectify it sociologically.)

In the play itself, Françoise Dorin sets 'bourgeois' drama (her own), which applies technical skill to produce gaiety, lightness and wit, 'typically French' qualities, in opposition to the 'pretentiousness' and 'bluff,' camouflaged under 'ostentatious starkness', the dull solemnity and drab decor, which characterize 'intellectual' drama. The series of contrasted properties which the right-bank critics pick out—technical skill, joie de vivre, clarity, ease, lightness, optimism, as opposed to tedium, gloom, obscurity, pretentiousness, heaviness and pessimism—reappears in the columns of the left-bank critics, but here the positives are negatives and vice versa, because the hierarchy of qualities is reversed.

As in a set of facing mirrors, each of the critics located at either extreme can say exactly what the critic on the other side would say, but he does so in conditions such that his words take on an ironic value and stigmatize by antiphrasis the very things that are praised by his opposing counterpart. Thus, the left-bank critic credits Mme. Dorin with the qualities on which she prides herself; but when *he* mentions them, to *his* readership, they automatically become derisory (so that her 'technique' becomes 'a box of tricks', and 'common sense' is immediately understood as synonymous with bourgeois stupidity). In so doing, he turns against Mme. Dorin the weapon she herself uses against avant-garde theatre when, exploiting the structural logic of the field, she turns against avant-garde theatre the weapon it likes to use against 'bourgeois' chatter and the 'bourgeois' theatre which reproduces its truisms and clichés (e.g., Ionesco's descriptions of *The Bald Prima Donna* or *Jacques* as 'a sort of parody or caricature of boulevard theatre, boulevard theatre falling apart and going mad').

In each case the same device is used: the critic's relationship of ethical and aesthetic connivance with his readers supplies the leverage to break the connivance of the parodied discourse with its own audience and to turn it into a series of 'misplaced' remarks which are shocking and

A Sociological Test

Moving from right to left or from right bank to left bank, we start with *L'Aurore:* 'Cheeky Françoise Dorin is going to be in hot water with our *toffee-nosed, Marxist* intelligentsia (the two things go together). The author of *Un sale égoïste* shows no respect for the solemn *boredom,* profound emptiness and vertiginous nullity which characterize so many so-called 'avant-garde' theatrical productions. She dares to profane with sacrilegious laughter the notorious "incommunicability" which is the alpha and omega of the contemporary stage. And this perverse *reactionary,* who flatters the lowest appetites of consumer society, far from acknowledging the error of her ways and wearing her boulevard playwright's reputation with humility, has the impudence to prefer the jollity of Sacha Guitry, or Feydeau's bedroom farces, to the darkness visible of Marguerite Duras or Arrabal. This is a crime for which she will not easily be forgiven. Especially since she commits it with cheerfulness and gaiety, using all the dreadful devices which make lasting successes' (Gilbert Guilleminaud, *L'Aurore,* 12 January 1973).

Situated at the fringe of the intellectual field, at a point where he already has to speak of it as an outsider ('our intelligentsia'), the *L'Aurore* critic does not mince his words (he calls a reactionary a reactionary) and does not hide his strategies. The rhetorical effect of putting words into the opponent's mouth, in conditions in which his discourse, functioning ironically, objectively signifies the opposite of what he means, presupposes and brings into play the very structure of the field of criticism and his relationship of immediate connivance with his readership based on homology of position.

From *L'Aurore* we move to *Le Figaro.* In perfect harmony with the author of *Le Tournant*—the harmony of orchestrated habitus—the *Figaro* critic cannot but experience absolute delight at a play which so perfectly corresponds to his categories of perception and appreciation, his view of the theatre and his view of the world. However, being forced into a higher degree of euphemization, he excludes overtly political judgements and limits himself to the language of aesthetics and ethics: 'How grateful we should be to Mme. Françoise Dorin for being a *courageously light* author, which means to say that she is *wittily* dramatic, and *smilingly serious,* irreverent without fragility, pushing her comedy into outright vaudeville, *but* in the *subtlest* way imaginable; an author who wields satire *with elegance,* who at all times demonstrates astounding virtuosity. . . . Françoise Dorin knows *much more than any of us* about the *tricks of the dramatist's art,* the *springs of comedy,* the *potential of a situation,* the comic or biting force of the mot juste. . . . Yes, what skill in taking things apart, what irony in her deliberate sidestepping, what mastery in the way she lets you see her pulling the strings! *Le Tournant* gives every sort of enjoyment without a hint of self-indulgence or vulgarity. And without ever being facile, since it is quite clear that in this day and age, *it is entirely the avant-garde which is conformist,* it is gravity which is ridiculous and boredom which is the imposture. Mme. Françoise Dorin will *relieve a well-balanced audience* by bringing it back into *balance* with healthy laughter. . . . Hurry along and see for yourselves and I'm sure you will *laugh so heartily* that you will forget to think how anguishing it can be for a writer to wonder if she is still in tune with the times in which she lives. . . . In the end it is a question everyone asks himself and only humour and *incurable optimism* can rid him of it!' (Jean-Jacques Gautier, *Le Figaro,* 12 January 1973).

From *Le Figaro* one moves naturally to *L'Express,* which balances between endorsement and distance, thereby attaining a distinctly higher degree of euphemization: 'It *ought* to be a runaway success. . . . A witty and amusing play. A character. An actor made for the part: Jean Piat. . . . With an *unfailing virtuosity that is only occasionally overdone,* with *a sly cunning, a perfect mastery of the tricks of the trade,* Françoise Dorin has written a play on the 'turning points' in the Boulevard which is, ironically, the most traditional of Boulevard plays. *Only morose pedants will probe too far into the contrast between two types of theatre and the contrast between two conceptions of political life and the private life behind it.* The *brilliant* dialogue, full of *wit* and *epigrams,* is often bitingly sarcastic. But Romain is not a caricature, he is much less stupid than your run-of-the-mill avant-gardist. Philippe has the *plum rôle,* because he is on his own ground. What the author of *Comme au théâtre* gently wants to suggest is that the Boulevard stage is where people speak and behave 'as in real life', and this is true, but it is only a partial truth, and not just because it is a class truth' (Robert Kanters, *L'Express,* 15–21 January 1973).

Here the approval, which is still total, begins to be coloured by systematic use of formulations that are ambiguous even as regards the oppositions involved: "It ought to be a runaway success', 'a sly cunning, a perfect mastery of the tricks of the trade', 'Philippe has the plum rôle', all formulae which could equally be taken pejoratively. And we even find, surfacing through its denial, a hint of the other truth ('Only morose pedants will probe too far . . .') or even of the plain truth, but doubly neutralized by ambiguity and denial ('and not just because it is a class truth').

Le Monde offers a perfect example of ostentatiously neutral discourse, even-handedly dismissing both sides, both the overtly political discourse of *L'Aurore* and the disdainful silence of *Le Nouvel Observateur:* 'The simple, or simplistic, argument is complicated by a very subtle "two-tier" structure, as if there were two plays overlapping. One by Françoise Dorin, a conventional author, the other invented by Philippe Roussel, who tries to take "the turning" towards modern theatre. This conceit performs a circular movement, like a boomerang. Françoise Dorin deliberately exposes the Boulevard clichés which Philippe attacks and, through his voice, delivers a violent denunciation of the bourgeoisie. On the second floor, she contrasts this language with that of a young author whom she assails with equal vigour. Finally, the trajectory brings the weapon back onto the Boulevard stage, and the futilities of the mechanism are unmasked by the devices of the traditional theatre, which are shown to have lost nothing of their value. Philippe can declare himself a "courageously light" playwright, inventing "characters who talk like real people"; he can claim that his art is "without frontiers" and therefore non-political. However, the

demonstration is entirely distorted by the model avant-garde author chosen by Françoise Dorin. Vankovicz is an epigone of Marguerite Duras, a vaguely militant, belated existentialist. He is parodic in the extreme, like the theatre that is denounced here ("A black curtain and a scaffold certainly help!" or the title of the play: "Do take a little angst in your coffee, Mr. Karsov"). The audience sniggers at this derisive picture of modern drama; the denunciation of the bourgeoisie is an amusing provocation inasmuch as it rebounds onto an odious victim and finishes him off. . . . To the extent that it reflects the state of bourgeois theatre and reveals its systems of defence, *Le Tournant* can be regarded as an *important work*. Few plays let slip so much anxiety about an "external" threat and *recuperate* it with so much *unconscious* fury' (Louis Dandrel, *Le Monde,* 13 January 1973).

The ambiguity which Robert Kanters was already beginning to cultivate here reaches its peak. The argument is 'simple *or* simplistic', take your pick; the play is split in two, offering two works for the reader's choice, a 'violent' but 'recuperatory' critique of the bourgeoisie and a defence of non-political art. For anyone naive enough to ask whether the critic is 'for or against', whether he finds the play 'good or bad', there are two answers: first, the observation by an 'objective informant' with a duty towards truth that the avant-garde author portrayed is 'parodic in the extreme' and that 'the audience sniggers' (but without our knowing where the critic stands in relation to this audience, and therefore what the sniggering signifies); and then, after a series of judgements that are held in ambiguity by many reservations, nuances and academic attenuations ('insofar as . . .', 'can be regarded as . . .'), the assertion that *Le Tournant* is 'an important work', but be it noted, as a document illustrating the crisis of modern civilization, as they would no doubt say at Sciences Po.

This art of conciliation and compromise achieves the virtuosity of art for art's sake with the critic of the Catholic paper *La Croix,* who laces his unconditional approval with such subtly articulated justifications, understatements through double negation, nuances, reservations and self-corrections that the final *conciliatio oppositorum,* so naively Jesuitical 'in form and substance', as he would say, almost seems to go without saying: '*Le Tournant,* as I have said, seems to me an admirable work, in both form and substance. This is not to say it would not put many people's teeth on edge. I happened to be sitting next to an unconditional supporter of the avant-garde and throughout the evening I was aware of his suppressed anger. However, I by no means conclude that Françoise Dorin is unfair to certain very respectable—albeit often tedious—experiments in the contemporary theatre . . . And if she concludes—her preference is delicately hinted—with the triumph of the "Boulevard"—but a boulevard that is itself avant-garde—that is precisely because for many years a master like Anouilh has placed himself as a guide at the crossroads of these two paths' (Jean Vigneron, *La Croix,* 21 January 1973).

Although the silence of *Le Nouvel Observateur* no doubt signifies something in itself, we can form an approximate idea of what its position might have been by reading its review of Félicien Marceau's play *La Preuve par quatre,* or the review of *Le Tournant* which Philippe Tesson, then editor of *Combat,* wrote for *Le Canard Enchaîné:*

'Theatre seems to me the wrong term to apply to these *society gatherings of tradesmen and businesswomen* in the course of which a famous and much loved actor recites the laboriously witty text of an equally famous author in the middle of an elaborate stage set, even a revolving one decorated with Folon's measured humour . . . No "ceremony" here, no "catharsis" or "revelation" either, still less improvisation. Just a plateful of bourgeois cuisine for stomachs that have seen it all before. . . . The audience, like all boulevard audiences in Paris, bursts out laughing, on cue, in the most conformist places, as and when this spirit of easy-going rationalism inspires them. The connivance is perfect and the actors are all in on it. This play could have been written ten, twenty, or thirty years ago' (M. Pierret, *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 12 February 1964, reviewing Félicien Marceau's *La Preuve par quatre*).

'Françoise Dorin really *knows a thing or two.* She's a first-rate *recuperator* and terribly *well-bred.* Her *Tournant* is an excellent Boulevard comedy, which runs mainly on bad faith and demagogy. The lady wants to prove that avant-garde theatre is a dog's dinner. To do so, she takes a *big bag of tricks* and, needless to say, as soon as she pulls one out the *audience* rolls in the aisles and calls for more. Our author, *who was just waiting for that,* does it again. She gives us a young trendy leftist playwright called Vankowicz—get it?—and puts him in various ridiculous, uncomfortable and rather shady situations, to show that this young gentleman is no more disinterested, no less bourgeois, than you and I. What *common sense,* Mme. Dorin, what *lucidity,* what *honesty!* You at least have the courage to stand by your opinions, and very healthy, red-white-and-blue ones they are too' (Philippe Tesson, *Le Canard Enchaîné,* 17 March 1973 [italics in all foregoing quotations are mine]).

laughable because they are not uttered in the appropriate place and before the right audience. Instead, they become a 'mockery', a parody, establishing with their audience the immediate complicity of laughter, because they have persuaded their audience to reject (if it had ever accepted) the presuppositions of the parodied discourse.

As this exemplary case clearly shows, it is the logic of the homologies, not cynical calculation, which causes works to be adjusted to the expectations of their audience. The partial objectifications in which intellectuals and artists indulge in the course of their battles omit what is essential by describing as the conscious pursuit of success with an audience what is in fact the result of the pre-established harmony between two systems of interests (which may coincide in the person of the 'bourgeois' writer), or, more precisely, of the structural and functional homology between a given writer's or artist's position in the field of production and the position of his audience in the field of the classes and

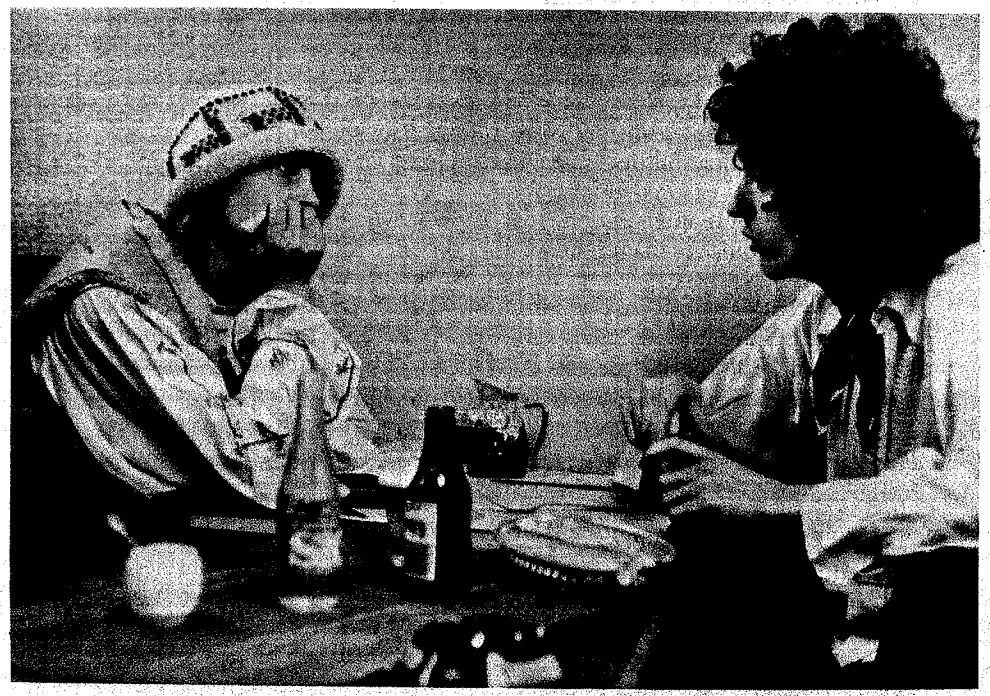
class fractions. By refusing to recognize any other relationship between the producer and his public than cynical calculation or pure disinterestedness, writers and artists give themselves a convenient device for seeing themselves as disinterested, while exposing their adversaries as motivated by the lust for success at any price, provocation and scandal (the right-bank argument) or mercenary servility (the left-bank argument). The so-called 'intellectual lackeys' are right to think and profess that they, strictly speaking, serve no one. They serve objectively only because, in all sincerity, they serve their own interests, specific, highly sublimated and euphemized interests, such as 'interest' in a form of theatre or philosophy which is logically associated with a certain position in a certain field and which (except in crisis periods) has every likelihood of concealing, even from its advocates, the political implications it contains.

Between pure disinterestedness and cynical servility, there is room for the relationships established, objectively, without any conscious intention, between a producer and an audience, by virtue of which the practices and artifacts produced in a specialized and relatively autonomous field of production are necessarily over-determined; the functions they fulfil in the internal struggles are inevitably coupled with external functions, those which they receive in the symbolic struggles between the fractions of the dominant class and, in the long run, between the classes. 'Sincerity' (which is one of the pre-conditions of symbolic efficacy) is only possible—and real—in the case of perfect, immediate harmony between the expectations inscribed in the position occupied (in a less consecrated area, one would say 'job description') and the dispositions of the occupant; it is the privilege of those who, guided by their 'sense of their place,' have found their natural site in the field of production. In accordance with the law that one only preaches to the converted, a critic can only 'influence' his readers insofar as they grant him this power because they are structurally attuned to him in their view of the social world, their tastes and their whole habitus. Jean-Jacques Gautier, for a long time literary critic of *Le Figaro,* gives a good description of this elective affinity between the journalist, his paper and his readers: a good *Figaro* editor, who has chosen himself and been chosen through the same mechanisms, chooses a *Figaro* literary critic because 'he has the right tone for speaking to the readers of the paper; because, without making a deliberate effort, 'he naturally speaks the language of *Le Figaro'* and is the paper's 'ideal reader'. 'If tomorrow I started speaking the language of *Les Temps Modernes,* for example, or *Saintes Chapelles des Lettres,* people would no longer read me or understand me, so they would not listen to me, because I would be assuming a certain number of ideas or arguments which our readers don't give a damn about.'[15] To each position there correspond presuppositions, a *doxa,* and the homology between the producers' positions and their clients' is the precondition for this complicity, which

is all the more strongly required when fundamental values are involved, as they are in the theatre.

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES This limiting case forces one to question the appearances of the direct effect of demand on supply or of supply on demand, and to consider in a new light all the encounters between the logic of goods production and the logic of taste production through which the universe of appropriate, appropriated things—objects, people, knowledge, memories etc.—is constituted. The limit of these coincidences of homologous structures and sequences which bring about the concordance between a socially classified person and the socially classified things or persons which 'suit' him is represented by all acts of co-option in fellow-feeling, friendship or love which lead to lasting relations, socially sanctioned or not. The social sense is guided by the system of mutually reinforcing and infinitely redundant signs of which each body is the bearer—clothing, pronunciation, bearing, posture, manners—and which, unconsciously registered, are the basis of 'antipathies' or 'sympathies'; the seemingly most immediate 'elective affinities' are always partly based on the unconscious deciphering of expressive features, each of which only takes on its meaning and value within the system of its class variations (one only has to think of the ways of laughing or smiling noted by ordinary language). Taste is what brings together things and people that go together.

The most indisputable evidence of this immediate sense of social compatibilities and incompatibilities is provided by class and even class-fraction endogamy, which is ensured almost as strictly by the free play of sentiment as by deliberate family intervention. It is known that the structure of the circuit of matrimonial exchanges tends to reproduce the structure of the social space as described here;[16] it is probable that the homogeneity of couples is still underestimated and that better knowledge of the 'secondary' properties of the spouses and their families would further reduce the apparent random element. For example, a survey in 1964 of the matrimonial strategies of six classes (1948–1953) of arts graduates of the Ecole Normale showed that of those who were married by then (85 percent of the total), 59 percent had married a teacher, and of these 58 percent had married an *agrégée.*[17] Among the directors of the central administration, who occupy an intermediate position between the civil service and business, 22.6 percent of whose fathers are civil servants and 22 percent businessmen, 16.6 percent of those who are married have a civil-servant father-in-law and 25.2 percent a businessman father-in-law.[18] Among the alumni of INSEAD (European Institute of Business Administration), which trains future top executives for the private sector, 28 percent of whose fathers are industrial or commercial employers and 19.5 percent executives or engineers, 23.5 percent of those who are married have an employer for father-in-law and 21 percent an executive or engineer; very rarely are they the sons (2 percent) or sons-in-law (5 per-



cent) of a teacher.[19] And the decisive contribution of the logic of matrimonial exchanges to the reproduction of the *grande bourgeoisie* has been demonstrated in an earlier study.[20]

Taste is a match-maker; it marries colours and also people, who make 'well-matched couples', initially in regard to taste. All the acts of co-option which underlie 'primary groups' are acts of knowledge of others qua subjects of acts of knowledge or, in less intellectualist terms, sign-reading operations (particularly visible in first encounters) through which a habitus confirms its affinity with other habitus. Hence the astonishing harmony of ordinary couples who, often matched initially, progressively match each other by a sort of mutual acculturation.[21] This spontaneous decoding of one habitus by another is the basis of the immediate affinities which orient social encounters, discouraging socially discordant relationships, encouraging well-matched relationships, without these operations ever having to be formulated other than in the socially innocent language of likes and dislikes.[22] The extreme improbability of the particular encounter between particular people, which masks the probability of interchangeable chance events, induces couples to experience their mutual election as a happy accident, a coincidence which mimics transcendent design ('made for each other') and intensifies the sense of the miraculous.

Those whom we find to our taste put into their practices a taste which does not differ from the taste we put into operation in perceiving their practices. Two people can give each other no better proof of the affinity of their tastes than the taste they have for each other. Just as the art-lover finds a raison d'être in his discovery, which seems to have been waiting for all eternity for the discoverer's eye, so lovers feel 'justified in existing', as Sartre puts it, 'made *for* each other', constituted as the end and raison d'être of another existence entirely dependent on their own existence, and therefore accepted, recognized in their most contingent features, a way of laughing or speaking, in short, legitimated in the arbitrariness of a way of being and doing, a biological and social destiny. Love is also a way of loving one's own destiny in someone else and so of feeling loved in one's own destiny. It is no doubt the supreme occasion of a sort of experience of the *intuitus originarius* of which the possession of luxury goods and works of art (made *for* their owner) is an approximate form and which makes the perceiving, naming subject (we know the role of name-giving in love relations), the cause and the end, in short, the raison d'être, of the perceived subject.

> Le Maître, par un oeil profond, a, sur ses pas,
> Apaisé de l'éden l'inquiète merveille
> Dont le frisson final, dans sa voix seule, éveille
> Pour la Rose et le Lys le mystère d'un nom.[23]

Taste is the form par excellence of *amor fati.* The habitus generates representations and practices which are always more adjusted than they seem to be to the objective conditions of which they are the product. To say with Marx that 'the petit bourgeois cannot transcend the limits of his mind' (others would have said the limits of his understanding) is to say that his thought has the same limits as his condition, that his condition in a sense doubly limits him, by the material limits which it sets to his practice and the limits it sets to his thought and therefore his practice, and which make him accept, and even love, these limits.[24] We are now better placed to understand the specific effect of the 'raising of consciousness': making explicit what is given presupposes and produces a suspension of immediate attachment to the given so that the knowledge of probable relationships may become dissociated from recognition of them; and *amor fati* can thus collapse into *odium fati,* hatred of one's destiny.

Symbolic Struggles

To escape from the subjectivist illusion, which reduces social space to the conjunctural space of interactions, that is, a discontinuous succession of abstract situations,[25] it has been necessary to construct social space as an objective space, a structure of objective relations which determines the possible form of interactions and of the representations the interactors can have of them. However, one must move beyond this provisional objectivism, which, in 'treating social facts as things', reifies what it describes. The social positions which present themselves to the observer as places juxtaposed in a static order of discrete compartments, raising the purely theoretical question of the limits between the groups who occupy them, are also strategic emplacements, fortresses to be defended and captured in a field of struggles.

Care must be taken to avoid the objectivist inclination (which is expressed and reinforced in a spatial diagram) to mark out regions of this space that are defined once and for all in a single respect and delimited by clearly drawn frontiers. For example, as has been shown in the case of industrial employers and as will subsequently be shown in the exemplary case of the new middle-class fractions, a particularly indeterminate zone in that site of relative indeterminancy represented by the petite bourgeoisie, each of the classes of positions which the ordinary classifications of statistics require us to construct can itself function as a relatively autonomous field. One only has to substitute more strictly defined occupational positions for the relatively abstract categories imposed by the necessities of statistical accumulation in order to see the emergence of the network of competitive relations which give rise, for example, to conflicts of competence—conflicts over the qualifications for legitimate practice of the occupation and the legitimate scope of the practice—between agents possessing different qualifications, such as doctors, anaesthetists, nurses, midwives, physiotherapists and healers (each of these universes itself functioning as a field of struggles); or between the occupations, mostly of recent creation, offering 'social' guidance (social workers, domestic-economy counsellors, child-care services, mother's helpers etc.), educational services (special teachers, remedial teachers, approved schools etc.), cultural services (play leaders, youth leaders, adult tutors etc.), or medico-psychological services (marriage guidance consultants, paediatric nurses, physiotherapists etc.), whose common feature is that they are only defined in and by the competition between them and in the antagonistic strategies through which they seek to transform the established order so as to secure a recognized place within it.

The model of social space that has been put forward here is not only limited by the nature of the data used (and usable), particularly by the practical impossibility of including in the analysis structural features such as the power which certain individuals or groups have over the economy, or even the innumerable associated hidden profits. If most of those who carry out empirical research are often led to accept, implicitly or explicitly, a theory which reduces the classes to simple ranked but non-antagonistic strata, this is above all because the very logic of their practice leads them to ignore what is objectively inscribed in every distribution. A distribution, in the statistical but also the political-economy sense, is the balance-sheet, at a given moment, of what has been won in previous battles and can be invested in subsequent battles; it expresses a state of the power relation between the classes or, more precisely, of the struggle for possession of rare goods and for the specifically political power over the distribution or redistribution of profit.

Thus, the opposition between theories which describe the social world in the language of stratification and those which speak the language of the class struggle corresponds to two ways of seeing the social world which, though difficult to reconcile in practice, are in no way mutually exclusive as regards their principle. 'Empiricists' seem locked into the former, leaving the latter for 'theorists', because descriptive or explanatory surveys, which can only manifest classes or class fractions in the form of a punctual set of distributions of properties among individuals, always arrive after (or before) the battle and necessarily put into parentheses the struggle of which this distribution is the product. When the statistician forgets that *all* the properties he handles, not only those he classifies and measures but also those he uses to classify and measure, are weapons and prizes in the struggle between the classes, he is inclined to abstract each class from its relations with the others, not only from the oppositional relations which give properties their distinctive value, but also from the relations of power and of struggle for power which are the very basis of the distributions. Like a photograph of a game of marbles or poker which freezes the balance sheet of assets (marbles or chips) at a given stage, the survey freezes a moment in a struggle in which the agents put back into

play, at every moment, the capital they have acquired in early phases of the struggle, which may imply a power over the struggle itself and therefore over the capital held by others.

The structure of class relations is what one obtains by using a synchronic cross-section to fix a (more or less steady) state of the field of struggles among the classes. The relative strength which the individuals can put into this struggle, or, in other words, the distribution at that moment of the different types of capital, defines the structure of the field; but, equally, the strength which the individuals command depends on the state of the struggle over the definition of the stake of the struggle. The definition of the legitimate means and stakes of struggle is in fact one of the stakes of the struggle, and the relative efficacy of the means of controlling the game (the different sorts of capital) is itself at stake, and therefore subject to variations in the course of the game. Thus, as has constantly been emphasized here (if only by use of quotation marks), the notion of 'overall volume of capital', which has to be constructed in order to account for certain aspects of practice, nonetheless remains a theoretical artifact; as such, it could produce thoroughly dangerous effects if everything that has to be set aside in order to construct it were forgotten, not least the fact that the conversion rate between one sort of capital and another is fought over at all times and is therefore subject to endless fluctuations.

Dispositions are adjusted not only to a class condition, presenting itself as a set of possibilities and impossibilities, but also to a relationally defined position, a rank in the class structure. They are therefore always related, objectively at least, to the dispositions associated with other positions. This means that, being 'adapted' to a particular class of conditions of existence characterized by a particular degree of distance from necessity, class 'moralities' and 'aesthetics' are also necessarily situated with respect to one another by the criterion of degree of banality or distinction, and that all the 'choices' they produce are automatically associated with a distinct position and therefore endowed with a distinctive value. This occurs even without any conscious intention of distinction or explicit pursuit of difference. The genuinely intentional strategies through which members of a group seek to distinguish themselves from the group immediately below (or believed to be so), which they use as a foil, and to identify themselves with the group immediately above (or believed to be so), which they thus recognize as the possessor of the legitimate life-style, only ensure full efficacy, by intentional reduplication, for the automatic, unconscious effects of the dialectic of the rare and the common, the new and the dated, which is inscribed in the objective differentiation of conditions and dispositions. Even when it is in no way inspired by the conscious concern to stand aloof from working-class laxity, every petit-bourgeois profession of rigour, every eulogy of the clean,

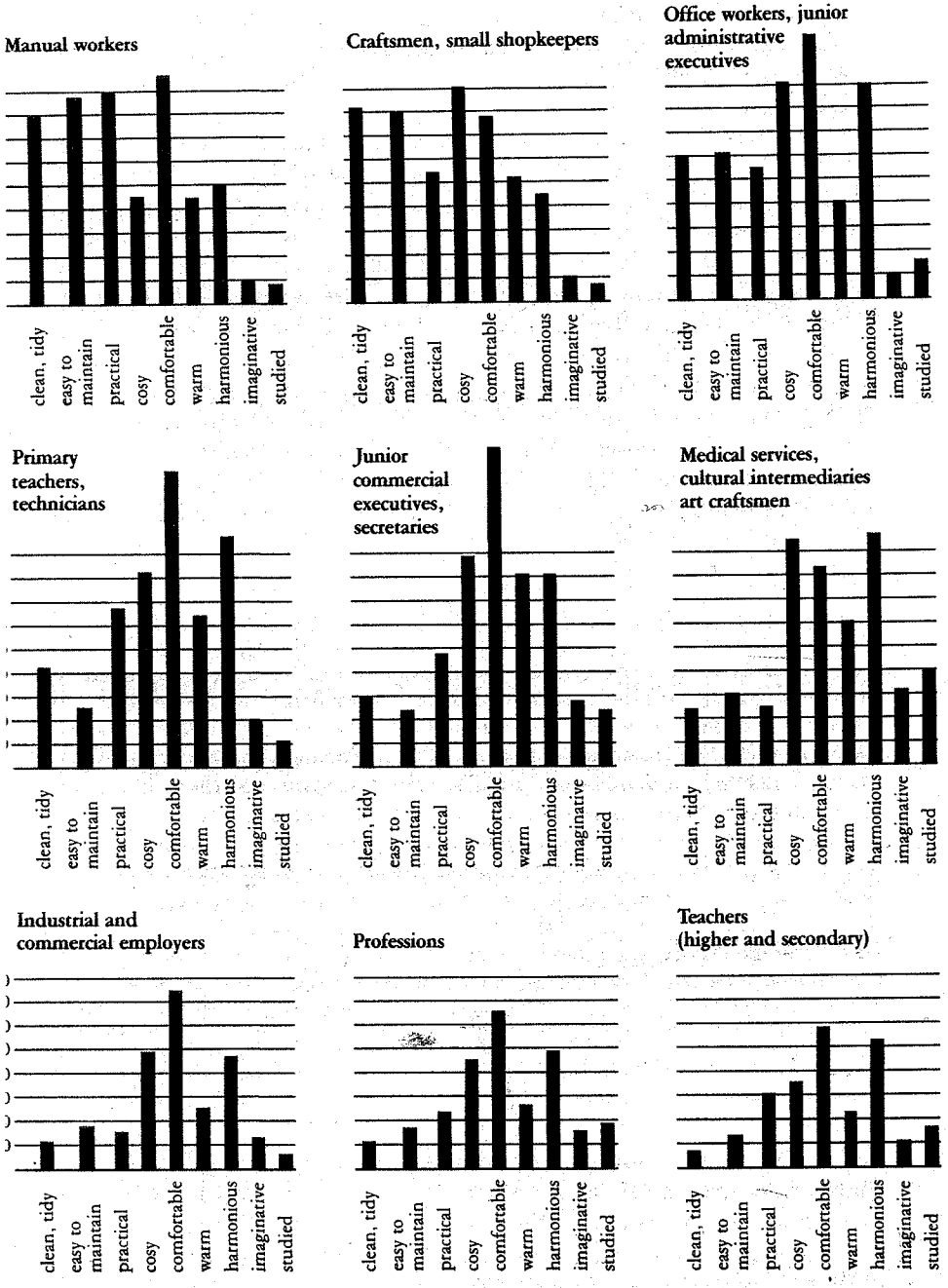
sober and neat, contains a tacit reference to uncleanness, in words or things, to intemperance or improvidence; and the bourgeois claim to ease or discretion, detachment or disinterestedness, need not obey an intentional search for distinction in order to contain an implicit denunciation of the 'pretensions', always marked by excess or insufficiency, of the 'narrow-minded' or 'flashy', 'arrogant' or 'servile', 'ignorant' or 'pedantic' petite bourgeoisie.

It is no accident that each group tends to recognize its specific values in that which makes its value, in Saussure's sense, that is, in the latest difference which is also, very often, the latest conquest,[26] in the structural and genetic deviation which specifically defines it. Whereas the working classes, reduced to 'essential' goods and virtues, demand cleanness and practicality, the middle classes, relatively freer from necessity, look for a warm, 'cosy', comfortable or neat interior, or a fashionable and original garment.[27] These are values which the privileged classes relegate to second rank because they have long been theirs and seem to go without saying; having attained intentions socially recognized as aesthetic, such as the pursuit of harmony and composition, they cannot identify their distinction with properties, practices or 'virtues' which no longer *have* to be claimed or which, because they have become commonplace and lost their distinctive value, no longer *can* be claimed.

As is shown in figure 10 by the series of histograms indicating the class-fraction variations of the adjectives applied to the ideal domestic interior (except for three of them, classical, neat—*soigné*—and sober, which proved to be ambiguous), the proportion of choices emphasizing overtly aesthetic properties (studied, imaginative, harmonious) grows as one moves up the social hierarchy, whereas the proportion of 'functionalist' choices (clean, practical, easy to maintain) declines. The steady distortion of the histogram in fact points towards three relatively incommensurable extremes: the small shopkeepers lead to the industrial and commercial employers, the primary teachers to the secondary teachers and the 'cultural intermediaries' to the artistic producers. The same logic is found in the refusal of adjectives. The working classes never reject 'clean and tidy', 'easy to maintain' or 'practical'. In the middle classes, the established fractions (office workers, junior administrative executives, craftsmen and shopkeepers) reject 'imaginative' much more often than 'classical', in contrast to the new petite bourgeoisie (except the 'art craftsmen'), who, like most fractions of the dominant class (especially the teachers and members of the professions), reject 'classical' more often than 'imaginative'.

Tastes thus obey a sort of generalized Engel's law. At each level of the distribution, what is rare and constitutes an inaccessible luxury or an absurd fantasy for those at an earlier or lower level becomes banal and common, and is relegated to the order of the taken-for-granted by the appearance of new, rarer and more distinctive goods; and, once again, this

Figure 10 Ideal homes.



happens without any intentional pursuit of distinctive, distinguished rarity.[28] The sense of good investment which dictates a withdrawal from outmoded, or simply devalued, objects, places or practices and a move into ever newer objects in an endless drive for novelty, and which operates in every area, sport and cooking, holiday resorts and restaurants, is guided by countless different indices and indications, from explicit warnings ('Saint-Tropez'—or the Buffet de la gare de Lyon, or anywhere else—'has become impossible') to the barely conscious intuitions, which, like the awareness of popularization or overcrowding, insidiously arouse horror or disgust for objects or practices that have become common. (It is no accident that tastes in painting or music so often follow paths which, revivals and rehabilitations apart, reproduce history in biography.) So the search for distinction has no need to see itself for what it is, and all the intolerances—of noise, crowds etc.—inculcated by a bourgeois upbringing are generally sufficient to provoke the changes of terrain or object which, in work as in leisure, lead towards the objects, places or activities rarest at a given moment. Those who are held to be distinguished have the privilege of not worrying about their distinction; they can leave it to the objective mechanisms which provide their distinctive properties and to the 'sense of distinction' which steers them away from everything 'common'. Where the petit bourgeois or nouveau riche 'overdoes it', betraying his own insecurity, bourgeois discretion signals its presence by a sort of ostentatious discretion, sobriety and understatement, a refusal of everything which is 'showy', 'flashy' and pretentious, and which devalues itself by the very intention of distinction.

When asked how they would dress if 'invited to dinner by their husband's boss', 33 percent of the wives of junior executives or office workers (32 percent of manual workers' wives, 29 percent of farm workers' wives) say they would 'wear their best clothes', as against only 19 percent of the wives of industrial and commercial employers, senior executives and professionals, of whom 81 percent say they would change their clothes 'but without putting on their Sunday best', compared with 67 percent of the middle-class wives and 68 percent of the working-class wives (C.S. XLII).

Struggles over the appropriation of economic or cultural goods are, simultaneously, symbolic struggles to appropriate distinctive signs in the form of classified, classifying goods or practices, or to conserve or subvert the principles of classification of these distinctive properties. As a consequence, the space of life-styles, i.e., the universe of the properties whereby the occupants of different positions differentiate themselves, with or without the intention of distinguishing themselves, is itself only the balance-sheet, at a given moment, of the symbolic struggles over the imposition of the legitimate life-style, which are most fully developed in the struggles for the monopoly of the emblems of 'class'—luxury goods, le-

gitimate cultural goods—or the legitimate manner of appropriating them. The dynamic of the field in which these goods are produced and reproduced and circulate while yielding profits of distinction lies in the strategies which give rise to their rarity and to belief in their value, and which combine—in their very opposition—to bring about these objective effects. 'Distinction', or better, 'class', the transfigured, misrecognizable, legitimate form of social class, only exists through the struggles for the exclusive appropriation of the distinctive signs which make 'natural distinction'.

Culture is a stake which, like all social stakes, simultaneously presupposes and demands that one take part in the game and be taken in by it; and interest in culture, without which there is no race, no competition, is produced by the very race and competition which it produces. The value of culture, the supreme fetish, is generated in the initial investment implied by the mere fact of entering the game, joining in the collective belief in the value of the game which makes the game and endlessly remakes the competition for the stakes. The opposition between the 'authentic' and the 'imitation', 'true' culture and 'popularization', which maintains the game by maintaining belief in the absolute value of the stake, conceals a collusion that is no less indispensable to the production and reproduction of the *illusio,* the fundamental recognition of the cultural game and its stakes. Distinction and pretension, high culture and middle-brow culture—like, elsewhere, high fashion and fashion, haute coiffure and coiffure, and so on—only exist through each other, and it is the relation, or rather, the objective collaboration of their respective production apparatuses and clients which produces the value of culture and the need to possess it. It is in these struggles between objectively complicit opponents that the value of culture is generated, or, which amounts to the same thing, belief in the value of culture, interest in culture and the interest of culture—which are not self-evident, although one of the effects of the game is to induce belief in the innateness of the desire to play and the pleasure of playing. It is barbarism to ask what culture is for; to allow the hypothesis that culture might be devoid of intrinsic interest, and that interest in culture is not a natural property—unequally distributed, as if to separate the barbarians from the elect—but a simple social artifact, a particular form of fetishism; to raise the question of the interest of activities which are called disinterested because they offer no intrinsic interest (no palpable pleasure, for example), and so to introduce the question of the interest of disinterestedness.

The struggle itself thus produces effects which tend to disguise the very existence of the struggle. If the relationship of the different classes with culture can be described indifferently either in the language (favoured by Maurice Halbwachs) of distance from the centres of cultural values or in the language of conflict, this is because the symbolic struggles between the classes have no chance of being seen and organized as

such, and are bound to take the form of competitive struggles helping to reproduce the gaps which are the essence of the race. It is no accident that—apart from Proudhon, who is inspired by his petit-bourgeois horror of the dissolute, slovenly life-style of artists, and by what Marx calls his 'irae hominis probi', to dare to expose the hidden, repressed face of the petite bourgeoisie's ambivalent idea of art—there is practically no questioning of art and culture which leads to a genuine objectification of the cultural game, so strongly are the dominated classes and their spokesmen imbued with a sense of their cultural unworthiness.

Nothing is further from such objectification than the artistic denunciation of the art which some artists go in for,[29] or the activities grouped under the term counter-culture. The latter merely contest one culture in the name of another, counterposing a culture dominated within the relatively autonomous field of cultural production and distribution (which does not make it the culture of the dominated) to a dominant culture; in so doing they fulfil the traditional role of a cultural avant-garde which, by its very existence, helps to keep the cultural game functioning.

The dominated classes intervene in the symbolic struggles to appropriate the distinctive properties which give the distinctive life-styles their physiognomy and especially in the struggles to define the legitimate properties and the legitimate mode of appropriation, only as a passive reference point, a foil. The nature against which culture is here constructed is nothing other than what is 'popular', 'low', 'vulgar', 'common'. This means that anyone who wants to 'succeed in life' must pay for his accession to everything which defines truly humane humans by a change of nature, a 'social promotion' experienced as an ontological promotion, a process of 'civilization' (Hugo speaks somewhere of the 'civilizing power of Art'), a leap from nature to culture, from the animal to the human; but having internalized the class struggle, which is at the very heart of culture, he is condemned to shame, horror, even hatred of the old Adam, his language, his body and his tastes, and of everything he was bound to, his roots, his family, his peers, sometimes even his mother tongue, from which he is now separated by a frontier more absolute than any taboo.

The struggles to win everything which, in the social world, is of the order of belief, credit and discredit, perception and appreciation, knowledge and recognition—name, renown, prestige, honour, glory, authority, everything which constitutes symbolic power as a recognized power—always concern the 'distinguished' possessors and the 'pretentious' challengers. Pretension, the recognition of distinction that is affirmed in the effort to possess it, albeit in the illusory form of bluff or imitation, inspires the acquisition, in itself vulgarizing, of the previously most distinctive properties; it thus helps to maintain constant tension in the symbolic goods market, forcing the possessors of distinctive properties

threatened with popularization to engage in an endless pursuit of new properties through which to assert their rarity. The demand which is generated by this dialectic is by definition inexhaustible since the dominated needs which constitute it must endlessly redefine themselves in terms of a distinction which always defines itself negatively in relation to them.

Nietzsche's 'enlightened elitism' comes close to the scientific truth of the mechanisms of the production of belief in the value of culture: 'You were wont to say that no one would strive for culture if he knew how unbelievably small the number of truly cultured men is and indeed can only be; and yet that even this small number of truly cultured men was not possible unless a great mass, determined, fundamentally, against their nature and only by a seductive illusion, engaged in the pursuit of culture; that therefore nothing should be publicly divulged of the ridiculous disproportion between the number of truly cultivated men and the vast apparatus of culture; that the peculiar secret of culture was this: that countless people work for culture, apparently for themselves, but ultimately only to make a few people possible.'[30]

The symbolic struggles over being and seeming, over the symbolic manifestations which the sense of appropriateness, as strict as the old sumptuary laws, assigns to the different social conditions ('Who does he think he is?'), separating, for example, natural 'grace' from usurped 'airs and graces', are both based and focussed on the degree of freedom from one's 'station' that is allowed by the specific logic of symbolic manifestations. Countless social arrangements are designed to regulate the relations between being and seeming, from the laws on the illegal wearing of uniforms and decorations and all forms of usurpation of titles, to the gentlest forms of repression aimed at recalling to reality, to the 'sense of reality', of limits, those who, by exhibiting the external signs of a wealth associated with a condition higher than their own, show that they 'think themselves' something better than they are, the pretentious pretenders, who betray by their poses, their postures, their 'presentation' that they have a self-image too far out of line with the image others have of them, to which they ought to cut down their self-image ('climb down').

The relation to one's own body which is expressed in a certain manner and bearing—the 'natural' self-confidence, ease and authority of someone who feels authorized, the awkwardness or arrogance of someone who brings suspicion upon his legitimacy by his too patent need to assert it—is one of the most visible traces of early and recurrent exposure to archetypal situations which are very unequally probable for the different social classes. It is one of the most powerful social markers, and for this reason the forced or affected ease of the bluffer is always exposed to the demystifying irony of an interlocutor who 'sees through' it and refuses to be 'taken in'.

This does not mean that the strategies of pretension are lost in advance. Since the surest sign of legitimacy is self-assurance, bluff—if it succeeds (first by impressing the bluffer)—is one of the few ways of escaping the limits of social condition by playing on the relative autonomy of the symbolic (i.e., of the capacity to make and perceive representations) in order to impose a self-representation normally associated with a higher condition and to win for it the acceptance and recognition which make it a legitimate, objective representation. Without subscribing to the interactionist—and typically petit-bourgeois—idealism which conceives the social world as will and representation, it would nonetheless be absurd to exclude from social reality the representation which agents form of that reality. The reality of the social world is in fact partly determined by the struggles between agents over the representation of their position in the social world and, consequently, of that world.

As is shown by the inversion of the relationship between spending on food and on clothing, and more generally, on substance and on appearance, as one moves from the working class to the petite bourgeoisie, the middle classes are *committed* to the symbolic. Their concern for appearance, which may be experienced as unhappy consciousness, sometimes disguised as arrogance,[31] is also a source of their pretension, a permanent disposition towards the bluff or usurpation of social identity which consists in anticipating 'being' by 'seeming', appropriating the appearances so as to have the reality, the nominal so as to have the real, in trying to modify the positions in the objective classifications by modifying the representation of the ranks in the classification or of the principles of classification. Torn by all the contradictions between an objectively dominated condition and would-be participation in the dominant values, the petit bourgeois is haunted by the appearance he offers to others and the judgement they make of it. He constantly overshoots the mark for fear of falling short, betraying his uncertainty and anxiety about belonging in his anxiety to show or give the impression that he belongs. He is bound to be seen—both by the working classes, who do not have this concern with their being-for-others, and by the privileged classes, who, being sure of what they are, do not care what they seem—as the man of appearances, haunted by the look of others and endlessly occupied with being seen in a good light.

Being so linked to appearance—the one he has to give, not only to do his job, that is, play his role, to 'make believe', to inspire confidence or respect and present his social character, his 'presentation', as a guarantee of the products or services he offers (as is the case with salespeople, business representatives, hostesses etc.), but also to assert his pretensions and demands, to advance his interests and upward aspirations—the petit bourgeois is inclined to a Berkeleian vision of the social world, reducing it to a theatre in which being is never more than perceived being, a mental representation of a theatrical performance (*représentation*).[32] His ambiguous position in the social structure, sometimes compounded by the

ambiguity inherent in all the roles of intermediary between the classes—manipulated manipulators, deceived deceivers—often his very trajectory, which leads him to the positions of second-in-command, second officer, second lead, second fiddle, éminence grise, agent, deputy or stand-in, deprived of the symbolic profits associated with the recognized status and official delegation which allow legitimate imposture (and well-placed to suspect its true foundation): everything predisposes him to perceive the social world in terms of appearance and reality, and the more he has personally had to 'climb down', the more inclined he is to observe manipulations and impostures with the suspicious eyes of resentment.[33]

But the site par excellence of symbolic struggles is the dominant class itself. The conflicts between artists and intellectuals over the definition of culture are only one aspect of the interminable struggles among the different fractions of the dominant class to impose the definition of the legitimate stakes and weapons of social struggles; in other words, to define the legitimate principle of domination, between economic, educational or social capital, social powers whose specific efficacy may be compounded by specifically symbolic efficacy, that is, the authority conferred by being recognized, mandated by collective belief. The struggle between the dominant fractions and the dominated fractions (themselves constituting fields organized in a structure homologous to that of the dominant class as a whole) tends, in its ideological retranslation—and here the dominated fractions have the initiative and the upper hand—to be organized by oppositions that are almost superimposable on those which the dominant vision sets up between the dominant class and the dominated classes: on the one hand, freedom, disinterestedness, the 'purity' of sublimated tastes, salvation in the hereafter; on the other, necessity, self-interest, base material satisfactions, salvation in this world. It follows that all the strategies which intellectuals and artists produce against the 'bourgeois' inevitably tend, quite apart from any explicit intention, and by virtue of the structure of the space in which they are generated, to be dual-action devices, directed indifferently against all forms of subjection to material interests, popular as much as bourgeois: 'I call bourgeois whoever thinks basely', as Flaubert put it. This essential over-determination explains how the 'bourgeois' can so easily use the art produced against them as a means of demonstrating their distinction, whenever they seek to show that, compared to the dominated, they are on the side of 'disinterestedness', 'freedom', 'purity' and the 'soul', thus turning against the other classes weapons designed for use against themselves.

It is clearly no accident that the dominant art and the dominant art of living agree on the same fundamental distinctions, which are all based on the opposition between the brutish necessity which forces itself on the vulgar, and luxury, as the manifestation of distance from necessity, or asceticism, as self-imposed constraint, two contrasting ways of defying nature, need, appetite, desire; between the unbridled squandering which only highlights the privations of ordinary existence, and the ostentatious

freedom of gratuitous expense or the austerity of elective restriction; between surrender to immediate, easy satisfactions and economy of means, bespeaking a possession of means commensurate with the means possessed. Ease is so universally approved only because it represents the most visible assertion of freedom from the constraints which dominate ordinary people, the most indisputable affirmation of capital as the capacity to satisfy the demands of biological nature or of the authority which entitles one to ignore them.

Thus linguistic ease may be manifested either in the tours de force of going beyond what is required by strictly grammatical or pragmatic rules, making optional liaisons, for example, or using rare words and tropes in place of common words and phrases, or in the freedom from the demands of language or situation that is asserted in the liberties taken by those who are known to know better. These opposing strategies, which place one above the rules and proprieties imposed on ordinary speakers, are in no way mutually exclusive. The two forms of conspicuous freedom, unconventional constraint and deliberate transgression, can coexist at different moments or different levels of the same discourse; lexical 'relaxation' may, for example, be counterbalanced by increased tension in syntax or diction, or the reverse (this is clearly seen in condescension strategies, in which the gap thus maintained between the levels of language is the symbolic equivalent of the double game of asserting distance by appearing to negate it). Such strategies—which may be perfectly unconscious, and thereby even more effective—are the ultimate riposte to the hyper-correction strategies of pretentious outsiders, who are thrown into self-doubt about the rule and the right way to conform to it, paralyzed by a reflexiveness which is the opposite of ease, and left 'without a leg to stand on'.

The speaker who can 'take the liberty' of standing outside rules fit only for pedants or grammarians—who, not surprisingly, are disinclined to write these games with the rules into their codifications of the linguistic game—puts himself forward as a maker of higher rules, i.e., a taste-maker, an *arbiter elegantium* whose transgressions are not mistakes but the annunciation of a new fashion, a new mode of expression or action which will become a model, and then modal, normal, the norm, and will call for new transgressions by those who refuse to be ranked in the mode, to be included, absorbed, in the class defined by the least classifying, least marked, most common, least distinctive, least distinguishing property. Thus we see that, contrary to all naively Darwinian convictions, the (sociologically well-founded) illusion of 'natural distinction' is ultimately based on the power of the dominant to impose, by their very existence, a definition of excellence which, being nothing other than their own way of existing, is bound to appear simultaneously as distinctive and different, and therefore both arbitrary (since it is one among others) and perfectly necessary, absolute and natural.

Ease in the sense of 'natural facility' is no more than ease in the sense

of a 'comfortable situation ensuring an easy life': the proposition is self-destructive, since there would be no need to point out that ease is only what it is, if it were really not something else, which is also part of its truth. This is the error of objectivism, which forgets to include in the complete definition of the object the representation of the object that it has had to destroy in order to arrive at the 'objective' definition; which forgets to perform the final reduction of its reduction that is indispensable in order to grasp the objective truth of social facts, objects whose being *also* consists in their being perceived.[34] One has to put back into a complete definition of ease what is destroyed by recalling that ease, like Aristotle's virtue, requires a certain ease (or, conversely, that embarrassment arises from embarrassment), that is, the effect of imposition which those who only have to be in order to be excellent achieve by their mere existence. This perfect coincidence is the very definition of ease which, in return, bears witness to this coincidence of 'is' and 'ought' and to the self-affirming power it contains.

The value placed on casualness and on all forms of distance from self stems from the fact that, in opposition to the anxious tension of the challengers, they manifest both the possession of a large capital (linguistic or other capital) and a freedom with respect to that capital which is a second-order affirmation of power over necessity. Verbal virtuosities or the gratuitous expense of time or money that is presupposed by material or symbolic appropriation of works of art, or even, at the second power, the self-imposed constraints and restrictions which make up the 'asceticism of the privileged' (as Marx said of Seneca) and the refusal of the facile which is the basis of all 'pure' aesthetics, are so many repetitions of that variant of the master-slave dialectic through which the possessors affirm their possession of their possessions. In so doing, they distance themselves still further from the dispossessed, who, not content with being slaves to necessity in all its forms, are suspected of being possessed by the desire for possession, and so potentially possessed by the possessions they do not, or do not yet, possess.[35]

III Class Tastes and Life-Styles

Our pride is more offended by attacks on our tastes than on our opinions

La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*